

Criteria For Appointment and Retention of Graduate Faculty Membership

**School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering
University of Oklahoma**

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Approved by graduate dean on January 23, 2023**

The School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering (AME) at the University of Oklahoma (OU) has a longstanding commitment to high-quality graduate education. It provides students with a transformative, cutting-edge education rooted in the best traditions of disciplinary academic excellence while forging new interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary connections. AME offers graduate degrees in Aerospace Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. The main responsibilities of the Graduate Faculty are to conduct scholarly research and creative work of high quality, teach graduate courses effectively, advise graduate students, and direct the research of graduate students. Listed below are criteria to determine the eligibility of Graduate Faculty members within AME.

A. Academic Background and Type of Appointment

Members of the Graduate Faculty in AME should have a Ph.D. or equivalent in their discipline, inter-discipline, or a related discipline with demonstrated equivalent education and experience. In general, AME faculty members are recommended for Graduate Faculty membership. Additionally, faculty with a full-time tenure track or tenured appointment in another School in the Norman Campus at OU can request a courtesy appointment as AME graduate faculty. Granting of courtesy status to members of other Schools will be determined by the vote of the AME Graduate Faculty Committee.

~~AME Graduate Faculty members (RM0 status) have the following five levels:~~

2. May serve on master's degree committees and all the privileges of RM0 (RM1 status).
3. May chair non-thesis master's committees and all the privileges of RM1 (RM2 status).
4. May chair thesis master's committees and all the privileges of RM2 (RM3 status).
5. May chair doctoral committees and all the privileges of RM3 (RM4 status).

B. Duties and Responsibilities

1. Faculty members encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students and hold the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. They demonstrate respect for their students as individuals and serve as intellectual guides and counselors. (Faculty Handbook 3.2.2)
2. Chairing Ph.D. dissertation committees requires a multi-year commitment to students to prepare them as research scholars and educators. Because the Chair role is one of the most important and demanding responsibilities a faculty member may hold, the "Chair" status is reserved for those who demonstrate currency and expertise in research, scholarly, and creative achievements in specific disciplines and possess the ability to prepare and mentor future scholars and researchers. To chair a doctoral dissertation, the graduate faculty member (RM4 status) must show evidence of current involvement in scholarly research and/or creative activity. This evidence may consist of authoring/co-authoring books, book chapters, and peer-reviewed articles, obtaining research grants, contracts, and patents, and submitting proposals for research funding or similar demonstrations. Please refer to Section C for detailed requirements.

3. In judging the appropriateness of an applicant for the Program Graduate Faculty, no single criterion should be used. The primary consideration is whether the faculty member is currently an active and productive scholar and an effective educator/mentor at the graduate level. The evaluation of scholarship productiveness and mentorship effectiveness can be found in Section C.

C. Retention and Appointment

For Graduate Faculty members within AME, the members must have met the following criteria to retain the privilege to direct doctoral dissertations and chair dissertation committees:

1. Authored/co-authored two peer-reviewed articles in refereed journals or conferences over the preceding five years; and
2. Made contributions over the preceding five years in at least one of the following six categories:
 - a. One invited keynote presentation at regional, national, or international conferences or workshops.
 - b. One scholarly book, book chapter, or monograph.
 - c. One funded external grant or contract as PI, Co-PI, or senior personnel.
 - d. One issued patent.
 - e. Submission of two proposals for research funding as PI, Co-PI or senior personnel.
 - f. Publication (acceptance) of one additional peer-reviewed article in refereed journals or conferences.
3. In addition, graduate faculty members serving as chairs are expected to foster the professional development of students and provide effective mentorship. Faculty members serving on graduate committees are expected to provide timely response and review. The effectiveness of mentorship and service will be evaluated using graduate student exit surveys and exit interviews.

If a member's privilege is revoked for failure to meet the above criteria, the faculty member must complete one MS committee (either thesis or non-thesis) as chair and have one refereed publication within the next two years to be reinstated to direct dissertations. Exceptions to these requirements for retention and reappointment can be made at the discretion of the AME Graduate Faculty Committee.

For Graduate Faculty members from schools other than AME, the member must have met the following criterion over the preceding five years:

1. Performed duties corresponding to the appointed member status at least once, e.g. RM4 in directing doctoral dissertation, RM3 in chairing master's thesis committee, RM2 in chairing master's non-thesis committee, and RM1 in serving on master's committee.

D. Special Membership Appointments

Special membership (SM) status may be granted to scholars with strong research records and PhDs (such as post-doctoral scientists, research faculty members, research scientists working in national laboratories, research centers and other research scientists) with the privilege to teach graduate-level classes, and serve on graduate examination/thesis/dissertation committees. These scholars may also be granted the privilege to co-chair committees, but may not serve as the Graduate College Representative of dissertation committees. Experts without a Ph.D. degree but having tested experience in their area may also be considered for SM status to serve on thesis and dissertation committees and to teach graduate courses. The tested experience is demonstrated by:

- (a) At least four years of experience in industry involving direct engineering work (design, development and manufacturing) as evidenced by publications or patents; or
- (b) At least four years of experience in business and entrepreneurship with an appropriate track record of creating new businesses and commercializing products; or

- (c) Attainment of associate fellowships or fellowships in professional engineering societies, such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA).
- 4. All requests for SM status must be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and the Dean of the Graduate College. The teaching effectiveness of graduate faculty serving as SM will be evaluated by the Graduate Studies Committee by obtaining feedback periodically from students in the class. The effectiveness of mentorship and service of graduate faculty serving as SM will be evaluated using graduate student exit surveys and exit interviews.

E. Duration of Appointments

All regular RM1 through RM4 appointments shall be for a maximum of seven years. Appointments for durations shorter than a seven-year term may be recommended by the AME Graduate Faculty Committee. SM appointments that include authority to chair committees and/or count toward the departmental majority shall be for a maximum of five years; all other SM appointments shall be for a maximum of two years.