Appointment as Graduate Program Director

Responsible University Officer(s):

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

Policy Owner(s):

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Policy contact(s):

Kelly Burke

Date Revised:
August 1, 2018, May 1, 2020.

Effective Date:
August 1, 2018

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Every graduate program must have a Graduate Program Director, appointed by the unit dean after consultation with the department head and program faculty.

2. Appointments are for three-year terms; appointments may be renewed in three-year increments provided evaluations are positive.

3. A tenured graduate faculty member in an appropriate field is eligible to serve as Graduate Program Director.

4. Deans or their designated representatives may, with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, assign the role Graduate Program Director to an individual who is not otherwise eligible under this standard.

5. Units may develop additional criteria consistent with this policy.

6. Each Unit must have a set of publicly available written statements regarding the position of Graduate Program Director, which will include:

    a. a description of the Director's responsibilities and reporting lines;

    b. the standards for selection and evaluation of the Director (evaluation must include input from the Graduate School);

    c. the process for selecting the Director and approving the appointment, including effective involvement of program faculty;

    d. the process for removing a Director, including consultation with the Graduate School and program faculty where appropriate.

7. All programs not housed within a single unit must specify in the program's Memorandum of Understanding which dean will appoint the Graduate Program Director and what process will be used to nominate program faculty for the position.

REASON FOR POLICY

The faculty Graduate Program Director represents the program to faculty governance bodies, takes a leadership role in maintaining program quality and effectiveness, and communicates with deans and/or the Graduate School about the program's larger concerns. The Graduate Program Director conducts or coordinates periodic program assessment to ensure that the program's curriculum, content, and pedagogy are appropriate and current.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The Graduate Program Director (GPD) is the primary responsible party for graduate education in the department or program and serves as the liaison with the Graduate School. The Graduate School works collaboratively with GPDs on all matters relating

to graduate education in the program. **The GPD is required to maintain complete and confidential academic records on all graduate students**. Other responsibilities include:

Admission and Recruitment:
- The GPD is responsible for establishing and maintaining department admissions standards, which must be consistent with Graduate School admission policies;
- Is responsible for making recommendations for admission to the Graduate School or for delegating this responsibility;
- Serves as chair of departmental graduate recruiting, admissions, and fellowship committees—or delegates such responsibilities where appropriate.

Advising:
- The GPD is responsible for the coordination of advising; departmental practice after initial advising varies: in some departments the GPD remains the advisor until a chair is chosen; in others, faculty advisors are assigned;
- Communicates with the Graduate School on requests including, but not limited to, transfer of graduate credit, advanced standing, leaves of absence, reinstatements, extensions of time, and information on students in academic difficulty.

Advocacy:
- The GPD is the advocate for the needs of new and continuing graduate students and degree program(s), both within and outside the department;
- Works with Graduate School personnel on cases involving student complaints and grievances, student conduct, students in psychological difficulty, and other issues;
- Is responsible for seeking representation on the Graduate Student Association by September 1 of each academic year.

Communication:
- The GPD forwards relevant announcements that are sent by the Graduate School or the university to department/program faculty and graduate students.

Degree Completion:
- The GPD serves as the final authority in certifying the Plan of Study prior to submission to the Graduate School for final audit and degree clearance.

Departmental Requirements:
- The GPD is responsible for periodic review of Curricular Requirements;
- Ensures that departmental academic requirements are explicitly communicated to students, especially on the department's website including but not limited to:
    - ✓ the total minimum number of credits and the total number of courses (both specifically required and elective) required for the degree
    - ✓ course numbers and titles of all specifically required courses
    - ✓ whether S/U courses count toward the degree, and if so, the limit (if any)
    - ✓ whether remedial (prerequisite) courses count toward the degree, and if so, the limit (if any)
    - ✓ the specific rules for good academic standing.
- The Graduate School also recommends that departments post their student handbooks in PDF format online and keep them updated as new editions appear.

Evaluation:
- The GPD evaluates each student's academic progress and standing each semester and ensures that students remain informed of degree requirements and expected milestones.
- Satisfactory performance in the Graduate School also involves maintaining the standards of academic progress and professional integrity expected in a particular discipline or program. Failure to maintain the standards set out in a student's departmental or program handbook may result in dismissal of the student from the program.

Fellowships and Funding:
- The GPD alerts students of departmental, disciplinary, and professional fellowships and research opportunities, and encourages them to apply;
- Nominates entering and continuing students for fellowships;
- Reports all received student funding to The Graduate School, including all internal and external awards;
- Pursues development opportunities.

Policy and Compliance:
- The GPD is the official departmental or program interpreter of Graduate School rules and regulations. Please contact the Graduate School if you are uncertain about how to interpret a specific Graduate School policy;
- Ensures that departmental practices and guidelines conform to Graduate School and university policy.