

# Graduate Faculty Membership Criteria

## School of Computer Science

### University of Oklahoma

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*Any academic unit offering courses or coursework in any College awarding an undergraduate degree on the Norman campus may appoint members of the Graduate Faculty. To make such an appointment, the academic unit must elect a Graduate Faculty Committee made up of members of the Graduate Faculty.*

—Graduate Faculty Charter, IV.1.a

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The Graduate Faculty Committee for the School of Computer Science (hereinafter “CS” or “the School”) shall consist of the members of the Graduate Studies Committee who shall be elected by the School’s faculty. The committee shall consist of at least three members of the School’s regular faculty with appointments to the OU Graduate Faculty at the highest level (RM4 under the current system; M3 under the prior system), including the School’s Graduate Liaison who shall chair both committees and must satisfy these same criteria. The size of both committees shall be determined by the School’s Director on an annual basis.

The following criteria are to be used by the Graduate Faculty Committee to determine the eligibility of OU faculty to be appointed as Graduate Faculty members, to teach graduate courses, and to direct and serve as committee members for PhD dissertations and MS theses. For the purposes of interpreting this document, the faculty members of the School include the members of the CS faculty with a full-time appointment in a tenure-track position or a ranked-renewable position, adjunct professors, and visiting professors.

#### **Terminal Degree(s):**

The terminal degree accepted is a research-based doctoral degree in computer science or a closely related field such as software engineering, computer engineering, electrical engineering, engineering education, data science, or mathematics.

#### **Tested Experience Criteria:**

Candidates who do not have a doctoral degree will be evaluated as the need arises. Candidates without a terminal degree must show evidence of at least one of the following:

- National or international recognition of their research accomplishments related to computer science. Such recognition may include leadership of significant research or development initiatives, major externally funded projects, widely adopted software

systems, patents, invited keynote presentations, or comparable evidence of professional impact.

- At least five years of research, development, or other professional application of advanced (graduate-level) computer science knowledge or techniques in positions that do not permit extensive publication.

**Term:**

The normal term for regular members (RM0-RM4 status) of the CS Graduate Faculty is seven years. The normal term for special members (SM status) of the CS Graduate Faculty is two years.

**Appointment Criteria:**

The numerical examples provided in this document are illustrative benchmarks and not strict minimum requirements. Expectations for ranked-renewable or teaching-track faculty shall be interpreted in light of the primary duties of the appointment while maintaining standards appropriate to the graduate privilege level sought. The Graduate Faculty Committee shall evaluate research, scholarship, and creative activity holistically, taking into account quality, impact, authorship role, funding activity, and norms of the relevant subfield.

RM0 – May teach graduate classes

- Research, scholarship, or creative activity required: Terminal degree or tested experience, as described above.
- Other Criteria: If terminal degree or tested experience is more than five years in the past, evidence of capability with the current state of relevant accepted computer science knowledge is required. An example of such evidence is instruction of graduate-level computer science courses with annual evaluations consistently at or above the level of “Good, Meets Expectations” during the previous five years.

RM1 – All the privileges of RM0 and may serve on master’s committees

- Research, scholarship, or creative activity required: Terminal degree or tested experience, as described above. If terminal degree or tested experience is more than five years in the past, evidence of some ongoing computer science research-related scholarship or creative activity is required. Such evidence may include publications, software products, portfolio items, or performances. An example of such evidence is at least one publication during the past five years in a national or international archival journal or conference publication subject to full-paper peer review.
- For ranked-renewable or teaching-track faculty, eligibility may be demonstrated through sustained graduate teaching excellence and continued professional engagement in the computer science discipline over the previous five years. Professional engagement may include curriculum leadership, development of substantial instructional materials, applied technical contributions, industry collaboration, or other documented professional activity reflecting current expertise.

- Other Criteria: None.

RM2 – All the privileges of RM1 and may chair non-thesis master’s committees\*

- Research, scholarship, or creative activity required: Terminal degree or tested experience, as described above. Evidence of at least moderate ongoing computer science research-related scholarship or creative activity is required. Such evidence may include publications, software products, portfolio items, or performances. An example of such evidence is at least two publications during the past five years in national or international archival journals or conference subject to full-paper peer review.
- For ranked-renewable or teaching-track faculty, eligibility may be demonstrated through sustained excellence in graduate instruction together with documented professional activity within the previous five years. Such activity may include significant applied technical contributions, industry leadership, externally funded instructional or applied projects, development of widely adopted instructional materials or software systems, professional certifications, or comparable evidence of continued disciplinary engagement.
- Other Criteria: None.

RM3 – All the privileges of RM2 and may serve on doctoral committees and/or chair master’s thesis committees\*

- Research, scholarship, or creative activity required: Terminal degree or tested experience, as described above. Evidence of substantial ongoing computer science research or creative activity is required. Such evidence may include publications, software products, portfolio items, or performances. An example of such evidence is at least three publications during the past five years in national or international archival journal or conference subject to full-paper peer review. Sustained effort to obtain competitive external research funding may be considered as additional evidence of substantial or abundant research activity.
- For ranked-renewable or teaching-track faculty, eligibility requires sustained excellence in graduate instruction and at least one peer-reviewed archival publication or equivalent scholarly contribution within the previous five years. Equivalent contributions may include substantial refereed conference papers, scholarly publications in computing education, significant applied research publications, or other documented scholarly outputs subject to peer review.
- Other Criteria: Must consistently meet or exceed expectations in supporting and mentoring graduate student advisees, as documented through annual evaluations and graduate program review processes.

RM4 – All the privileges of RM3 and may chair doctoral committees\*

- Research, scholarship, or creative activity Required: Terminal degree or tested experience, as described above. Evidence of abundant ongoing computer science research or creative activity is required. Such evidence may include publications, software products, portfolio items, or performances. An example of such evidence is at

least five publications during the past five years in national or international archival journal or conference subject to full-paper peer review. Sustained effort to obtain competitive external research funding may be considered as additional evidence of substantial or abundant research activity.

- For ranked-renewable or teaching-track faculty, eligibility requires sustained excellence in graduate instruction and at least two peer-reviewed archival publications (or equivalent scholarly contributions) within the previous five years. In addition, the faculty member must demonstrate ongoing engagement with current research or applied scholarship sufficient to supervise doctoral research at the highest level.
- Other Criteria: Must consistently meet or exceed expectations in supporting and mentoring graduate student advisees, as documented through annual evaluations and graduate program review processes.

\*Appointments of SM faculty to chair committees and/or count toward the departmental majority require review by the Graduate Council Graduate Faculty Membership Subcommittee and approval of the Graduate Dean, based on three criteria: close association with the unit hosting the graduate program, permanence, and credentials comparable to regular Graduate Faculty members with the same graduate privileges.

### **Special Membership Appointments:**

All requests for special membership to the CS Graduate Faculty will be reviewed by the CS Graduate Faculty Committee and appointments will be made for a specific period of time, usually two years. It is expected that these requests will come from the following faculty members:

- Part-time instructors with an MS degree may be asked to teach beginning graduate-level courses.
- Visiting faculty members with a full-time appointment may be granted the privilege of teaching graduate-level courses, serving on master's and doctoral committees, directing master's theses, and co-directing dissertations, provided that they are expected to remain at OU for the anticipated duration of the obligation. For example, if the anticipated time to degree completion of a doctoral student is five years, the visiting faculty member would only be granted the privilege of co-directing the student's dissertation if the visiting faculty member is expected to remain at OU for five years or more.
- Affiliated faculty members may be granted the privilege of teaching graduate-level courses, serving on master's thesis or doctoral dissertation committees, and directing theses and dissertations, provided that they are expected to remain at OU for the anticipated duration of the obligation.
- Emeritus faculty members may be granted the privilege of teaching graduate-level courses, serving on master's thesis or doctoral dissertation committees, and co-directing theses and dissertations, provided that they are expected to remain at OU for the anticipated duration of the obligation.

### Continuing Research, Scholarly, or Creative Activity:

- The primary evidence of scholarship that is required to maintain the status of a dissertation-directing graduate faculty member will consist of the equivalent of approximately five published research-based articles in refereed scientific or technical journals, or full-paper refereed archival conferences, within the most recent five-year period. Research-relevant software products, portfolio items, or performances may also be considered, as may review articles and research-based presentations at regional, national, or international scientific and technical meetings. In subfields where publication rates are lower but venues are highly selective, evaluation shall emphasize quality, selectivity, and scholarly impact rather than raw publication counts.
- In addition, graduate faculty who have already directed dissertations will be judged on their performance with respect to the level of guidance given to students and the timely completion of the dissertation.

### Teaching and Mentorship Expectations:

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*As teachers, faculty members encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. Faculty members demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Faculty members make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between faculty member and student. They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them. They protect their academic freedom.*

—Faculty Handbook, 3.2.2, Academic Responsibility

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All graduate faculty are required to uphold the standards set forth in the Faculty Handbook regarding Academic Responsibility.

**Teaching Expectations:** Graduate faculty who teach graduate courses are expected to satisfy all teaching standards set forth in the School's Procedures for Tenure, Promotion, and Annual Faculty Review.

**Mentorship Expectations:** Graduate faculty who advise graduate students are expected to satisfy all mentorship standards set forth in the School's Procedures for Tenure, Promotion, and Annual Faculty Review. In addition, chairs of master's thesis and doctoral committees (hereinafter "advisors") are obligated to meet the highest

practicable standards in advising and mentoring graduate students under their supervision.

Advisors must:

- set the tone for and work to establish the culture of the research environment, making it a place of equity, belonging, and inclusion,
- regularly and frequently instruct, advise, mentor, and guide advisees in their academic, research, and professional development as appropriate for the stage of their career, and
- provide clear and regular input and feedback regarding advisee progress toward degree completion, and periodic evaluation of advisee performance as required by School policies.

Prospective advisors must set clear and explicit expectations for prospective advisees with respect to:

- the nature and type(s) of research and scholarship the advisor is interested in and willing to support,
- the nature and type(s) of support that the advisor will provide,
- the quantity and quality of research and scholarship required for thesis/dissertation completion and defense,
- background skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary for research success,
- skills, knowledge, and competencies to be acquired during the course of research and scholarship,
- the pace at which the advisee is expected to progress through the program, and
- other obligations and expectations of the advisee with respect to their advisor and the advisor's other advisees.

In addition, advisors must work with each advisee to:

- establish timelines for progress with respect to degree steps and milestones (e.g., completion of General Examination, completion of thesis/dissertation chapters/drafts),
- determine committee membership for thesis, advisory, and/or doctoral committees and establish roles and responsibilities of each committee member including expected time periods for input/feedback regarding student work<sup>1</sup>,
- monitor and maintain progress toward degree completion.

### **Regular Performance Review:**

All Graduate Faculty will be reviewed annually in accordance with the School's Procedures for Tenure, Promotion, and Annual Faculty Review as supplemented herein. For regular members

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<sup>1</sup> These roles and responsibilities need to be determined in conjunction with and agreed to by the committee members and must conform to Graduate College guidelines.

of the School's faculty, this review will take place as part of the annual evaluation conducted by Committee A, which will confer with the Graduate Faculty Committee as necessary to ensure complete and accurate evaluation of teaching and/or mentorship at the graduate level. For other faculty who have been granted Graduate Faculty status in CS (e.g., affiliated faculty, emeritus faculty, visiting faculty, part-time instructors), this review will be conducted by the Graduate Faculty Committee solely with respect to the faculty member's graduate teaching and/or mentorship in the School.

This review will result in a written assessment from the reviewing committee regarding the faculty member in question using the same performance scale used for annual evaluations and will include narrative feedback justifying the performance rating assigned. This assessment will be provided to the faculty member as well as be retained by the School for a period of no less than seven years.

### **Retention/Renewal Criteria and Process:**

Retention and renewal of Graduate Faculty status will be based on consistently meeting or exceeding expectations in annual evaluations of Graduate Faculty teaching and/or mentorship as appropriate for the Graduate Faculty status sought/held, as well as on satisfying appointment criteria as outlined herein. Renewal decisions shall consider the faculty member's overall record relative to appointment level and subfield norms.

### **Standards and Process for Rescission of Graduate Faculty Appointments or Selected Privileges:**

Rescission of Graduate Faculty Appointments or Selected Privileges shall follow policies and procedures described by the Graduate College as follows:

#### **(A) GROUNDS FOR RESCISSION OF GRADUATE FACULTY STATUS**

As outlined in the Graduate Faculty Charter (Article IV, Section 3.c.), in "certain cases, such as those of professional incompetence, dishonesty, or failure to fulfill professional duties related to Graduate Faculty membership, a member may have some or all privileges on the Graduate Faculty rescinded prior to the end of the term of appointment. This is an exceptional event and should be undertaken only after other administrative remedies have failed."

Possible grounds for rescission of a Graduate Faculty appointment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) scholarly misconduct, as defined in the Faculty Handbook (section 3.26.1);

- (2) failure to fulfill a Graduate Faculty member's academic and/or graduate mentoring responsibilities (academic responsibility is defined in Faculty Handbook section 3.2.2 and in the introductory section of this policy document);
- (3) failure to adhere to Graduate College policies or University policies relating to graduate education.

#### (B) INITIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

When reasons arise to question an individual's Graduate Faculty status, the circumstances should be brought to the attention of the appropriate administrative officer(s) (i.e., Chair or Director of the unit, Graduate Liaison, Academic Dean, or Graduate Dean) who shall ordinarily investigate the matter to include, among other things, meeting with the Graduate Faculty member in person to discuss the matter, unless reasonably prevented from doing so. If after investigation, the administrative officer determines the conduct warrants rescission of Graduate Faculty status, he/she shall convey the matter and a recommendation to the Graduate Dean. However, if he/she determines the conduct does not warrant a change in Graduate Faculty status, then the matter may be resolved by mutual consent.

#### (C) DECISION BY THE GRADUATE DEAN

Following the initial administrative review, the Graduate Dean will conduct a thorough review of the matter, including the Graduate Faculty member's conduct, pertinent Graduate College and University policies, and the unit's published criteria for Graduate Faculty membership. During this investigation, the Graduate Dean may conduct additional interviews and seek additional documentation.

If at any point the Graduate Dean discovers possible violations of law or other university policies, the Graduate Dean will refer the matter to the appropriate officials.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Graduate Dean will issue a report of the decision to the Graduate Faculty member, Chair or Director of the unit, Graduate Liaison, Academic Dean, and Provost. If the decision is not to rescind Graduate Faculty privileges, then the matter will be considered resolved. If the decision is to rescind some or all privileges of Graduate Faculty membership, then the changes in privileges will be implemented immediately. Privileges that have been rescinded through this process cannot be reinstated by an academic unit without approval of the Graduate Dean.

#### (D) APPEALS

The Graduate Dean's decision may be appealed by any of the parties involved through the University of Oklahoma-Norman Campus Procedure for Appeal of Graduate Faculty Status.

**Adoption:**

Adopted by Computer Science Faculty, March 2026

Approved by graduate dean, March 2026