



NMSU GRADUATE FACULTY MANUAL



DECEMBER 4, 2025

PREPARED AND APPROVED BY THE NMSU GRADUATE FACULTY COUNCIL

NMSU Graduate Faculty Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide broad guidance and technical details about what is required to serve as a Graduate Faculty member, as well as information on how to advise students to help them achieve their degree and succeed in their NMSU graduate work and beyond. As graduate faculty, we have responsibilities and duties related to working with one another and with students. Holding graduate faculty status provides an opportunity to guide and advise students using insights and resources that go beyond the scope of our personal graduate school experiences.

Faculty Mentoring and Advising

The advising (i.e., mentorship) of graduate students by NMSU Graduate Faculty is a privilege and a serious responsibility. Effective academic guidance is a cornerstone of successful graduate education. The role of an advisor as mentor is vital to the intellectual excellence and vitality of any academic program. Furthermore, advising is imperative for the effective inclusion of historically underrepresented groups in education, scholarship, service, and the launching of successful careers both within and beyond higher education. For the university faculty, it is key to sustaining a graduate program that enhances the intellectual community and the faculty member's own research and scholarly agenda.

Degree advisors are responsible for supporting the scholarly and professional development of their students. This mentorship role requires careful attentiveness to the goals of the individual graduate student, constructive counsel, regular meetings, and timely feedback. Additionally, mentors should be knowledgeable in providing advice on course selection, program requirements, scholarly presentations, and academic publications. In most instances the role of research advisor, mentor, and Committee Chair are fulfilled by one individual. When the advisor/mentor is not also the Chair of the Committee, the advisor and the Chair must communicate regularly and work collaboratively to guide the student through the degree process.

Graduate advising includes the recognition of mentoring as an active process by which faculty members foster structured, trusting relationships with graduate students by offering guidance, support, and encouragement aimed at developing students' competence and character. Graduate faculty mentors listen actively to student concerns and care about their student's personal and professional well-being. As mentors, we aim to assist graduate students in developing their strengths, working through challenges, achieving academic excellence, and guiding them to professional advancement in their chosen career paths. Mentors act as advocates and role models for their mentees and are committed to helping their students meet personal and professional goals. While graduate students should be encouraged to develop a network of mentors, the primary advisor is expected to play a leading mentorship role.

Effective advisors strive to:

- Understand and respect that each graduate student brings different perspectives, experiences, and interests.
- Communicate clearly and frequently with the student about expectations and responsibilities, ensuring that with each communication there is mutual understanding.

- Assist the student in developing a timeline for completing academic requirements and meeting professional goals.
- Develop a semester-by-semester contract to confirm with students a process to review progress, establish goals, address challenges, and develop future plans.
- Encourage openness about any challenges or difficulties that impact the graduate experience, and work with the student to resolve barriers and identify resources for support.
 - [Graduate Calendar](#)
 - [Graduate Forms](#)
 - [Steps to Graduating](#)
- Encourage students to inform the mentor immediately if assigned tasks are unclear or if they have no prior experience or require assistance with the tasks.
- Listen to and support a student’s scholarly and professional goals.
- Be knowledgeable about departmental and Graduate School policies.
- Be aware of how institutional resources can provide support to students in times of academic, professional, and personal challenges and consult these resources for further guidance when advising students.
- Be actively engaged in preparing students for future careers inside and beyond the academy.

It is strongly recommended that all advisors work with their students to prepare an Individual Professional Development Plan and a Mentoring Plan. The plan is a required component of many agency applications such as NSF). Many discipline-specific templates can be retrieved online with the query “IDP graduate student your discipline”. Sample templates may be found here:

- NIH <https://www.nigms.nih.gov/training/strategicplanimplementationblueprint/Pages/IndividualDevelopmentPlans>
- APA <https://www.apa.org/education-career/guide/individual-development-plan>
- AJMoodie(https://andrewjmoodie.com/assets/files/mentoring_plan_template.pdf)
- Engineering https://engineering.purdue.edu/Engr/Academics/Graduate/CurrentGraduateStudents/IDP/Individual-Development-Plan_PhD_Version-1.2.pdf
- Humanities <https://grad.uiowa.edu/grad-success/humanities-idp-resources>

Some excellent resources on graduate mentoring and mentoring include the following:

- [Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#) published by Brown University,
- [Mentoring Resources](#) published by the Council of Graduate Schools
- [How to Mentor Graduate Students](#) published by the University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School
- The Science of Effective Mentoring in STEM (<https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/the-science-of-effective-mentoring-in-stemm>).
- Developing Mutually Beneficial Mentor-Mentee Relationships ([Video Link](#))

Graduate Assistantships and Credit Hours

Research credit hours and Graduate Assistant hours are tracked separately. It is recommended that faculty and students discuss the expectations for each activity and develop a mutually agreed upon written plan.

- Assistantship hours and expectations should align with the Graduate Union requirements.
- Graduate students should receive an award letter as specified by [Collective Bargaining Agreement \(CBA\)](#) and contractual expectations.
- Credit hours are variable and separate from assistantship hours.
 - Advisors and students should discuss and agree upon the work hours and activities undertaken for research credit according to the guidelines specified in ARP 4.23, 4.63 Credit Hour Calculation (<https://arp.nmsu.edu/index.html>)

Ethics and Conflicts Management

Integrity

Graduate faculty should ensure graduate students are aware of the University statements of academic integrity: ARP 5.10 (Academic Integrity & 11.3 Addressing Allegations of Misconduct in Research (<https://arp.nmsu.edu/index.html>) as well as any documents that may be disseminated by their individual departments

Graduate faculty need to communicate the following to their students.

- Integrity in research should be based on **honesty**, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Both the mentor and the mentee should be communicating their research in a transparent way.
- Graduate faculty will advise students in academics and on the ethics of the profession; encourage the practice of ethical and responsible conduct in research, scholarship, and publication; and assist students in addressing ethical issues.
- Upon registration into the graduate program, the mentor should make the student aware of university and departmental policies regarding the conduct of research and rights in data, intellectual property and publications developed during thesis/dissertation research.
- Graduate faculty have a responsibility to teach their students about acknowledging the scholarly contributions of others in the literature and about reporting their scientific or artistic findings in accurate forms, preserving the integrity of the research record.
- It is recommended that all graduate students complete a course in ethics and integrity, ideally through a departmental course offering. Alternatively online courses can be completed through NMSU's CITI Program membership (<https://about.citiprogram.org/>) or by attendance at a professional society workshop.

Harassment and Discrimination

Graduate faculty must adhere to the university policy on sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and discrimination. Violations of these policies will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

Reports/complaints of alleged harassment and/or discriminatory conduct at NMSU should be made to the [Office of Institutional Equity \(OIE\)](#). OIE will work with other NMSU departments, units and colleges, to take necessary steps to protect the NMSU community from harassment and/or discriminatory conduct including, but not limited to, the following: restricting access to campus facilities for individuals engaging in this conduct, requiring training, written notice, and all other steps necessary to stop the conduct and prevent recurrence.

Graduate faculty who are found by OIE to have violated these policies and conducted an action of harassment and/or discrimination on or off campus will be subject to consequences including termination from the graduate faculty and/or removal as thesis/ dissertation mentor or committee member.

Graduate faculty should review the university policy on prohibition of all forms of unlawful discrimination. The policy is located online at: ARP 3.25 Prohibition of All Forms of Unlawful Discrimination (<https://arp.nmsu.edu/index.html>).

Co-authoring with Students

Because of the usual intense and dynamic interaction between the mentor and the student, there is anticipation that research may lead to joint publication(s). Before the start of any research effort, it is recommended that the collaborating faculty and student(s) discuss the planned workload and preliminary order of authorship in line with the standards of their field, as well as any intellectual property considerations (Guidelines on Authorship in Scholarly or Scientific Publications, Brown University, <https://division-research.brown.edu/research-cycle/conduct-research/ethics-research/guidelines-authorship-scholarly-or-scientific>)

Procedures for Graduate Defenses

Graduate School Dean's Representative Duties During Oral Exams

A representative of the Graduate School, also known as the Dean's Representative, is required for all graduate student oral examinations, including Comprehensive Exams and Final Defenses for a Thesis or Dissertation. The Dean's Representative must be a member of the Graduate Faculty and must *not* be from the student's home department. There are two main responsibilities of the Dean's Representative: (1) ensure the integrity of the examination process and (2) ensure that the exam was fair to the student. The Dean's representative does not need to have any knowledge of the student's discipline, and to maintain an unbiased perspective, should not have a vested interest in the student's research.

For the oral examination:

- The Dean's Representative will call the oral examination to order.
 - If a thesis or dissertation is presented, the Dean's representative shall determine that the thesis is in final draft form and examinable as required.
- It is the responsibility of the student and their research advisor to bring the thesis or dissertation into a final presentable form according to the provision of the Graduate School (<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/current-students/graduating-thesis-and-dissertation-students.html>).

- The decision that the thesis or dissertation is in final form and ready to be presented must be made by the research advisor.
- If the thesis or dissertation is found not to be in such form, the examination shall be adjourned, and the Dean of the Graduate School shall be notified immediately.
- It is the responsibility of the Dean's Representative to see that the ground rules are discussed and understood by all present for the examination. This is achieved by asking the student to leave the room while the committee discusses the appropriate procedures to follow in relation to discipline's practices for the exam.
- Following this discussion, when the student returns to the meeting, the Dean's representative yields the chair role to the student's advisor who is typically the Chair of the Committee. The major adviser assumes the chair and is responsible for presiding over the exam of the candidate.
- Each member of the committee shall be given sufficient time and opportunity to question the candidate.
- After completion of the question segment of the oral exam, the student's chair yields to the Dean's Representative to resume the final process of the exam. After excusing the student to wait outside the examining room, a general discussion of the examination and the candidate's performance should be allowed and encouraged before the voting process commences by the committee.
- The Dean's Representative will direct the committee in the voting process related to the vote forms provided by the NMSU Graduate School for the examination.
- At the end of the voting process, the Dean's Representative is responsible for determining the result of the vote, announcing the outcome, and completing the requisite forms related to the Report of the Examination Committee and Dean's Certificate.
- The Dean's Representative is responsible for delivery of the exam's outcome along with the Dean's Certificate and all ballot documentation to the Office of the Graduate School, either in person or electronically.

Process for Obtaining Graduate Faculty Status

To obtain Graduate Faculty Status, follow these steps

<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/obtaining-graduate-faculty-status.html>:

- 1. Read:** [Graduate Faculty Status Nomination Process](#)
- 2. Complete:** [Grad Faculty Status Nomination Form](#)
- 3. Combine:** **Nomination Form and CV into one PDF**

- The faculty member initiates the process by completing Section I and emails the form, including the CV, to the Department Head and the Dean of the College.
- The department head completes Section II writing a recommendation speaking to the faculty member's scholarly productivity. In doing so, the department head anchors the nomination with a review of the last three years' Annual Performance Review (APR).

- The metric that must be met for further review is “meeting or exceeding expectations” in research or creative productivity the last three years. This evaluation MUST match the expectations and evaluation criteria set forth in the Department’s Functions and Criteria Statement and agree with the allocation of effort of the faculty member. A simple statement to this effect in the nomination form from the department head is sufficient.
- If the faculty member is a newly hired faculty member that does not have three years of APRs on file, the department head bases nomination on the candidate’s record to date in accordance with the Department’s Functions and Criteria Statement. A similar process is to be followed in the review of applications for renewed Graduate Faculty status for emeritus faculty members.
- The department head emails the nomination form with a current version of the faculty member’s CV to the College Dean. The College Dean approves the request if he or she feels the case being made is adequate and emails the packet to the Graduate School at thegradschool@nmsu.edu or returns the nomination packet to the department head if she or he does not feel the case being made is adequate to warrant a recommendation to nominate the faculty for graduate faculty status.
- In the case of department head seeking new or renewed status, the Dean of the College within which the relevant department resides completes the nomination. The nomination is based on the dean’s evaluation of the department head’s scholarship record, considering the administrative load of the Department Head.
- After the initial appointment, the qualifications of each graduate faculty member will be automatically renewed based on the graduate faculty performance on the annual performance review as evaluated by the department head and approved by the cognizant dean. Department heads will notify the dean of the Graduate School in the case of performance concerns of graduate faculty and initiate a full review process that includes the Graduate Council standing committee on Graduate Faculty Appointments and the dean of the Graduate School.
- The Graduate Faculty Review Committee reviews the application and the faculty member’s CV and submits a decision on the nomination that considers the broad record of the faculty member, and their situation as either a newly hired faculty, College Faculty, Emeritus faculty, department head, or outside applicant. This recommendation is forwarded to the Graduate Dean for the final determination of the nomination.
- The process proposed above has three stages of completion– the department head’s letter of nomination, the College Dean’s recommendation, and the recommendation of the Graduate Faculty Review Committee. This review and approval process provides adequate checks and balances and is consistent with the APR and DH evaluation processes.
- Individuals outside of NMSU can apply for graduate faculty status to serve on student committees with limited privileges. Individuals outside NMSU are not allowed to serve as committee chair or graduate dean’s representative. The nomination process and requirements align with those for NMSU faculty without APR submission.

Important dates

Faculty and students should be aware of deadlines to file Application for Degree, hold thesis or dissertation exam, submit thesis or dissertation to ProQuest, etc. The current dates can be found in the NMSU Graduate School Calendar:

<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/current-students/graduate-school-calendar.html>

Graduate forms

<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/current-students/graduate-forms.html>

Awards and Funding

<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/scholarships-and-tuition/awards-and-funding.html>

FAQ

<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/current-students/faq.html>

Document Revision Date: 11/03/2025

- *Prepared and approved by the NMSU Graduate Faculty Council. A current roster can be found here: <https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/faculty-and-staff/graduate-faculty-council.html>.*