4.11 Status Appointments

1. **Appointment to Graduate Faculty Status**

Nominations for graduate faculty membership are initiated by academic departments through the appropriate dean, reviewed and recommended by the Graduate School, including the Graduate Council and Dean of the Graduate School, and approved by the Provost. All graduate courses must be taught by graduate faculty appointed to do so by a specific department. According to SACS requirements, graduate faculty members may only teach courses bearing designators for which they have been specifically approved.

1. Status Membership Categories
2. **Full Membership** Criteria (Five Year Term)
3. Associate or full professor on tenure track appointment; or
4. Assistant professor with earned doctorate or appropriate terminal degree on tenure track appointment; or
5. Endowed professor.
6. Additional requirements: Each person approved for full membership in the graduate faculty must have been involved in the following activities within the five-year period immediately preceding approval.
7. Teaching graduate students in courses numbered 500 and above, or chairing graduate student theses/dissertations, or supervising graduate student research, independent studies, internships, field studies, or practica;

**AND**

1. Engaging in research as evidenced through scholarly work or creative endeavors of an equivalent nature appropriate to the discipline as defined by the department Collegial Review Document.
2. Graduate education activities permitted by full membership:
3. Chairing thesis/dissertation committees
4. Membership on thesis/dissertation committees
5. Teaching courses 500 or above
6. Supervising independent studies and research
7. **Regular Membership** Criteria (3 year term)
8. Associate or full professor on a tenure track appointment; or
9. Assistant professor with earned doctorate or appropriate terminal degree on tenure track appointment; or
10. Other persons who hold at least a master’s degree plus five years of qualifying professional experience that meets SAC’s credential requirements and who are elected by the graduate faculty of the appropriate department or discipline, approved by the dean of the academic college and the Dean of the Graduate School. Nominations are endorsed by the academic dean of the college, reviewed by the Graduate Council, and recommended by the Dean of the Graduate School. The applicant will be notified of appointment by the Dean of the Graduate School
11. Additional requirements: Each person approved for regular membership in the graduate faculty must have been involved in the following activities within the four year period immediately preceding selection:
12. Teaching graduate students in courses numbered 500 and above, or supervising graduate student research, independent studies, internships, field studies, or practica;

**OR**

1. Engaging in research or creative endeavors appropriate to the discipline as defined by the department Collegial Review Document.
2. Graduate education activities permitted by regular membership:
3. Membership on thesis/dissertation committees
4. Teaching courses 500 or above
5. Supervising independent studies or research
6. **Associate Membership** Criteria
7. Persons of qualifying professional experience, including Professors of Practice, who do not meet the criteria for full or regular membership, may be selected on a temporary basis as non-voting members of the graduate faculty upon recommendation of the appropriate department based on criteria reflected in the department Collegial Review Document.
8. Professor of Practice. Appointments to the rank of “Professor of Practice of\_\_\_\_\_” are equivalent to Adjunct appointments and are made only to eminently qualified academic, business, or government leaders who have made major impacts, reflective of SAC’s alternative credentials, on fields and disciplines important to the programs at Western Carolina University and who demonstrate a deep commitment to teaching and scholarship. Because of the stature of these individuals, this category has only one rank (Professor); Adjunct appointments should be made to less senior individuals. *(See University Policy 6—Adjunct and Affiliate Faculty Appointments for Professor of Practice responsibilities).*
9. Associate members may be appointed for a term of one session, one semester, or one-to- three years upon the nomination/recommendation of the appropriate department head and dean.
10. Graduate education activities permitted by associate membership:
11. Membership of thesis/dissertation committees
12. Teaching courses numbered 500 or above
13. Supervising internships or practica.
14. Processes for Recommending and Approving Graduate Faculty Membership
15. **Tenure-track; Endowed Professor; Professor of Practice Appointments**: Upon hiring, the department head and dean indicate on the AA21 whether or not the candidate is recommended for full, regular, or associate graduate faculty membership. The Student Services Specialist reviews the AA21 forms on the share drive and submits the new hires recommended for graduate faculty membership to the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council will review and make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School. Where needed, graduate faculty membership approval should be secured prior to contract issuance. In the event that Graduate Council is not meeting regularly, the Dean of the Graduate School and College Dean will meet to consult and determine whether Graduate Faculty status is approved.
16. **Adjunct/Full-time, Fixed Term/Affiliate Appointments**: Upon hiring, the department head and dean indicate on the contract whether or not the candidate is recommended for associate graduate faculty membership. Each dean’s office submits a list of adjunct/fixed term/affiliate faculty recommended for associate graduate faculty membership to the Student Services Specialist in the Graduate School at least one month prior to the start of each semester. The Graduate Council will review and make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School
17. **Other Appointments:** Persons of qualifying professional experience—typically external to the university—who do not meet the criteria for full or regular graduate faculty membership may be recommended by the appropriate department head and dean for associate graduate faculty status through the nomination process established by the Graduate School. (See Graduate Faculty Status Form).
18. **Continuing Membership:** Full, regular, and associate graduate faculty membership is normally reviewed at the end of the appointed term (see 1. a. b. &c. above), and where appropriate, in conjunction with the Annual Faculty Evaluation (AFE) process. A separate Academic Affairs (AA) form is submitted to the Graduate School office as needed, recommending continuance, change, or termination, of graduate faculty membership. If neither a, b, c (see above) applies, or the Graduate Faculty status needs to change—a candidate may be submitted for consideration using the Graduate Faculty Status Form. For associate status members not subject to the AFE process, the term of membership will correspond to that period indicated on the initial nomination form, unless or until recommended otherwise by the appropriate department head and dean.