

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2026

Approved May 5, 2026

1. Call to Order

Called to order at 1:04pm by Chair McLean.

2. Roll Call

Present:

Allen, Belim, Bergiel, Boyd, Bryan, Buzon, Chen, Council (proxy), Elias, Ellison, Elman, Fleming, Green, Griffin, Hadley, Harte, Hildebrandt, Hopper, Ivory, Janzen, Kazeem, Khan, Kimbrel, Koczkas, Maggiano, Mendes, Moon, Ofoe, Peralta, Riker, Ruffin, Shelnut, Sicignano, Swift, Viswanath, Webb, Yang (proxy), Yarbrough, Zot

Absent:

Brock, Colley, Dyar, Faucette, Matthews, Roberts, Schoon, Seong, talbot, Wentz, Yeh,

3. Minutes

A) The April 10, 2026 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes were approved electronically on April 24, 2026.

4. Committee Reports

Information Items (Dylan McLean, Chair):

1) General Information Updates

a) Shelly Elman and Jason Swift have been selected as the Senate nominees to serve on the strategic planning committee. These nominations were motioned, seconded, and unanimously approved.

2) Committee Chair General Updates

Committee III: Academic Policies Committee (Shelly Elman, Chair)

Action Items:

Each item was taken individually and all passed unanimously, as noted below.

A) Attendance Policy and Academic Engagement (Figure 1)

- 1) Discussion and vote on proposed revisions to Faculty Handbook and Undergraduate Catalog sections regarding academic engagement, the

attendance-verification process, the semester timeline, and the reinstatement procedure.

2) *Professor Elman noted that this proposal refers to scenarios when students are dropped by faculty (such as for non-attendance). Students can be reinstated at any time by Registrar without faculty notification. The proposal reflects Title IV guidelines and provides a template for reinstatement to make faculty and students more aware of the process. Led by Dr. Moon; worked with campus partners in drafting language.*

3) *Questions:*

i. *Q: If a faculty member objects to a student's request to be reinstated, is there a follow up process for the student?*

1. *A: The proposal does not include this in the recommendation. Dr. Moon explained that other universities state if student is dropped, they do not get credit, if they withdraw entirely, they can get partial credit (regarding the financial refund component of this process). In practice a non-attendance drop by faculty is due to lack of academic engagement. The current policy was not aligned with Title IV because of inconsistent applications; this aligns three policies including what is noted in the Faculty Handbook.*

ii. *Comment: When students are reinstated, if they have done work in a class and are dropped for the fee payment deadline, what is done in CourseDen gets wiped and so reinstated students have to restart, which is problematic.*

1. *A: Important point and consideration. Hope that by reducing the timeline, this will help to alleviate this problem. Students can appeal right away so that time lost is at most two to three weeks.*

4) *This proposal was unanimously approved.*

B) Graduate Faculty Status Policy (**Figure 2**)

1) Graduate Faculty Status at the University of West Georgia establishes a formal framework for authorizing faculty roles in graduate instruction, supervision, and research. The policy is intended to:

i. Ensure quality and consistency in graduate education.

- ii. Align faculty permissions with credentials and institutional needs.
- iii. Recognize differing forms of graduate contributions, including teaching, supervision, and research.
- iv. Support equitable and sustainable workload practices across colleges.
- v. Advance the university's strategic goals for graduate education, scholarship, research, creative activity, and externally funded research.
- vi. Graduate Faculty Status is not a rank or reward; it is a designation that establishes specific graduate responsibilities and clarifies expectations associated with those responsibilities.

2) *Questions*

i. *Q: Will it exclude non-graduate faculty from teaching graduate courses? In Music there are cross-listings across levels; do we then have to hire someone different to teach the graduate component of the cross-list?*

1. *A: Dr. Maggiano mentioned that in that case it would bring that faculty member into the graduate faculty category (no need to hire two people to teach different cross-listed sections of a course), per committee meetings with Dr. Varga. Dr. Peralta noted that if faculty think they may teach graduate courses at any time, they should ask Chair for permission and the designation in advance.*

ii. *Q: What about post-baccalaureate classes?*

1. *A: That circumstance was not addressed in this process. Best advice is to get graduate faculty status.*

3) *This proposal was unanimously approved.*

C) Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's (ABM) Degree Pathway Revision (**Figure 3**)

- 1) Rationale: Additional language clarifies the timeline for automatic admission into the master's degree program following completion of the bachelor's degree. This clarification supports timely matriculation, ensures administrative feasibility, and promotes completion of the master's degree within the established time-to-degree limits (3–6 years, depending on the program).

- 2) *Only for programs that are already ABM.*
 - i. *Questions:*
 1. *Q: Student can pursue an ABM with an audition in the Music Program, can language be added regarding this alternate method?*
 - a. *A: Go through graduate program coordinator and liaise with Dr. Varga to resolve; need to make Registrar aware.*
- 3) *This proposal was unanimously approved.*

Committee I: Undergraduate Programs Committee (Stacy Boyd, Chair)

Action Items:

The items below were Taken as a block vote and unanimously approved.

A) College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

1) School of Visual and Performing Arts

a) Art, B.F.A.

Request: Revise Program

As Art prepares for our upcoming national accreditation review and our corresponding self-study report and evaluators visit spring 2027, we have been tasked to review and update all concentrations within the BFA in Art and our corresponding course offerings against national standards as established by the NASAD (our national accreditation body) and to bring several items UpToDate, and/or to be more aligned with current disciplinary practices and vernacular. These actions will not only ensure alignment with national standards, but will also enhance the overall curriculum, enrich classroom experiences, and offer increased flexibility to support diverse student learning needs within each concentration within the BFA in Art degree at UWG. As a result, changes are being made to the curriculum (structure) and subsequent courses through the following applicable modifications to AIDA, Art Education, Ceramics, Graphic Design, Painting, Printmaking and Sculpture: - New course development - Updating current course titles - Addressing the course prerequisites (which have impacted RPG, created enrollment bottlenecks for student majors and/or created prior scheduling issues) - Updating and/or consolidating select SLOs to better address national standards and current disciplinary practices and language Additionally in fulfilling the USG

initiative to have all undergraduate programs meeting the standard of 120 credit hours to graduation, ART is reducing its current required credit hours for all of its BFA in Art concentrations (AIDA, Art Education*, Ceramics, General Fine Arts, Graphic Design, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, and Sculpture) from 126 to 120 credit hours. We are accomplishing this by reducing the required art studio elective hours from a current total of 21 hours to 18 and by converting ART 4998 and ART 4999 from a current combined 3 credit hours to zero credit hours. In the attached documents you will find a larger summary of the changes being made as well as the program maps for all of the ART concentrations. *Please note the teaching certification track in Art Education will be reduced to 123 hours due to the NASAD's accreditation standards for the BFA and the teacher certification requirements currently stipulated by the College of Education.

2) School of Social Sciences

a) [Embedded Certificate in Forensic Science](#)

Request: Revise Program

Anth 1105 Introduction to Biological Anthropology now has a lab component (Anth 1105L). It directly touches on Forensic Anthropology and Human Biological Variation and Evolution and is a well-suited introductory-level course alternative for students pursuing the Embedded Certificate in Forensic Sciences.

B) Tanner Health School of Nursing

1) [NURS - 4801 - Caring with Commitment: Nursing Roles in Long-term Care](#)

New Course Request

This course is required to meet the HRSA Traineeship requirements for nursing students. The grant requires students to complete additional clinical hours and additional didactic content. This course is the first of a series of four courses that will meet this requirement of the grant.

2) [NURS - 4802 - Caring for the Acutely Ill](#)

New Course Request

This course is required to meet the HRSA Traineeship requirements for nursing students. The grant requires students to complete additional clinical hours and

additional didactic content. This course is the first of a series of four courses that will meet this requirement of the grant.

3) [NURS - 4803 - Caring for Communities](#)

New Course Request

This course is required to meet the HRSA Traineeship requirements for nursing students. The grant requires students to complete additional clinical hours and additional didactic content. This course is the first of a series of four courses that will meet this requirement of the grant.

4) [NURS - 4804 - Caring for All](#)

New Course Request

This course is required to meet the HRSA Traineeship requirements for nursing students. The grant requires students to complete additional clinical hours and additional didactic content. This course is the fourth in a series of four courses that will meet this requirement of the grant.

Information Items:

A) [XIDS 2002 Cornerstone Course Offerings](#): Approved by the committee.

B) Dr. Sarah Elias was approved as the next UPC Chair.

Committee II: Graduate Programs Committee (Kim Green, Chair)

Action Items:

The items below were taken as a block vote and passed unanimously.

A) College of Education

1) Department of Special Education

a) [Specialist in Education, Ed.S.](#)

Request: Revise

The Specialist in Education, Ed.S., is adding a new Applied Behavior Analysis track and provides the opportunity for initial certification as a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). This track to the Ed.S. is being added to offer an innovative option for students who already hold a master's degree and are seeking initial certification as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). The governing body for this credential (the Behavior Analyst Certification Board - BACB) has strict requirements for program structure as does the accrediting body

(Association for Professional Behavior Analysts - APBA) that make offering a standalone certificate program or alternative program option not viable. The design of this program takes into account each of those respective requirements offering potential students seeking this initial certification an approved and recognized opportunity to do so. This is the only Ed.S. level ABA track in the USG. The Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Track requires 39 credit hours, can be completed in six semesters, and leads to level 6 upgrade and eligibility to sit for the National Board Certification exam in behavior analysis. The new track does require prior approval from SACSCOC for a Program Length Change because the Traditional track requires 27 total credit hours, while the new ABA track requires 39 (an increase of 44.4% or 12 credit hours is 12 which will take students more than one additional semester to complete). The ABA Track requires distinct program learning outcomes (PLOs) in order to meet professional accreditation requirements as it will be accredited by the Association of Professional Behavior Analysts (APBA) as an initial BCBA preparation program. These eleven PLOs specific to this track are stated in the Curriculog entry.

B) College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

1) School of Social Sciences

a) [PSYC - 6785A - Advanced Horizon Seminar](#)

Request: Add

This is a special series of topical seminars meant to explore subjects at the leading edge of contemporary psychology which are of special interest to students and faculty.

b) [PSYC - 6785B - Advanced Horizon Seminar](#)

Request: Add

This is a special series of topical seminars meant to explore subjects at the leading edge of contemporary psychology which are of special interest to students and faculty.

6. Old Business

a. None

7. New Business

- a. None
- 8. Announcements
- 9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:24pm by Chair McLean.

Respectfully submitted by Laura McCloskey Wolfe, Executive Secretary and Art Program faculty member.

Figure 1: Approved Final Version

Recommendations

Action for Recommendation #1: Changes for Policies and Forms

Faculty Guide to Attendance/Roster Verification

([https://www.westga.edu/assets/registrar/docs/Faculty Guide to Attendance Roster Verification 1.29.24.pdf](https://www.westga.edu/assets/registrar/docs/Faculty_Guide_to_Attendance_Roster_Verification_1.29.24.pdf))

- Reorganize and retitle the current section on academic engagement in the Faculty Guide. The section now titled “Last Date of Attendance Guidance per the Department of Education / UWG Financial Aid” should be moved so that it appears before the step-by-step roster-verification procedures, since it provides the reporting standard faculty should use in deciding whether a student should be marked as not attending. It should also be retitled more clearly, such as “Academic Engagement Guidance for Roster Verification,” because the current title does not accurately reflect the content of the section. Any such revision should also include corresponding updates to the table of contents and page references.
- Add a short clarification section at the beginning of the revised “Academic Engagement Guidance for Roster Verification,” before the Title IV-based language and examples, such as: “Faculty should be aware of common points of confusion that may lead to misreporting. Logging into a course does not by itself count as academic engagement. Administrative communication about reinstatement does not by itself establish academic engagement. Communication counts only when it concerns academic matters related to the course.” It should conclude with a sentence such as: “Please read the descriptions below for what does and does not count as academic engagement.”

Faculty Handbook

(<https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/18255799/latest/>)

202 Record of Student Absences/Attendance

All faculty (teaching face-to-face and/or online courses) shall state their attendance expectations and requirements in the syllabus. Instructors of online courses should define in the syllabus the actions students must take to satisfy course attendance requirements at the beginning of the term and throughout the semester.

Course attendance requirements are distinct from roster verification. For roster-verification purposes, the University uses an academic-engagement standard, meaning participation in academically relevant course activity as described in University policy and the Faculty Guide to Attendance/Roster Verification. Roster-verification status depends on whether a student has engaged in qualifying academic activity under that standard.

Faculty must accurately identify, prior to the roster-verification deadline, students who should be reported as not attending because they have not established academic engagement in the course, consistent with the Faculty Guide to Attendance/Roster Verification. Faculty wishing to drop a student during the Drop/Add period must contact the Registrar's Office.

A student who is removed from a course as a result of roster verification may seek

reinstatement only through the University's documented reinstatement process. Any petition for reinstatement must be submitted within 7 calendar days of the drop notice. Reinstatement is appropriate only in circumstances permitted by University procedure, such as administrative or reporting error.

Per the Class Roster (203) policy, faculty must indicate on each class roster the attendance of all students. For roster-verification purposes, attendance reporting should be based on the academic-engagement standard and guidance described in the Faculty Guide to Attendance/Roster Verification. Accurate attendance information is important for a variety of stakeholders, including Financial Aid (accuracy of aid issued and Title IV regulations), Student Affairs (housing, health services, etc.), and Business and Finance (withdraw refunds).

Verification of attendance is also important because grades of I, U, or F require entering a last date of attendance per the Registrar's Office. Faculty will not be able to submit grades until this field is populated for these grades (I, U, or F). All other grades (A-D or S) do not require a last date of attendance.

Excused absences: Students are encouraged to vote in all federal, state, and local elections. Board of Regents' policy states: "A student whose class schedule would otherwise prevent them from voting will be permitted an excused absence for the interval reasonably required for voting" (BOR Minutes, 1977-78, p. 245) ([Section 4.1.3, Board of Regents Policy Manual, University System of Georgia](#)).

Undergraduate Catalog

(<https://www.westga.edu/assets/registrar/docs/catalogs/pdfs/undergraduate-catalog-25-26.pdf>)

Class Absence (p. 71)

Instruction begins the first day of class. In face-to-face courses, if students fail to attend the first day and have not contacted the instructor to explain their absence, they may be dropped during the Drop/Add Period to make room for other students.

In fully online or hybrid courses each instructor has the authority to specify in the syllabus what qualifies as attendance at the first-class meeting and during the Drop/Add Period to drop students who fail to meet that requirement. Instructors may require students to attend a face-to-face meeting, to log in to the online course-delivery system by a specified date, or to take other specified steps at the beginning of the session.

For those courses that meet for the first time after the end of the Drop/Add Period, see Faculty Handbook Section 204.

Class attendance policies are determined by each instructor for their courses and may be found in the syllabus. Since course policies differ, students are responsible for understanding attendance requirements for each course. Failure to comply with those requirements may significantly affect grades.

However, attendance expectations during the Drop/Add Period and course attendance policies are distinct from roster verification. For roster-verification purposes, the University uses an academic-engagement standard, meaning participation in academically relevant course activity as defined by University policy. Compliance or

noncompliance with a particular attendance requirement does not by itself determine roster-verification status.

If a student is removed from a course through roster verification, any request for reinstatement must be submitted within 7 calendar days of the drop notice, in accordance with University reinstatement procedures.

Students are expected to attend each class meeting. Students absent from class while officially representing the University or observing religious holidays should generally not be penalized in the calculation of final grades, as long as they provide advance notice and expeditiously make arrangements to complete any missed work.

University-sponsored activities include but are not limited to the following: intercollegiate athletic competitions, musical/theatrical/art performances or exhibitions associated with a degree program, debate competitions, and research conferences. Activities not considered to be university-sponsored include participation in clubs, even if they are affiliated with UWG, or events associated with social organizations such as fraternities or sororities.

Regardless of the reason for the absence, each student is responsible for the material covered in class, for completing any assignments, and for making specific arrangements with the instructor for any work missed. The degree to which missed work can be made up will depend upon the nature of the work and its intended purpose. Make-up is at the discretion of the instructor. However, instructors should be aware that students missing classes for university sponsored activities or religious holidays should be given all appropriate courtesies and opportunities to make up missed work. Students are responsible for alerting their professors about any expected absences prior to those absences. Any student who must be absent for more than one week of class should notify the Patient Advocates in Health Services, telephone 678-839-6452. The student should also notify the instructor or department.

Action for Recommendation #2: Proposed Timeline

	UWG Proposed
Class starts	Jan 10
Add/Drop with Refund	Jan 10-16
Fee payment deadline	Jan 10 (first day of class)
Roster verification	Jan 20-22 (the three days immediately after add/drop ends)
Reinstatement	Within 7 calendar days of drop notice

The proposed dates are intended as a model for how the timeline could be better aligned. Exact dates may need to be adjusted in consultation with the Registrar's Office and Financial Aid.

Action for Recommendation #3: Reinstatement Form Prototype

Reinstatement Request Following Attendance Verification

Deadline: This request must be submitted within 7 calendar days of the drop notice resulting from attendance verification.

- Date of drop notice: _____
- Petition deadline: _____
- Date request received: _____

Student Information

- Student name: _____
- Student ID number: _____
- UWG email: _____
- Phone number: _____

Course Information

- Course prefix and number: _____
- Section/CRN: _____
- Course title: _____
- Instructor name: _____
- Semester/term: _____

Student Statement of Prior Academic Engagement

To be considered for reinstatement, the student must explain how they academically engaged in the course before the roster-verification period ended. Please note that communication about reinstatement or a statement that the student plans to attend, participate, or complete work in the future is not sufficient.

Please describe the academically relevant activity you completed before the roster-verification deadline. Include dates and any available documentation.

Please check any that apply and attach supporting documentation if available:

- ☐ Submitted an academic assignment
- ☐ Took an assessment or exam
- ☐ Participated in an assigned discussion or other assigned course activity
- ☐ Interacted with the instructor about academic matters related to the course
- ☐ Other academically relevant activity: _____

Date(s) of academic engagement: _____

Documentation attached:

- ☐ Screenshot from course site
- ☐ Assignment submission record
- ☐ Email about academic course content
- ☐ Other: _____

Important Notice Regarding Financial Aid

Reinstatement in a course does not by itself restore financial-aid eligibility for that course. Financial-aid eligibility may be restored only if the case is determined to involve institutional error, such as misreporting of attendance despite prior academic engagement.

Student Acknowledgment of Academic Risk

By signing below, I understand that if I am reinstated, I may have missed course content, assignments, announcements, or other important information. I understand that reinstatement does not guarantee extensions, make-up work, or restoration of financial-aid eligibility. I accept responsibility for the academic risks associated with reinstatement.

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

Instructor Certification

To be completed by the instructor.

Based on my records, the student:

☐ Did academically engage in the course before the roster-verification deadline.

☐ Did not academically engage in the course before the roster-verification deadline.

If yes, please identify the academic engagement and date(s):

In my judgment, the student was mistakenly reported as not attending:

☐ Yes

☐ No

Additional comments, if needed:

Instructor name: _____

Instructor signature: _____

Date: _____

Registrar's Office Action

☐ Reinstatement approved

☐ Reinstatement denied

Date processed: _____

Processed by: _____

Appeal Information

If the instructor does not agree that there was a reporting error and the student appeals, the case will be reviewed by the associate dean or designee in consultation with the Registrar's Office and Financial Aid.

Appeal Review

☐ Appeal submitted

Date of appeal: _____

Decision of associate dean/designee:

☐ Approved

☐ Denied

Comments:

Associate dean/designee name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Consultation completed with:

Registrar's Office representative: _____

Financial Aid representative: _____

University of West Georgia

Graduate Faculty Status Policy

I. Purpose and Scope

Graduate Faculty Status at the University of West Georgia establishes a formal framework for authorizing faculty roles in graduate instruction, supervision, and research. The policy is intended to:

1. Ensure quality and consistency in graduate education
2. Align faculty permissions with credentials and institutional needs
3. Recognize differing forms of graduate contributions, including teaching, supervision, and research
4. Support equitable and sustainable workload practices across colleges
5. Advance the university's strategic goals for graduate education, scholarship, research, creative activity, and externally funded research

Graduate Faculty Status is not a rank or reward; it is a designation that establishes specific graduate responsibilities and clarifies expectations associated with those responsibilities.

II. Guiding Principles

1. Graduate teaching, graduate supervision, and graduate research represent distinct forms of academic labor and shall be treated as such.
2. Graduate Faculty Status authorizes activity; it does not by itself guarantee workload adjustments.
3. Workload recognition occurs through outcome-based review rather than automatic formulas.
4. Assignment of teaching and supervision responsibilities remains under the authority of department chairs, directors, and academic deans.
5. Graduate Faculty Status categories are application-based, time-limited, and revocable.
6. Policies shall be scalable across colleges with differing graduate missions and enrollment profiles.

III. Overall Benefits of Graduate Faculty Status

1. Authorization to teach and/or supervise graduate-level work as defined by role
2. Formal recognition of graduate contributions in workload and annual review
3. Eligibility for graduate-related professional development opportunities as available
4. Priority consideration for graduate-focused instructional and research support as available
5. Inclusion in graduate faculty governance and program development at the College and Department level as relevant to the individual unit

6. Eligible to serve on the Graduate Faculty Council as part of an advisory group to the Dean of the Graduate School

III. Graduate Faculty Status Categories

The University recognizes four categories of Graduate Faculty Status:

Graduate Faculty Category	Primary Purpose	Core Focus	Typical Activities	What This Status Is <i>Not</i>
Graduate Teaching Faculty (GTF)	Ensure high-quality graduate instruction	Teaching	Teaching graduate courses; mentoring students through coursework	Not responsible for chairing theses/dissertations; not supervising GRAs; not a research designation for graduate faculty status
Graduate Teaching and Supervising Faculty (GTSF)	Ensure quality and consistency in graduate student outcomes	Teaching, supervision and mentoring	Supervising theses, dissertations, applied projects, and capstones; academic oversight of part-time capstone instructors; supervising GTAs	Not required to maintain a funded research agenda for graduate faculty status; not supervising GRAs unless elevated to GRF
Graduate Research Faculty (GRF)	Advance faculty-led research that includes graduate student mentorship	Research mentorship	Mentoring graduate students as researchers; supervising Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs); integrating graduate students into funded or unfunded research agendas	Not required for faculty to conduct research; not applicable when graduate students are not part of the research role
Graduate Affiliate Faculty	Provide instructional or professional expertise in limited, defined roles	Specialized teaching support	Teaching designated graduate courses; facilitating capstone courses under academic oversight; serving as committee members by exception	Not supervising GTAs or GRAs; not a pathway to workload release

A. Graduate Teaching Faculty (GTF)

Role Definition

Graduate Teaching Faculty are authorized to teach graduate-level courses and contribute to graduate instruction. Any graduate students serving as GTAs teaching graduate courses would need to qualify for Graduate Teaching Faculty status.

Permissions and Direct Benefits

- Teach graduate courses
- Participate in graduate curriculum development as assigned
- Eligibility for graduate teaching PD funds (pedagogy, assessment, accreditation) as available from the Graduate School.

Limitations

- May not supervise theses, dissertations, applied doctoral projects, or capstones
- May not supervise Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)
- May not supervise Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs)

Expectations

- Primary responsibility is instructional delivery
- No research or supervision expectations are implied by this status

Term and Review

- Appointment for up to five years
- GTF review shall be based on discipline-appropriate evidence evaluated at the department and college level.
- Status may be revoked if the faculty member does not teach graduate courses for two academic years
- Reapplication is required if graduate teaching resumes

Eligibility

A faculty member is eligible to apply for Graduate Teaching Faculty status if they meet **one** of the following:

1. **Full-time faculty appointment** in a teaching-focused or instructional role, including:
 - tenure-track faculty
 - career-track faculty
 - lecturers or clinical faculty with assignment to teach graduate-level courses

OR

2. Graduate students or post-baccalaureate instructors approved to teach graduate-level courses, when:
 - they are the instructor of record, or
 - they are teaching under departmental and graduate school approval

Additional Requirements

- Appropriate terminal degree or credentials for the discipline or
- In the case of graduate students:
 - demonstrated subject-matter expertise
 - documented instructional preparation
 - designated faculty oversight

Explicit Exclusions

- Adjunct or part-time faculty not assigned graduate teaching

- Individuals whose role does not include graduate instruction
-

B. Graduate Teaching and Supervising Faculty (GSF)

Role Definition

Graduate Supervising Faculty are authorized to provide instructional oversight of culminating graduate student work.

Permissions and Direct Benefits

- Chair and supervise master's theses, dissertations, applied doctoral projects, and capstones
- Serve as primary graduate advisors
- Supervise Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)
- Provide academic oversight for part-time or affiliate faculty teaching capstones or student projects
- GSF may provide academic oversight and quality assurance for part-time capstone instructors to ensure consistency of expectations, assessment, and grading.
- Eligibility for **Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)** tied to supervision needs
- Priority access to **professional development funds** related to supervision, mentoring, and assessment as available by the Graduate School
- Priority consideration for **graduate recruitment funds** tied to program growth or student yield as available by the Graduate School
- Formal recognition of supervision activity as a workload review trigger

Explicit Exclusions

- May not supervise Graduate Research Assistants
- May not supervise students employed on externally funded research agendas

Expectations

- Teaching as required by the College or Department
- Responsible for academic quality, mentoring, and timely progression of supervised students

Term and Review

- Appointment for up to five years
- GSF review shall be based on discipline-appropriate evidence evaluated at the department and college level.
- Status may be revoked if no graduate supervision activity occurs for two consecutive academic years
- Renewal includes review of supervision activity and outcomes

Eligibility

A faculty member is eligible to apply for Graduate Teaching and Supervising Faculty status if they:

- Hold a full-time faculty appointment, and
- Are assigned responsibility for supervision of:
 - theses
 - dissertations
 - applied doctoral projects
 - capstones or culminating graduate experiences
 - Graduate Teaching Assistants
- Demonstrated competency for graduate supervision through:
 - prior committee service
 - mentoring experience
 - discipline-appropriate scholarly or professional expertise
 - Other criteria deemed appropriate by the college or department

Explicit exclusions

- Part-time or adjunct faculty
 - Graduate students
 - Individuals without primary responsibility for graduate student outcomes
-

C. Graduate Research Faculty (GRF)

Role Definition

Graduate Research Faculty are authorized to lead and sustain research and scholarly activity, funded or non-funded, *that actively involves and mentor's graduate students as researchers*. This designation represents the highest level of Graduate Faculty Status.

Graduate Research Faculty status is intended to recognize and authorize faculty whose primary graduate role includes mentoring graduate students as researchers within faculty-led research or scholarly agendas.

Faculty may engage in research and scholarly activity, funded or unfunded, without holding Graduate Research Faculty status. Graduate Research Faculty status is required only when faculty-led research involving graduate students constitutes a primary mentoring or supervisory responsibility, including supervision of Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) or formal mentorship of graduate students in faculty-directed research.

Permissions and Direct Benefits

- All permissions of Graduate Teaching and Supervising Faculty
- Supervision of Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs)
- Leadership of research activity involving graduate students, including externally funded projects and unfunded scholarly agendas
- Integration of graduate students (master's and doctoral, as applicable) into faculty-led or collaborative research agendas
- Priority for GTAs and GRAs aligned with funded or mentored research
- Priority access to **travel funds** for graduate research dissemination
- Eligibility for **course releases or workload adjustments** tied to:
 - funded research involving graduate students,
 - concentrated doctoral supervision,
 - or documented research productivity
- Priority consideration for **graduate recruitment funds** aligned with research growth

Expectations

- Sustained or emerging research productivity at a high level appropriate to and connected with graduate student research
- Active or planned pursuit of external funding involving graduate students
- Mentorship of graduate researchers in research or scholarly inquiry aligned with an approved graduate research mentoring plan
- Other expectations as determined by the college and department

Automatic Elevation

- A faculty member holding GTF or GTSF status who is awarded external funding requiring GRA supervision shall be elevated to GRF status upon grant approval, for the duration of the funded activity or until reviewed.

Term and Review

- Appointment for up to five years
- GRF review shall be based on discipline-appropriate evidence evaluated at the department and college level.
- Status may be revoked if:
 - Research or creative activity has no meaningful evidence of graduate student research mentorship over the annual review period,
 - The faculty decides they no longer wish to mentor graduate research assistants as part of their research agenda, or
 - The approved research plan is not meaningfully pursued as determined by the college or department.

Eligibility

A faculty member is eligible to apply for Graduate Research Faculty status if they:

- Hold a **full-time faculty appointment**, and
- Are expected to lead or contribute to research involving graduate students

Required Evidence

1. Demonstrated or promising research trajectory as determined by the college or department
2. Research plan including graduate student integration

Explicit Exclusions

- Part-time faculty
 - Faculty without research expectations
 - Individuals not authorized to supervise GRAs
-

D. Graduate Affiliate Faculty

Role Definition

Graduate Affiliate Faculty provide instructional support for graduate programs on a part-time, visiting, or external basis.

Permissions

- Teach designated graduate courses
- Serve on graduate committees by exception and with approval
- Facilitate or guide student capstone work under the academic oversight of a designated Graduate Supervising Faculty member

Limitations

- Maximum teaching load of two courses per semester
- May not serve as the academic chair or primary supervisor for:
 - theses,
 - dissertations,
 - applied projects,
 - capstones
- May not supervise GTAs or GRAs

Term and Review

- Appointment for one to three years
 - Renewable based on instructional need and performance
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IV. Application, Appointment, and Revocation

1. All Graduate Faculty Status appointments are application-based.
 2. Applications are evaluated based on credentials, role expectations, and institutional, college, and departmental needs.
 3. Appointments require endorsement by the department chair or director and approval by the dean.
 4. Initial review by the department should occur at the time of hiring to determine the faculty member's qualifications to teach, supervise, and/or conduct research.
 5. All statuses are subject to periodic review and may be revoked when expectations are no longer met.
 6. Revocation of status does not constitute disciplinary action and does not affect faculty rank or tenure.
 7. Requests are first evaluated by the Department, approved by the Dean, verified by the Graduate School, and appointed by the Provost.
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V. Workload Recognition and Equity Framework

Workload review triggers begin with departments and/or colleges to initiate a discussion; graduate faculty status does not mandate course releases, compensation, or other adjustments. Chairs, directors, and deans retain authority to assign supervision and determine workload adjustments.

1. Graduate Faculty Status authorizes activity but does not automatically alter workload.
2. Triggering activity may include, but is not limited to, patterns of graduate level work that significantly exceed typical expectations within a college, department, or discipline.

Potential examples include:

- Sustained high course enrollments relative to college or institutional medians or otherwise determined by the college
 - Courses characterized by intensive writing, feedback, or individualized mentoring
 - Number, phase, and intensity of supervised graduate students (e.g., proposal stage vs. completion stage)
 - Chairing versus serving as a member on thesis, dissertation, or applied project committees
 - Supervision of Part-time faculty, Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) or Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs)
 - Concentrated periods of doctoral completions or grant-related graduate mentoring activity
3. Graduate course enrollments vary significantly across programs and colleges. When a faculty member's assigned graduate course enrollments consistently exceed institutional or college-level norms, a workload review should be initiated.

4. Each college, department, or discipline determine potential enrollment triggers. As a guideline (but not required), sustained enrollments approximately 1.5 times institutional or college medians may prompt review, but this is determined locally within each unit.
 5. Supervision (i.e., capstone, dissertations, theses, GTA, etc.) workload review may consider sustained supervisory activity not just upon completion.
 6. Workload adjustments may include, but are not limited to:
 - Course releases
 - Redistribution of supervision
 - Adjustment of teaching mix
 - Delayed acceptance of new supervisees
 - Other options deemed appropriate by Academic Deans and Department Chairs
 7. All determinations regarding workload adjustments rest with department chairs and academic deans. The Graduate School's does not have a role with workload assignments.
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VI. Graduate Assistantships

1. Graduate faculty status does not preclude graduate faculty from having general graduate assistants commonly referred to as “GA”.
 - a. The general graduate assistantship does not apply and can be supervised by anyone except for affiliate graduate faculty.
2. Each level of graduate faculty status ties a specific GA type to their role.
 - a. Graduate Teaching Assistants are permissible with Graduate Supervisory Status
 - b. Graduate Teaching Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants are permissible with Graduate Research Status

VII. Special Provisions

Capstone Instruction

Part-time or affiliate faculty may teach graduate capstone courses under the academic oversight of a designated Graduate Supervising Faculty member.

VIII. Governance and Implementation

1. The Graduate School shall provide general and broad oversight and maintain records of Graduate Faculty Status appointments with Colleges and Departments determining initial graduate faculty needs.
2. The Graduate Programs Committee (GPC) and the Academic Programs Committee serve in an important advisory capacity to the Graduate School to review annual reports on graduate faculty standing, outcomes, and to update this policy on a regular basis.

3. Colleges and Departments shall conduct annual reviews of graduate faculty activities for planning and equity purposes during the typical annual evaluation period.
4. Colleges and Departments determine the role graduate faculty status has in promotion and tenure, if any.
5. This policy shall commence at the beginning of Fall 2026.
6. During the AY27 period, data on workload, supervision, enrollments, and outcomes shall be reviewed to inform future refinements.

DRAFT

Figure 3: Approved Final Version

Policy: Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's (ABM) Degree Pathway

Rationale: Additional language clarifies the timeline for automatic admission into the master's degree program following completion of the bachelor's degree. This clarification supports timely matriculation, ensures administrative feasibility, and promotes completion of the master's degree within the established time-to-degree limits (3–6 years, depending on the program).

Current policy:

The Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's (ABM) degree pathway at the University of West Georgia enables outstanding undergraduate students to begin earning credit toward a master's degree while completing their bachelor's degree. This pathway allows students to count up to 12 credit hours toward both degrees, offering significant cost savings and a shorter time to complete the master's degree.

An ABM pathway may follow either a direct alignment (e.g., Undergraduate Major: English - M.A. English) or an indirect alignment (e.g., Undergraduate Major: English - MBA Business Administration), providing flexibility for students to pursue relevant educational advancements based on their career goals and skill-building priorities. Acceptance into an ABM pathway is facilitated in collaboration with applicable departments and faculty.

Regardless of whether the ABM pathway is direct or indirect, it is essential to ensure that course outcomes are clearly aligned or provide a robust justification of how the graduate program's outcomes build upon and achieve the competencies and learning objectives established at the undergraduate level. This alignment ensures educational progression and coherence between the two degree levels.

For courses counted at the undergraduate level, no justification is required if the graduate courses represent more advanced topics directly aligned with the undergraduate content (e.g., HIST 4000 - American History to HIST 6000 - American History) or the graduate course replaces an elective at the undergraduate level. However, nontraditional alignments, such as an English undergraduate student seeking to replace a core course with a business course, will require a justification within the application to clearly demonstrate how the graduate course outcomes satisfy the undergraduate course outcomes.

With approval from the undergraduate program coordinator, chair, or assistant chair, and graduate program coordinator, an undergraduate student admitted to an ABM pathway may take up to 12 credit hours of approved graduate-level courses distributed across multiple semesters. These credits can be applied toward both the bachelor's and master's degree requirements as determined by the advisors.

Minimum Eligibility Requirements

Students applying for an ABM pathway must

- Have completed at least 75 credit hours toward a bachelor's degree,
- Have completed at least 30 credit hours of undergraduate coursework at the University of West Georgia and
- Have a minimum undergraduate UWG GPA of 3.2

Please note: Master's programs may require more credit hours than 75 and higher GPA requirements than the minimum eligibility requirements stated above. Students must meet the minimum eligibility requirements for an ABM pathway before being accepted.

Master's programs that have higher eligibility requirements must submit a request including rationale for review and record-keeping to the graduate school. This ensures proper communication between students and the graduate school. Any changes in specific requirements will be reflected on the ABM website.

Student Application Process

Students interested in applying to an ABM pathway must

- Meet all Graduate School minimum eligibility requirements, or
- Meet minimum graduate ABM specific GPA requirements, if higher than a 3.2, and
- Meet minimum graduate ABM specific credit hour completion requirements, if greater than 75,
- Consult with their undergraduate program coordinator, chair, or assistant chair, and the master's degree graduate program coordinator to receive preliminary approval and identify graduate-level courses that will be counted towards both degrees and
- Complete a graduate application for the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's degree pathway

The Graduate School will review the application and facilitate the approval process with the relevant academic departments. The student will be accepted into the ABM pathway upon receiving all necessary approvals. Once accepted, the student must adhere to the specific criteria outlined in the application. The Graduate School will notify the Registrar's Office of the decision and the approved graduate-level courses.

Full admission into the master's degree program is not granted until final grades and GPA have been verified after earning the bachelor's degree.

Note: Certain master's programs may not offer an ABM pathway due to program accreditation standards.

Undergraduate Graduation

After earning a bachelor's degree, the Graduate School will automatically review the student's transcript to ensure the following criteria are met for direct advancement into the master's program:

- A minimum 3.0 GPA was earned for undergraduate coursework and
- "B" grades or higher were earned for all graduate-level coursework within the ABM pathway

Students who earn the required undergraduate GPA for graduate admission can be automatically admitted into the master's program at the student's request. Ideally, students will be admitted to the master's program in the semester immediately following completion of their bachelor's degree. However, students may request admission for any of the next three semesters after graduation. For example, a student who earns their bachelor's degree in Fall 2026 may request admission for Spring 2027, Summer 2027, or Fall 2027. Any request for admission beyond three semesters will require the submission of a separate graduate application.

Students who do not graduate with the undergraduate GPA required for admission into the master's program are not eligible to automatically proceed into the ABM-designated master's degree program but are still encouraged to apply for consideration as their graduate GPA may warrant admission.