

# The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

## PROPOSAL 40-19

### (Voting Units: Academic)

#### "Further Revision of Graduate School Policy Regarding External Membership on Graduate Committees"

##### I. Background:

The membership of a student's advisory committee is recommended to the dean of the Graduate School by the advisor and the chair, dean, or graduate program director of the student's academic home department, school or program.

In 2014-15 the Senate passed Proposal 37-15 revising Graduate School policy on which Graduate Faculty members could serve as external and internal committee members for graduate students (<http://www.mtu.edu/senate/policies-procedures/proposals-year/2014-15/37-15/index.html>). The proposal was approved by the Administration on April 22, 2015 and became Graduate School policy on that date.

The Graduate School recently submitted to the Senate a proposal titled "Modification of Graduate Faculty Status in Faculty Handbook," which organizes appointments to Graduate Faculty Status into two categories, full and associate, and establishes other procedures related to Graduate Faculty Status. These changes clarify how Michigan Tech meets the standards of the Higher Learning Commission, which requires appropriate expectations for the qualifications of faculty when they are engaged in graduate-level teaching and supervising research at the graduate level.

The changes in the policy related to Graduate Faculty Status require a revisiting of the topic of service as an external member of a PhD committee at Michigan Tech. These changes have been discussed in the Graduate Faculty Council in 2016-17 and 2017-2018 and are now being brought to the Senate.

Members of graduate students' committees serve in several roles; the current proposal will specify the requirements of several roles as described below:

- The primary role of the "internal" members is to provide consideration of a student's research from a perspective from the student's home department. Internal members are part of the home department and provide a link to policies and practices in the home department.
- The primary role of "external" members of a PhD graduate student's committee is to promote cross-disciplinary scholarly collaboration and consideration of a student's research from a perspective that might not be available if all committee members were drawn solely from the student's home department. For nondepartmental PhD students "external" is defined as

external to the student's administrative home department, which is the department of the main advisor. There must be at least one external member on PhD committees. In the committee for a nondepartmental PhD student, the Graduate School recommends that at least one committee member be external to the program.

- The advisor or co-advisor is the chair or co-chair of the graduate student's committee. The advisor or co-advisor is strongly associated with the project and therefore is not able to serve as the sole external member of the committee.

An additional related topic addressed in this proposal is that in the proposed policy, faculty with precisely 50% appointments in a department (the other half being an administrative appointment, for example) will be considered to be internal.

The Graduate Faculty Council and the Graduate School would like to replace the entire policy articulated in Senate Proposal 37-15 with the text in this proposal (shown below with deleted text in red strikethrough; original text is black; insertions are underlined in red). The new text is clear on all the permutations of role and appointment and will permit the Graduate School staff to implement the policy in a transparent manner.

## II. Proposal:

The following is the policy for "internal" and "external" committee members on graduate student committees:

Beginning fall semester, 2015:

- External committee members continue to not be required for master's students. At least one external committee member is required for doctoral students. External committee member will not be required for master's students.
- All committee members must have the appropriate Graduate Faculty Status (*full status or associate status with the assignment to be on the student's committee*).
- ~~"External" committee members will not be required for master's students.~~
- Faculty Those eligible to serve as "Internal" committee members ~~will be defined~~ are defined as members of the individuals Graduate Faculty with greater than or equal to 50% appointment in a student's administrative home department.
- ~~Faculty Those eligible to serve as "External" committee members are defined as:~~
- Members of the those Graduate Faculty who have ~~with~~ less than 50% appointment in a student's administrative home department.
- The advisor or co-advisor may not serve as the sole external member of the committee.
  - ~~Note that those with associate Graduate Faculty Status are not eligible to be sole advisor. This includes members of the Graduate Faculty who possess Affiliated Faculty status in a student's administrative home department or with the student's graduate program (for non-departmental and interdisciplinary programs) unless the Affiliated Faculty member is serving as the student's advisor or co-advisor.~~
  - ~~Ad hoc members of the Graduate Faculty.~~

**Table 1: Criteria for serving as external member of PhD graduate committees at Michigan Tech. Departments/Schools/Programs may be more restrictive than these policies.**

<u>Committee members who are:</u>	<u>Graduate faculty status</u>	<u>External member of committee</u>	<u>Sole External member of committee</u>
<u>Faculty with <math>\geq</math> 50% faculty appointment in the student's home department (includes emeritus/a)</u>	<u>Full</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>Faculty with <math>&lt;</math> 50% faculty appointment in the student's home department (includes emeritus/a)</u>	<u>Full</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes, as long as they are not the advisor or co-advisor</u>
<u>Affiliated faculty in student's home department or in the student's nondepartmental PhD program<sup>1</sup> (have primary faculty appointment in another department)</u>	<u>Full</u>	<u>Yes, as long as they are not the advisor or co-advisor</u>	<u>Yes, as long as they are not the advisor or co-advisor</u>
<u>Adjunct faculty with an appointment in the student's home department (do not have MTU academic appointment)</u>	<u>Associate</u>	<u>Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor</u>	<u>Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor</u>
<u>Non-TT faculty without a terminal degree; Non-Michigan Tech employees</u>	<u>Associate</u>	<u>Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor</u>	<u>Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor</u>

<sup>1</sup>For nondepartmental PhD students, "external" is defined as external to the student's administrative home department, which is the department of the main advisor. In the committee for a nondepartmental PhD student, the Graduate School recommends that at least one committee member be external to the program.

**Clean copy of the new policy:**

The following is the policy for "internal" and "external" committee members on graduate student committees:

- External committee members continue to not be required for master's students. At least one external committee member is required for doctoral students. External committee member will not be required for master's students.
- All committee members must have the appropriate Graduate Faculty Status (*full* status or *associate* status with the assignment to be on the student's committee).
- Those eligible to serve as Internal committee members are defined as individuals with greater than or equal to 50% appointment in a student's administrative home department.
- Those eligible to serve as external committee members are defined as those who have less than 50% appointment in a student's administrative home department.
- The advisor or co-advisor may not serve as the sole external member of the committee.

Note: Individuals with associate Graduate Faculty Status are not eligible to be sole advisor.

Table 1: Criteria for serving as external member of PhD graduate committees at Michigan Tech.  
**Departments/Schools/Programs may be more restrictive than these policies.**

<b>Committee members who are:</b>	<b>Graduate faculty status</b>	External member of committee	<b>Sole</b> External member of committee
Faculty with $\geq 50\%$ faculty appointment in the student's home department (includes emeritus/a)	Full	No	No
Faculty with $< 50\%$ faculty appointment in the student's home department (includes emeritus/a)	Full	Yes	Yes, as long as they are not the advisor or co-advisor
Affiliated faculty in student's home department or in the student's nondepartmental PhD program <sup>1</sup> (have primary faculty appointment in another department)	Full	Yes, as long as they are not the advisor or co-advisor	Yes, as long as they are not the advisor or co-advisor
Adjunct faculty with an appointment in the student's home department (do not have MTU academic appointment)	Associate	Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor	Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor
Non-TT faculty without a terminal degree; Non-Michigan Tech employees	Associate	Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor	Yes, as long as they are not co-advisor

<sup>1</sup>For nondepartmental PhD students, "external" is defined as external to the student's administrative home department, which is the department of the main advisor. In the committee for a nondepartmental PhD student, the Graduate School recommends that at least one committee member be external to the program.

**Proposal History:**

**Proposed to the Graduate Faculty Council on September 11, 2018.**

**Approved by the Graduate Faculty Council on September 25, 2018.**

**Academic Policy Committee xx??**

**Dean's Council on xx??**

**Introduced in Senate xx**

**Adopted by Senate: xx**

**Approved by Administration: xx**