Inclusion of External (Non-University of Minnesota) Members on Graduate Students’ Examining Committees

As part of the restructuring of graduate education, graduate faculty appointment categories were discontinued effective July 1, 2010. Among the resulting changes to the Graduate School’s role in the review and approval of graduate students’ examination committees is the shift in responsibility to the individual colleges for approving external (non-University of Minnesota) members as committee members.

It is important to note that there are two distinct types of external member appointments: 1) one-time-only assignment, which relates specifically to the issue at hand, and 2) appointments for ongoing faculty service.

One-time-only assignments:

This type of external member assignment is graduate student- and examination- specific. The external member is proposed as a committee member at the time the student files his/her milestone form (e.g., Degree Program form), or when a subsequent change to the approved committee is requested. As of July 1, 2010, the Graduate School no longer reviews the qualifications of proposed external members when we review/approve milestone forms or committee-substitution requests; rather, eligibility to serve on a specific student’s committee will be confirmed locally before the forms/requests are submitted to the Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) office in the Graduate School for final processing.

No “academic appointment” (Human Resources [HR] appointment) or related cost-pool contribution is required in this case, nor is the name of the external member published in the graduate program’s faculty list. A PeopleSoft (PS) record must be established, however, in order for the external member’s committee service to be tracked in UM Reports. Effective July 1, 2010, the responsibility for creating the required PS record for one-time-only committee assignments shifted from the Graduate School to the colleges. Note that HR staffs in the collegiate units have the capacity to create a PeopleSoft record.

Appointments for ongoing faculty service:

This type of external faculty appointment occurs when the graduate program proposes the ongoing participation of someone outside the University of Minnesota in various capacities. While the individual’s service might include participation on student examination committees, it would also comprise ongoing advising, teaching, and/or research responsibilities. The University’s position with respect to ongoing service of this type is that the non-University faculty member must hold an HR appointment, which can be without salary, thereby providing a legal basis for the graduate faculty member’s association with the University and graduate program.

Attached is a more detailed document that explains the one-time-only type of external member assignment and processes related to the inclusion of external member on graduate students’ examination committees. If you have other questions or concerns, please contact Karen Starry, Vicki Field, or Genny Rosing.
Process for Inclusion of External (Non-University of Minnesota) members on Graduate Students’ Examining Committees

Effective Date: July 1, 2010

1. The graduate program prepares the request to include an external member on a student’s examining committee based on procedures established by the college.

2. The graduate program submits the request to the individual authorized by the college to approve such external member assignments (“collegiate authorizer”).

3. The collegiate authorizer ensures that the request is in compliance with the college’s guidelines on external committee members, and communicates with the graduate program regarding any outstanding issues and/or their final decision.

4. If the collegiate authorizer approves the request, s/he will provide the college’s Human Resources (HR) staff with the external committee member’s information.

5. The college’s HR staff determines whether the external committee member has previously been assigned a PeopleSoft (PS) person record (Empl ID number). If the individual does not already have the required PS record, it needs to be created by the college’s HR staff.

6. Once the college’s HR staff identifies the existing PS person record (Empl ID number), or if necessary, creates one for the individual, s/he provides the collegiate authorizer with the required Empl ID information.

7. Upon notification by the collegiate authorizer that the external member request is approved, the DGS includes the name and Empl ID number of the external member on the student’s Degree Program, Thesis Proposal, or committee substitution request, and identifies the individual as an external committee member on the form.

8. The Degree Program, Thesis Proposal, or committee substitution request is submitted to the Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) office in the Graduate School.

9. The GSSP staff completes the review/approval process of the milestone form/committee substitution request, and forwards committee data to the Graduate School’s Data Management office for data input into PS including the assigned Empl ID number for the external committee member, which ensures accuracy of committee data in UM Reports.

10. The Graduate School’s Data Management enters the requisite data into PS.

Please contact Genny Rosing in the Graduate School’s Data Management office at rosing@umn.edu with any questions about the process.