

BYLAWS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES
Credentials Committee of the Graduate Council

Approved 10/2001

Revision Approved by Council 03/2004

The Credentials Committee is responsible for procedures that will ensure careful and competent supervision of dissertation research. The goal is to ensure good scholarship, competent management of the process, high academic standards, and completion of dissertations in a timely manner. To this end the Committee will conduct a review of the credentials of those who will be recommended to the Graduate Council for approval to direct doctoral dissertations. In making these recommendations the Committee will follow the procedures outlined below:

- 1) Tenure-track but untenured faculty members are eligible to direct dissertations subject to departmental approval as indicated by a vote of the tenured faculty, and a letter of support from the department head. The letter of support and the results of the vote should be forwarded to the Credentials Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Graduate Council. Based on the recommendation of the department head, the Credentials Committee may recommend approval for an unspecified number of students prior to the review for tenure or may limit approval to a specific dissertation project. It will be expected that department heads and senior faculty will mentor new faculty members as they master the art of working with students on their dissertations.
- 2) When a faculty member is awarded tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor, approval to direct dissertations will automatically be granted for a period of 10 years or until promotion to professor, *whichever comes first. If, after 10 years, a faculty member is not promoted to professor, approval to direct dissertations will not be extended except on a case by case basis (see #6) below.*
- 3) *When a faculty member is promoted to the rank of professor, approval to direct dissertations will automatically be granted for 10 years and will be reviewed every 10 years thereafter, for so long as approval is sought.*
- 4) *Application for continuing approval following promotion to professor should be submitted to the Credentials Committee in the year prior to expiration of approval and should consist of (a) a list of theses and dissertations supervised over the past 10 years; (b) a list of peer-reviewed publications for the past 10 years; (c) a list of grants and other external validation or support of creative and scholarly activity; (d) other evidence of scholarly activity that may be relevant to the approval to direct dissertations; and (e) a letter of support for continued approval from the department head placing the above items in the context of department standards. The primary criterion for approval will be evidence of externally reviewed and validated scholarly or creative activity.*

- 5) *Non-tenure track faculty may be considered for limited approval to direct dissertations. Where such approval is sought, departments should provide evidence of scholarly activity along with a letter of support from the department head. The results of the vote of the tenured faculty should be provided. The evidence forwarded should consist of (a) a list of peer-reviewed publications; (b) a list of grants and other external validation or support of creative and scholarly activity; (c) other evidence that may be relevant to the approval to direct dissertations. Evidence of participation in graduate training should be provided.*
- 6) Faculty members who have not been granted approval for supervision may petition the Dean of Graduate Studies for limited approval to supervise individual dissertations if the department head and department faculty support the petition. Petitions should describe the accomplishments of the faculty member as described in the previous paragraph, as well as the special circumstances that would warrant one-time approval.
- 7) *Automatic approval applies only to faculty members who participate in programs that award doctoral degrees. Faculty in other departments may petition for approval. Faculty members who have not completed their doctorates may not supervise dissertations.*

From time to time, the Committee may also consider other matters related to the process of dissertation supervision.

The Committee will consist of seven members from those colleges that award doctoral degrees. At least one member will be from each of the following colleges: Arts & Sciences; Business; Education, Health, and Human Sciences; and Engineering. The Committee elects a chair annually.

To be included on the committee's agenda, seven copies of each request for approval should be submitted to the Office of Graduate Student Services at least one week in advance of the meeting.