

## **Graduate Faculty Membership Criteria for the School of Library and Information Studies**

These criteria were adopted on October 8, 2025 by the School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) Graduate Faculty Committee (GFC) and the SLIS faculty. They supersede the previously governing criteria that were approved by the Graduate College in 1993.

The Graduate Faculty Committee for the School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) shall consist of Committee A members. This committee will verify the criteria outlined below are applied consistently and fairly, to maintain the highest standards of quality in determining the School's graduate faculty. The qualifications used for Graduate Faculty Status will be revisited every five years.

Terminal degree(s): SLIS contains one doctoral program in Information Studies and two master's programs in Library and Information Studies and Museum Studies. The terminal degree in the field of Library and Information Studies is the Ph.D. in Library and Information Studies, or a closely related field. The terminal Degree in the field of Museum Studies is the Ph.D. in Museum Studies, or a closely related field such as Art, Art History, Public History, or History.

**Regular Membership (RM) Status**: Per the Graduate Charter, only regular members of the faculty, as defined by the faculty handbook, are eligible for RM-level statuses. This includes tenured, tenure-track, and ranked-renewable faculty carrying titles of assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.

**Special Membership (SM) Status**: Non-ranked RT lecturers in the OU School of Library and Information Studies **OR** others holding a doctorate in library and information studies from an ALA-accredited program school, a doctorate from an iSchool, a doctorate in Museum Studies (if teaching within the Museum Studies program), a doctorate in a closely related field, or a comparable foreign degree may be appointed with SM status to the graduate faculty. As both of SLIS' master's degree programs are professional programs, practitioners who have a master's degree from an ALA accredited Library and Information Studies program or Museum Studies program, or other closely related disciplines who meet the tested experience criteria, can qualify for SM status to teach graduate courses.

Appointment process: Regular Graduate Faculty Appointment will follow the criteria outlined in this document. Nominations for special member (SM) appointments will originate from the School Director, in consultation with the Graduate Faculty Committee.

Term: The normal term for regular members of the Graduate Faculty is five years. See below for additional comments on term length and appointment renewal.

Appointment criteria: Appointment to the graduate faculty within SLIS will follow these criteria:

Graduate Faculty Appointment	Appointment Criteria
<p>RM0</p> <p>SM authority to teach graduate classes</p>	<p>The faculty member must be tenured, tenure-track, or ranked renewable term, <b>OR</b> hold a doctorate in library and information studies from an ALA- accredited program school, a doctorate from an iSchool, a doctorate in Museum Studies (if teaching within the Museum Studies program), a doctorate in a closely related field, or a comparable foreign degree.</p> <p>Because library and information studies and museum studies programs prepare students to serve as practitioners, a faculty member seeking SM status to teach graduate level courses, may qualify for graduate faculty status if they hold a master's degree in Library and Information Studies from an ALA-accredited program or a master's degree from a Museum Studies program (if teaching in the Museum Studies program) and possess at least two years of recent relevant professional experience.</p>
<p>RM1</p> <p>SM authority to serve on master's committees*</p>	<p>The faculty member must be tenured, tenure-track, or ranked renewable term faculty member and hold a doctorate in Library and Information Studies from an ALA-accredited program school, a doctorate from an iSchool, a doctorate in Museum Studies (if teaching within the Museum Studies program), a doctorate in a closely related field, or a comparable foreign degree.</p> <p>Because library and information studies and museum studies programs prepare students to serve as practitioners, a non-ranked faculty member seeking SM status to serve on master's level committees, may qualify for SM graduate faculty status if they hold a doctorate in Library and Information Studies from an ALA-accredited program, an iSchool, or a doctorate degree from a Museum Studies program (if teaching in the Museum Studies program), or closely related discipline <b>AND</b> meet the Graduate College's requirements.</p>
<p>RM2</p> <p>SM authority to chair non-thesis master's committees*</p>	<p>The faculty must meet the RM1 criteria <b>AND</b> must have <b>submitted</b> at least 2 research/scholarship outputs within the past 5 years (research outputs could be journal articles, conference proceedings, book chapters, or monographs) <b>OR</b> be actively involved in a multi-year research project that will result in one or more publications.</p> <p>Because library and information studies and museum studies programs prepare students to serve as practitioners, a non-ranked renewable term faculty member seeking SM status to chair non-thesis master's committees, may qualify for SM</p>

	graduate faculty status if they hold a doctorate degree in Library and Information Studies from an ALA-accredited program, an iSchool or a doctorate or master's degree from a Museum Studies program (if teaching in the Museum Studies program), or closely related discipline.
<p>RM3</p> <p>SM authority to serve on doctoral committees and/or chair master's thesis committees*</p>	<p>The faculty must meet the RM2 criteria <b>AND</b> must have <b>published</b> at least 2 research/scholarship outputs in the past 5 years (research outputs could be journal articles, conference proceedings, book chapters, or monographs) <b>OR</b> be actively involved in a multi-year research project that will result in one or more publications.</p> <p>A non-ranked renewable term faculty member seeking SM status to serve on doctoral committees, may qualify for SM graduate faculty status if they hold a doctorate degree in Library and Information Studies from an ALA-accredited program, an iSchool or a doctorate degree from a Museum Studies program (if teaching in the Museum Studies program), or closely related discipline.</p> <p>Non-ranked renewable term faculty members are not eligible to chair master's thesis committees.</p>
<p>RM4</p> <p>SM authority to chair doctoral committees*</p>	<p>The faculty must meet the RM3 criteria <b>AND</b> must have published at least 2 research/scholarship outputs in the past 5 years (research outputs could be journal articles, conference proceedings, book chapters, or monographs) <b>OR</b> be actively involved in a multi-year research project that will result in one or more publications.</p> <p>Non-ranked renewable term faculty members are not eligible to chair doctoral General Exam or dissertation committees.</p>

Criteria for SM status:

Nominations for Special Member status will be considered on an ad hoc basis. For those nominees who have not attained a PhD in the degree areas above must satisfy the “tested experience” required, stipulated and outlined in the Graduate Faculty Charter under **Tested Experience**.

“In limited cases, other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered as a substitute for the appropriate terminal degree or portions thereof. This experience is defined by the Higher Learning Commission as “tested experience”, in that it “includes a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching.” It is not based on years of teaching experience.”

### Tested Experience for School of Library and Information Studies

To qualify for SM status under tested experience a nominee should show recent relevant professional experience in either a library, archive, museum, or other cultural heritage or information organization. This could be demonstrated by work experience, past projects, and/or depth of knowledge in the field. The Graduate Faculty Committee (Committee A in SLIS) will evaluate the past experience and depth of knowledge in a professional capacity before appointing them to teach in the program.

\*Appointments of SM faculty to chair non-thesis committees, serve on masters or doctoral committees, and/or count toward the departmental majority require review by the Graduate Council Graduate Faculty Membership Subcommittee (GFM) and approval of the Graduate Dean, based on three criteria: close association with the unit hosting the graduate program, permanence, and credentials comparable to regular Graduate Faculty members with the same graduate privileges.

### Graduate Faculty Status Recission

Graduate faculty members have an academic responsibility to remain current in their discipline. As outlined in the Graduate Faculty Charter (Article IV, Section 3.c.), in “certain cases, such as those of professional incompetence, dishonesty, or failure to fulfill professional duties related to Graduate Faculty membership, a member may have some or all privileges on the Graduate Faculty rescinded prior to the end of the term of appointment. This is an exceptional event and should be undertaken only after other administrative remedies have failed.”

Possible grounds for recission of a Graduate Faculty Appointment for the School of Library and Information Studies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) failure to fulfill assigned teaching responsibilities
- 2) repeated issues with teaching performance (including advising responsibilities)
- 3) failure to adhere to Graduate College policies or University policies relating to graduate education

Teaching and mentorship expectations: The School expects faculty mentoring graduate students by serving on (and chairing) their graduate committees and/or serving as their graduate advisor to actively meet with the student and provide feedback on the student’s thesis/dissertation work or graduate program plan. This might involve in-person meetings, zoom/virtual meetings, emails, reviewing submitted work to provide feedback, and other ongoing mentoring activities.

Continuing research, scholarly, or creative activity: Upon first attaining a new Graduate Faculty Appointment (e.g., reaching RM4 following Tenure), that designation will last a minimum of 5 years. At the 5-year mark, the statement below governing “regular performance review” will then govern the retention of the appointment.

Regular performance review: Graduate Faculty Appointments will be revisited every year. Following promotion/tenure, faculty will attain RM4 status the Fall after being awarded tenure. If a faculty member fails to actively maintain the criteria for a status level they previously held, they will be notified of the deficiency. As a courtesy to students, and due to

the ongoing nature of Thesis/Doctoral committee work, a faculty member will continue to hold the previous appointment for a 2-year period following the identification of the deficiency, during which they have the opportunity to eliminate the deficiency. If the deficiency remains after completion of the grace period, the faculty member loses that status and moves to the otherwise highest appointment their current record merits.

To retain membership on the Graduate Faculty, faculty must meet the criteria listed above. Eligibility for graduate faculty membership will be reviewed every year in conjunction with faculty evaluations. Should a member not show evidence of continuing to meet the criteria, the member will be notified that to retain appointment, such evidence should be presented at the next evaluation.

Adopted by SLIS Faculty members, October X, 2025.

Approved by graduate dean,