Rationale –

Graduate education differs from undergraduate education in that graduate education is more specialized, more narrowly focused, and a more intense education experience that centers on the student's individual interests and the faculty member's area of expertise.

Recognizing that difference, the Graduate Council has developed a policy for faculty members engaged in graduate education, which parallels the policy of the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee, but more clearly defines the commitment of faculty mentoring graduate students through the thesis/dissertation/other culminating research experience. At the same time, we have tried to balance the broad range of disciplines and academic traditions that are collectively represented by the graduate programs and faculty at GVSU. As always, the GC has reviewed current policies from a range of peer institutions and has solicited input from FSBC, FPPC, and from graduate program directors.

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Responsibilities and Workload for Faculty Engaged in Graduate Education

Expectations of faculty engaged in graduate education in the areas of teaching, scholarship and creative activity, and service shall follow the same guidelines defined under "Faculty Responsibilities and Workload" (currently section 3.01) in the Faculty Handbook which relies on each unit to establish expectations for faculty "based on disciplinary standards and best practices and unit, college and university goals, and work".

In keeping with the guidelines, each unit shall determine workload assigned to teaching graduate courses, advising theses/dissertations/other culminating research experiences, graduate projects, serving on a graduate committee, independent study, clinical or internship supervision, studios, labs, rehearsals, team-teaching, and distance education. The unit's recommended workload must be approved by the academic dean and Provost.

Workload credit for graduate thesis/dissertation/other culminating research experiences will be based on the following:

a. The time demands on faculty mentoring a graduate thesis/dissertation/culminating research experiences will vary due to the specific content area, the technical skills required, and the depth of the topic.

b. The broader academic community accepts that workload granted for graduate thesis/dissertation/other culminating research experiences varies among humanities, social sciences, health professions, and math/science/engineering.

c. As with all workload matters, credit assigned for graduate thesis/dissertation/other culminating research experiences will be determined by each unit and approved by the appropriate academic dean and Provost.

Each unit and college will apply the following guidelines when assigning workload to graduate thesis/dissertation/ other culminating research experiences:

a. Workload credit for chairing a thesis committee shall be no less than 0.05 workload credit for 1 credit hour of thesis work (XXX 695). Workload credit for chairing a dissertation committee (XXX 795) shall be no less than 0.15 workload credit per 1 credit hour of dissertation.
b. Workload credit shall be assigned for other culminating research activities when it requires a substantial effort (e.g. similar to thesis/dissertation) on the part of the faculty member. In addition, the culminating research experience must be a requirement for the degree and approved by the unit head.
c. Workload credit is earned by the faculty member when the student is registered for the appropriate course (e.g. XXX 695, XXX 795). Workload credit will not be earned if the student withdraws and receives a tuition refund.
d. Faculty will indicate on their annual workload plan when they will apply workload credit. The workload plan shall be approved by the unit head.
e. Individual faculty shall normally apply workload credit for thesis/dissertation/other culminating research experience to teaching, but it may be applied to service, scholarship, or area of focus in approved circumstances. Application of credit to a category must be approved by the unit head.

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f. The maximum amount of workload credit a faculty member may count in a year will be determined by the unit head and approved by the academic dean and the Provost.

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