

DRAFT- Policy on Dissertation Supervision (9-14-21)

Supervising graduate students, especially students in Ph.D. programs, is a central part of a faculty member's role at Florida Atlantic University, and the production of Ph.D. graduates is a core part of the University's mission. The following policy memo establishes some uniform guidelines for Colleges and Academic Units regarding the assignment and compensation of faculty effort supervising Ph.D. dissertations, both *en route* to and upon graduation.

The ongoing effort of a faculty member **chairing** or **co-chairing** a Ph.D. student's supervisory committee must be recognized formally as part of their Annual Assignment. Standards and practices vary among disciplines, so it is left to the Colleges to establish conventions regarding the weight of a supervisory (co-)chair assignment and the broad category of effort (*i.e.*, teaching, service, or research) in which such assignments are counted. For the same reason, Colleges may choose to devolve this responsibility to their individual Academic Units.

Supervisory committees in some Ph.D. programs traditionally include **special members** (*e.g.*, a statistician) with an active role in supporting a student's *progress toward* graduation beyond those of a general (*i.e.*, non-chair) committee member. Colleges may also establish conventions for the formal recognition of such responsibilities in Annual Assignments, and again may devolve that responsibility to their individual Academic Units. However, a faculty member serving as a **general member** of a Ph.D. dissertation supervisory committee is expected to do so as part of their general Service commitment to the University.

Under no circumstances should faculty members be compensated for the *ongoing* supervision of a Ph.D. dissertation, whether by an overload assignment or some other form of stipend beyond their base pay from the University, during the period of their annual assignment. Rather, such effort must be given appropriate weight among faculty members' regularly assigned duties, as described above, either in the instruction section (as a course or as a an "instruction related activity"), or in the research section as deemed appropriate by the department chair and/or college Deans. Colleges may, however, elect to establish programs to compensate reward faculty members outside the Annual Assignment upon a student's *completion* of a dissertation leading to the award of a Ph.D. degree. The details of such incentive programs are left to the individual Colleges, but subject to the following limitations:

- The incentive granted to the chair or co-chairs of a Ph.D. dissertation supervisory committee upon a student's graduation may not exceed a one-time bonus of \$1,500 or its equivalent future teaching release.
- Faculty members jointly co-chairing a supervisory committee must split the incentive conventionally granted to a (lone) committee chair.
- Non-chair members of Ph.D. dissertation supervisory committees are ineligible for compensation under such incentive programs.

- No College is obliged to offer such an incentive program to its faculty, and any College choosing to do so is solely responsible to provide its entire budget.
- It is understood that bonus stipends, or their equivalent teaching release, do *not* count against the monetary cap on overload assignment compensation (equal to 25% of regular pay) established elsewhere by University regulations.
- Faculty incentive programs of this sort are allowed *only for the award of Ph.D. degrees requiring a formal dissertation*. They may not be extended to non-thesis doctorates, master's programs, or other categories of graduate programs.

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