

**MEMO ~ from Dr. Rodney C. Murrow, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies**

TO: All Graduate Faculty (permanent, associate, temporary, adjunct)  
REF: General Information, Graduate Studies  
DATE: August 2006

**Portfolio or Written Comps?** Effective January 1, 2003, graduate students in the M.Ed. program are required to submit a graduate portfolio at the conclusion of their degree program. Students who were in the M.Ed. program prior to that time are still required to take the written comprehensive examination, with the oral follow-up exam, at the conclusion of their plan of study. Effective January 1, 2006, entering students are required to create their portfolio using the LiveText™ web-based e-portfolio system. *After January 1, 2009, the written comprehensive examination will no longer be given and all M.Ed. students will be required to submit a graduate portfolio.*

Please poll your class(es) and identify those students who are required to submit a portfolio and those who are required to take the written comprehensive examination. If they have questions about either requirement, direct them to the graduate office, EC 103, to visit with Ms. Debbie Skinner, Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

Please announce in all of your graduate courses that guidelines for the preparation of the portfolio are online for the students' convenience. Artifacts from your course(s) may be important to the portfolio, so the students should begin now to work on that project. The *Portfolio Handbook for Advanced Programs* is available for the students' convenience on the Graduate Studies web page ([www.nwsu.edu/graduate/portfolio.html](http://www.nwsu.edu/graduate/portfolio.html)). Checkpoints for the portfolio (known as "Milestones") are due upon enrollment in the 10<sup>th</sup> hour, upon enrollment in the 17<sup>th</sup> hour, and at the end of the plan of study.

Please identify specific assignment, projects or other items in your course(s) that are appropriate artifacts to address core/specialty standards in the degree programs. If you need assistance locating the assessment standards, please contact the graduate office.

**Submitting Questions for the Written Comprehensive Examination.** For students in your course(s) who are required to take the written comprehensive exam, you are asked to submit a packet of questions and guidelines for the grading of each question – one packet for each course the student is enrolled in – to the graduate office at the end of the semester. You will receive an email reminder notice to this effect from the graduate office. *It is important that the questions be submitted promptly, in order for the students' packets to be prepared for their written examination.*

You will likely be asked to grade the papers of the students who select questions from your course(s). A "pass" is based on a score of 75 percent or higher; any score below that percentile is to be marked "fail." Should you be reassigned in your teaching, or perhaps leave NWOSU before your student(s) take the exam, the guidelines you leave in the packet(s) will assist another faculty member in the grading of the papers.

**Advisory Committee Responsibilities.**

1. Graduate students are required to select three graduate faculty members to serve on their advisory committee. The purpose of the advisory committee is to assist the student in developing a plan of study (the student has the major responsibility for the plan of study), to evaluate the graduate portfolio OR select questions for the written comprehensive examination, and to conduct the oral follow-up examination.
2. Each committee has a chair and two other members. They share the responsibilities equally, though some committees allow the chair to make decisions based on input from the other members. *It is NOT the sole responsibility of the committee chair to submit the plan of study, evaluate the portfolio, select questions for the written exam, or to conduct the oral follow-up exam.*
3. *It is expected that all eligible graduate faculty will serve on advisory committees.* There is an awkward imbalance amongst the graduate faculty, with some who serve on a very few, thereby forcing others into a fairly heavy service. If the responsibilities are shared by all of the eligible graduate faculty members, our students and faculty will be better served.

4. Be aware that advisory committees are active in the summer terms. Even if you are not teaching courses in the summer semester, you are expected to fulfill your obligations to the students whose committees you agree to serve on. *If you cannot fulfill a summer committee assignment, please do not agree to serve on a particular committee that indicates a summer graduation date.*
5. *For PORTFOLIO:* you will need to be familiar with the portfolio process; you will be expected to evaluate your advisees' portfolios at each of three "Milestones." Review the *Portfolio Handbook for Advanced Programs* online ([www.nwosu.edu/graduate/portfolio.html](http://www.nwosu.edu/graduate/portfolio.html)). Attend at least one "LiveText Graduate Portfolio" training session prior to completing your Milestone One assessment of a graduate portfolio submitted to you via LiveText.
6. *For WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAM:* you are asked to assist in the selection of the questions for your advisees' exams. To prepare your students for the exam, you may suggest methods for them to study, provide additional resources, or a variety of other suggestions, *but you must not provide the questions to the students in advance of the examination.*
7. *For WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAM:* you may be asked to grade questions from the exam. In case of questions you submitted, you will likely be asked to grade them; you may also be asked to grade questions submitted by faculty members who are unavailable or who are no longer employed by Northwestern.
8. *For WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAM:* you may be asked to serve as a proctor for the exam, which begins at 1:00 PM and ends at 5:00 PM. Faculty are asked to proctor the exam for periods of one hour each.

***Alva - Enid - Woodward: Issues concerning multiple campuses.***

1. The graduate office, EC 103 on the Alva campus, is our "central location." Though many of our faculty members are located primarily at a branch campus, there are times when it will be necessary for them to make a trip to the Alva campus.
2. Beginning August 22, 2006, the graduate office will have a representative on the Enid campus each Tuesday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM in Office 118.
3. It is simply not possible for the graduate office to duplicate services at all campus locations. In some instances, allowances can be made for the branch campuses, but the "distance factor" should not be an excuse for not meeting our responsibilities to our students.
4. As long as the written comprehensive examination is given (until the fall semester of 2008), it will be given on the Alva campus. To maintain the integrity of the examination, it is simply not practical to give the exam at all campus locations.

Please contact Ms. Debbie Skinner, Coordinator of Graduate Studies (email [dgskinner@nwosu.edu](mailto:dgskinner@nwosu.edu) or telephone 580.327.8410) or Dr. Rodney C. Murrow, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (email [rkmurrow@nwosu.edu](mailto:rkmurrow@nwosu.edu) or telephone 580.327.8589), if you have questions about your responsibilities in the graduate program.

***The Graduate Studies home page is located at [www.nwosu.edu/graduate/](http://www.nwosu.edu/graduate/)***

