

UCF Graduate Council

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GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of September 22, 2010 meeting

Members Present

Patricia Bishop, Ratna Chakrabarti, Mary Ann Feldheim, Stephanie Guittar, Jim Moharam, Eduardo Mucciolo, Paul Rompf, Eladio Scharron, Axel Stock

Recorder

Rhonda Nelson

Dr. Moharam called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum was established. Dr. Moharam welcomed the committee to the first meeting of the semester and introductions of the committee members followed.

Dr. Moharam indicated that the responsibility of the committee was to review and recommend new policies and procedures or changes to existing policies and procedures with regard to graduate education. He indicated that the issues can come from the colleges and departments and may also be recommended by the other Graduate Council committees in the course of their deliberations. A handout of suggested issues to undertake was shared. Dr. Moharam indicated that this was not intended to be the final list and asked the committee if there were additional issues to add. He then asked Dr. Stern to review the issues that were listed on the handout.

Candidacy exam policy. Dr. Stern pointed out that there was no current policy concerning whether a student should be required to pass a candidacy exam here if they had previously completed their coursework and candidacy exam at another university. Dr. Stern indicated that only one or two such cases arose each year. Other relevant issues were raised: (1) serious consideration should be given to having the student receive the degree from the other university (even if they accompany their advisor to UCF for the final year(s) of research); (2) excess transfer credit hours could be approved as an exception to policy; (3) the importance of maintaining flexibility for such situations.

Ethics environment. In the course of the discussion of the Z designation policy that was being instituted for undergraduates, the previous year's committee tabled adopting a Z designation for graduate students and recommended instead to create an environment that promoted a comprehensive understanding of ethical issues in graduate education. Currently, the Z designation does not apply to graduate students, even for graduate students taking UG classes. The current committee agreed that the Z designation policy should be mentioned in the syllabi for classes. Dr. Bishop asked if the paragraph she sent to everyone earlier in the year clearly indicated that the Z designation did not apply to graduate students. Dr. Chakrabarti indicated that COM has a required course on Ethics for all graduate students.

Limits on distance faculty participation in thesis and dissertation defenses. Discussion was held on whether faculty members should attend in person or online and other related issues.

Split level courses. The curriculum committee sought guidelines on whether there should be a limit on the number of split-level (combined 4000/5000 level) courses offered in a graduate program. There is not a systematic list of split level classes. A suggestion was made to consider whether core courses should be considered differently from elective courses. The Registrar's office will provide a list for the next meeting.

Continuous/part-time T/D enrollment issues. This issue continues from the discussion in last year's committee. The committee will consider this issue once the financial ramifications can be discussed with the Provost. Several summer enrollment situations were highlighted for consideration: (1) enrollment of a student in summer if the faculty advisor is away; (2) importance of continual progress in summer - if advisor remains at UCF, the student should continue working and be enrolled in T/D hours; (3) a student receiving support should be enrolled in the summer.

Graduate assistant policy language. No policy exists for hiring and supporting graduate assistants. It was noted that there are some state regulations in place, but additional guidelines can be added. Discussion was needed on acceptable practice with regard to leave and work hours. Dr. Bishop shared that EEO had asked that Graduate Studies consider adding policies regarding GAs because of the Title IX site visits. No policy is in place for appropriate benefits. Discussion followed on: (1) how to handle leave for GAs during pregnancies and sick leave; (2) considerations concerning students hired by the department versus by the faculty; and (3) raise options for graduate students. A Human Resources representative will be invited for the meeting when this issue is planned for discussion.

Other business. Dr. Moharam asked if anyone had any additional issues they would like to add to the agenda. Dr. Chakrabarti made a comment about T/D publishing issues with abstracts when students submit to Turnitin.com. Dr. Chakrabarti will bring more information regarding this to the committee. Discussion was then held on setting up accounts in Turnitin.com and who had access to the accounts.

Faculty Senate Constitution language regarding eligibility to serve on the Graduate Council. The committee reviewed the current language and made suggestions. The amended language below was approved by unanimous vote by the Graduate Council Policy Committee at today's meeting and will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate for consideration in article 3.10.5.1.1 of the UCF Faculty Constitution.

Current language: "... Only tenured associate or full professors are eligible to serve on the Council. Each college ..."

Amend to: "... Only associate or full professors who are members of the Graduate Faculty are eligible to serve on the Council. Each college ..."

Next meeting. The committee will begin reviewing the issue of Candidacy exams.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11::30 a.m.

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