

Graduate Policy Committee
April 11, 2012
10:00 – 11:30, MH 395

AGENDA

- 1) Welcome and call to order
- 2) Review C grade limit revision draft
- 3) Graduate Student Bill of Rights
- 4) Adjournment

Policy Committee:

Jeffrey Bedwell, COS Psychology

Juli Dixon, CEd School of Teaching, Learning and Leadership

Jim Moharam, chair, COPP Optics and Photonics

Alejandro Sepulveda, CECS Industrial Engineering and Management Systems

Gerald Smith, COHPA Health Professions

Jacqueline Byers, CON Nursing

Linda Colding, Libraries Reference

Steven Ebert, COM Biomedical Sciences

Paul Rompf, RCHM Hospitality Services

Eladio Scharron, CAH Music

Axel Stock, CBA Marketing

Nicole Owens, student representative Sociology

Ross Hinkle, CoGS *ex officio*

Michael Stern, CoGS liaison

Maximum Hours of Unsatisfactory Grades

Original Policy: 12-3.1.0

See 2011-2012 Graduate Catalog: Policies/General Graduate Policies/Academic Progress and Performance
http://www.graduatedcatalog.ucf.edu/content/policies.aspx?id=5700#Academic_Progress_and_Performance
(toward the bottom)

Maximum Hours of Unsatisfactory Grades

A degree-seeking or nondegree student may earn a maximum total of six semester hours of unsatisfactory grades. Unsatisfactory grades are C, C+, C- , D, D+, D-, F, and U. A course in which a student has received these grades may be repeated, however, both grades will be used in computing the GPA. There is no forgiveness policy for any course taken while in graduate status. Exceeding six semester hours of unsatisfactory grades is reason for dismissal.

Maximum Hours of Unsatisfactory Grades

Original Policy: 12-3.1.1

See 2011-2012 Graduate Catalog: Policies/General Graduate Policies/Academic Progress and Performance
http://www.graduatecatalog.ucf.edu/content/policies.aspx?id=5700#Academic_Progress_and_Performance
(toward the bottom)

Maximum Hours of Unsatisfactory Grades

A student may apply a maximum total of six semester credit hours of “C” grades, or the “C” grade credits associated with at most two classes, whichever is greater, to satisfy degree program requirements. “C” grades (C, C+, C-), as well as D, D+, D-, F, and U grades, are all considered unsatisfactory grades. Exceeding six semester credit hours of unsatisfactory grades is grounds for dismissal for all degree-seeking and nondegree students. A course in which a student has received an unsatisfactory grade may be repeated, however both grades will be used in computing the GPA. There is no forgiveness policy for any course taken while in graduate status.



Introduced by: Medicine Reps. Berry & Boohaker

Sponsored by: Sciences Rep. Tafur
Graduate Student Association
College of Graduate Studies, MH 230
University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida 32816

Introduced: Monday March 28 , 2011

Initial Vote: 5-0-0 **Final Reading:** May 12 , 2011 **Final Vote:** 5-0-0

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL FOR A GRADUATE STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS BILL 07-07

Whereas, The Golden Rule Student Handbook is the primary authority which defines the basic rights and freedoms of students enrolled at the University and was established to give the students a voice in determining the rules to which all students shall adhere;

Whereas, There is a need to extend the primary authority vested in the the Golden Rule Handbook and the Golden Rule Review Committee to address unique rights, freedoms, responsibilities, and rules worthy of and pertaining to graduate students enrolled at the University;

Whereas, Any student enrolled at the University is permitted to attend Golden Rule Review Committee meetings and be considered to have the right to debate on any proposal, but not have the power to vote unless they are members of the committee;

Whereas, Graduate Students, apart from the rest of the population of the University, are uniquely and singularly qualified to address any proposal/s pertaining to the rights, freedoms, responsibilities, and rules of enrolled graduate students extending beyond those existing in the Golden Rule Handbook;

and

Whereas, Only Graduate Students enrolled at the University should have the right to debate and vote on any proposal/s that extend their rights, freedoms, responsibilities, and rules beyond those existing in the Golden Rule Handbook;

Therefore, be it enacted by the 9th Assembly of the Graduate Student Association that the proposed rights, freedoms, responsibilities, and rules that Graduate Students enrolled at the University of Central Florida shall hold and adhere to beyond the Golden Rule are defined in the following Graduate Student Bill of Rights:

RIGHTS, FREEDOMS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRADUATE STUDENTS ENROLLED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

In order to promote a more productive climate between ourselves and our faculty and to define our role in the university as a whole, we, the graduate students of the University of Central Florida (UCF), claim the rights, freedoms, and responsibilities enumerated below. These are rights, freedoms, responsibilities, and rules common to all graduate students that extend beyond those specified in the Golden Rule. They form a foundation upon which faculty and graduate students can build a genuine intellectual community. The graduate student rights and responsibilities rest on the roles of graduate students as junior colleagues who are critical to the university's mission of teaching and research. All members of the university community are responsible for securing and respecting the general conditions conducive to a graduate student's unique role as student, researcher, and teacher. This document is supported by the Graduate Student Association, and endorsed by the Graduate Student Advisory Board¹ May 12 , 2011.

1. RIGHTS

(a-h Grads and the University) (i-k Grads and Advisers)

(l-t Grads as Junior Colleagues) (u-v Grads in the decision making process)

(w-z Grads and Grievances)

¹ The Rights and Responsibilities presented in this document were inspired by guidelines policies, and papers existing at other Universities and the literature. A select number of these guidelines, policies, and papers are listed below:

G. S. A. at Middle Tennessee State University, "Graduate student bill of rights and responsibilities," 2010. [Online]. Available: http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/10_12/2010-12_BillofRights.pdf

G. S. A. at the University of California Davis, Pierre duVair, Sumner Morris, "Graduate student bill of rights and responsibilities," November 1990. [Online]. Available:

http://gsa.ucdavis.edu/Graduate_Student_Bill_of_Rights

G. S. A. at the University of California Davis, "Graduate student bill of rights and responsibilities," August 2009. [Online]. Available: http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/forms/GS401_StudentRightsResponsibilities.pdf

G. S. A. at the University of California San Diego, "Graduate student bill of rights and responsibilities," November 2010. [Online]. Available: <http://gsa.ucsd.edu/content/graduate-student-bill-rights-andresponsibilities>

M. Schniederjans and N. Geri, "A proposed Ph. D. student bill of rights," International Journal of Doctoral Studies, vol. 2, pp. 1-8, 2007.

- a. Graduate students are to be considered members of a scholarly community, respected as individuals of merit, and be treated as junior colleagues of faculty. As such graduate students have the right to collegial and respectful treatment by faculty members.
- b. Graduate students shall not be exploited in any way by faculty, administration, or staff.
- c. Graduate students have the right to observe all holidays outlined in the University's academic calendar.
- d. Graduate students have the right to at least ten (10) school days of vacation time per calendar year in addition to all university holidays and/or closures.
- e. Graduate students have the right to study and work in an environment free of exploitation, intimidation, harassment and discrimination based on characteristics such as gender, ethnicity race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religious or political beliefs and affiliations.
- f. Graduate students have the right to an accurate and timely description of the availability and the likelihood of financial and resource support within their program and within the University and will be given an equal opportunity to compete for support for which they are eligible.
 - i. Prospective and currently enrolled graduate students should be provided a thorough description of the requirements and qualifications necessary for holding teaching assistant-ships and graduate assistant-ships and receiving financial support from the University.
 - ii. Prospective and currently enrolled graduate students should be provided a thorough description of the requirements and qualifications for all academic and financial awards in their programs and in the Graduate Catalog. They are to be assured that competition for any and all academic awards will be available to eligible graduate students and that evaluation for such awards will be fair and objective. They also should be informed of the procedures for evaluating applicants.
- g. Graduate students have the right to be informed of specific requirements for achieving an advanced degree.
 - i. Each department shall communicate clearly these requirements to its students.
 - ii. No graduate student shall be held to program requirements implemented after the catalog year of their admission, unless the student so chooses.
 - iii. Prospective and currently enrolled graduate students have the right to know of the average time to complete a degree within a specific graduate program.
 - iv. Prospective and currently enrolled graduate students have the right to know a program's and/or emphasis's attrition rate, if available, and the predominant reasons for lack of program completion except in instances where confidentiality is threatened. Student access to statistical information on graduate programs shall not interfere with the privacy rights of other students.
 - v. Prospective and currently enrolled graduate students have the right to know academic benchmarks for each degree. These benchmarks shall be clearly outlined in writing.
- h. Graduate students have the right to a non-biased evaluation of their progress toward achieving an advanced degree. The evaluation criteria shall be clearly understood by the graduate adviser and student.

- i. If a graduate student requests an explanation for any unsatisfactory performance evaluation it shall be given in writing in a timely manner.
- i. Graduate students have the right to respectful mentorship, substantive feedback, and regular guidance concerning their academic performance.
 - i. Graduate students shall have their progress toward achieving an advanced degree be evaluated in an objective manner and based on criteria that are understood by the graduate adviser and students.
 - ii. Evaluations shall be factual, specific, and shall be shared with the student within a reasonable period of time. Annual progress reports shall be in writing.
 - iii. A written evaluation of performance on qualifying and comprehensive examinations shall be provided to students.
 - iv. Graduate students shall receive regular feedback and guidance concerning their academic performance through a mutually agreeable schedule of conferences with their adviser/chair/mentor.
 - v. Graduate students and their thesis/dissertation directors shall arrive at and maintain a mutually agreeable schedule of evaluative/supervisory conferences.
 - vi. Graduate students shall be given a fair opportunity to correct or remedy deficiencies in their academic performance with agreed upon timetables for remedy.
- j. Graduate students have the right to restructure their committee and/or change their major professor, committee chair, or adviser.
- k. Graduate students have the right to be clearly informed, in writing, of any intent of dismissal or disqualification from their graduate program or emphasis.
 - i. Any intent to dismiss a student from a graduate program and/or emphasis for academic reasons must be preceded by a warning, which includes specific performance information, well in advance of actual dismissal.
 - ii. Any intent to discontinue an adviser/chair/mentor relationship with a graduate student must be preceded by a warning within a reasonable period of time.
 - iii. Graduate students must be notified in writing of unsatisfactory performance before any attempt is begun to dismiss them from a graduate program. Only the dean of the College of Graduate Studies can dismiss a student from a graduate program for academic reasons and normally only upon the recommendation of the graduate program coordinator and department chair.
 - iv. Graduate students have the right to appeal for cause any decision affecting their academic standing as a graduate student. The burden of responsibility rests with the appellant to provide timely, cogent, and convincing written documentation of the facts upon which the appeal is based. University grievance procedures shall be available upon request at the Graduate College. Opportunities for informal resolution shall also be explained to the student when appropriate.
 - A. In general, a student's performance or behavior shall not be discussed by a professor with other students.

B. Discussion among faculty of a student's performance shall be of a professional nature and shall be limited to the student's academic performance and fitness as a graduate student: the substance of the communication shall be based on need-to-know, relevant information.

- l. Graduate students shall be provided with appropriate office, study, and/or laboratory space.
- m. Graduate students have the right to refuse to perform tasks if those tasks are not related to their academic and/or professional development, or are not a part of their defined responsibilities.
- n. Graduate students have the right to receive fair recognition for their efforts and contributions to cooperative research projects.
- o. Graduate students have the right to co-authorship in publications involving significant contribution of ideas or research work from the student.
 - i. The student shall receive first authorship for publications which are comprised primarily of the creative research and writing of the student when consistent with the conventions of the field.
 - ii. Due efforts and recognition shall be determined prior to the project commencement whenever possible.
- p. Graduate students have the right to be represented in the decision-making process relative to graduate issues in their departments and programs specific to their discipline, possibly taking many different forms.
- q. Graduate students have the right to evaluate their major professors and/or advisers annually in writing without fear of retribution.
- r. Graduate students have the right to review vitae of faculty members within their degree programs/departments who are qualified/eligible to serve on their graduate committees.
 - i. These vitae shall be made available at the time the students are accepted into their programs to aid them in selecting their committee members.
- s. Teaching assistants and teaching associates have the right to appropriate teacher training as specific to their teaching assignment.
 - i. All graduate programs and/or emphases shall implement a structured training program for their teaching assistants and teaching associates.
 - ii. All graduate programs and/or emphases shall outline the expectations of a graduate student teacher, and the ways in which those expectations can be achieved, for their teaching assistants and teaching associates.
- t. Graduate students have the right to professional training.
 - i. This shall include but not be limited to information about professional associations and conferences, mock interviews, job opportunities and publishing articles in journals.
- u. Graduate students have the right to share in the governance of the University.
 - i. All departments, graduate programs and/or emphases shall include space for graduate student representatives in the decision-making process where appropriate.
 - ii. Graduate students shall have space for representatives on all campus-wide committees, with voting privileges where appropriate according to the guidelines of shared governance.

- v. Graduate students have the right to manage a significant percentage of discretionary funds derived from tuition dollars to best serve the needs of the graduate student population.
 - i. Graduate student monies shall be appropriated by a representative body comprised of graduate students.
- w. Graduate students have the right to confidentiality in their communication with professors.
- x. Graduate students have the right to clearly defined official grievance procedures and informal complaint procedures at the department and campus-wide levels.
 - i. Each department shall have clearly defined grievance procedures that will be made readily available.
 - ii. Consistent with this right, graduate students have the right to procedures appropriate to the nature of the case and the severity of the potential discipline.
 - iii. When a formal hearing is required, a graduate student has the right to the following minimum procedural standards to assure a fair hearing.
 - A. The opportunity for a prompt and fair hearing: upon the request of the student the University shall bear the burden of proof and the student shall have the opportunity to present documents, witnesses, and confront and cross-examine witnesses presented by the University. No inference, shall be drawn from the silence of the accused.
 - B. A record of the hearing: an expeditious written decision based upon the preponderance of evidence, which shall be accompanied by a written summary of the findings of fact.
 - C. An appeal.
- y. Graduate students have the right to challenge their term grades if those grades are based upon criteria other than course performance.
- z. Graduate students have the right to be free of reprisals for exercising these rights.

2. FREEDOMS

- a. Given that Graduate students have the same rights and obligations as all citizens, as applicable by law, they are free as other citizens to express their views and to participate in the political processes of the academic community and the community at large.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

(a-b Informed Grads) (c-f Academic Etiquette) (g-j Involvement)

(k Upholding the UCF Mission)

- a. Graduate students have a responsibility to read and become familiar with the Graduate Catalog and the Graduate Student Bill of Rights.
- b. Graduate students have a responsibility to complete and submit all documents required for admission and their academic progress to the College of Graduate Studies and to their departments.
- c. Graduate students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in all academic activities in a manner befitting the professional academic.
- d. Graduate students' behavior shall be a credit to themselves, the degree program/department, and the University.

- e. Graduate students have a responsibility to devote appropriate time and energy toward achieving the advanced degree within a reasonable time frame as specified by their graduate programs.
- f. Graduate students have a responsibility to uphold ethical norms and honesty in research methodology and scholarship.
- g. Graduate students have a responsibility to participate in the campus community to the extent that they are able and to enrich the campus in whatever ways possible, including contributing to:
 - i. the academic development and the social environment of the department in which they are pursuing the advanced degree
 - ii. decision making relative to graduate student issues in the department, student government, and the University
- h. Graduate students have the responsibility to take the initiative in asking questions that promote their understanding of the academic requirements and financial particulars of their specific graduate program.
- i. Graduate students have the responsibility to understand their role in the development of their relationships with faculty mentors.
 - i. To demonstrate an awareness of the time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty members and program staff.
 - ii. To communicate regularly with faculty mentors and advisers, especially in matters related to research, progress, concerns, and problems within the graduate program.
- j. Graduate students have the responsibility to inform their graduate program coordinator and major adviser, in writing, of any intent to modify and/or relinquish their position in their program of study.
- k. Graduate students have the responsibility to uphold the public service aspects of the mission of this public university, at a level appropriate to their ability and graduate program.
 - i. To provide high quality teaching to undergraduate students.
 - ii. To provide valuable research and support to the faculty and fellow graduate students.

Be it further enacted, That any proposed changes to the Graduate Student Bill of Rights shall require a super majority (2/3) vote of the leadership of the representative body or the written support of 15% of the enrolled graduate student population at the University ;

Be it further enacted, That a majority vote of all enrolled graduate students voting on any proposed changes to the Graduate Student Bill Rights and the support of the Faculty Senate and the Administration of the University of Central Florida shall be required before any changes to the Graduate Students Bill of Rights are implemented;

Be it further enacted, That the Graduate Student Bill of Rights presented in this document shall become effective immediately upon receiving a majority vote of enrolled graduate students and

GSBORR – Issues Outline

The major question is: how can we cooperate to accomplish the goals for these best practices?

Major points: (these are a subset of the “Whereas” clauses)

1. Due to the differences in the nature of graduate education and the population of students engaged in graduate education, the Rules, Rights and Responsibilities pertaining to graduate students are not identical to those pertaining to other students at the university. It is important to delineate these.
2. Graduate students should be represented on university committees that either decide on, or make recommendations concerning issues affecting graduate students

Major issues:

- Respectful treatment
 - Respect of time – holidays, vacation, hours
 - Timely response and notification
 - Professional behavior
 - Recognition as contributors to the missions of the university
- Clarified expectations, and changing terms of those expectations
- Access to information:
 - role of graduate handbooks
 - reasonable general information
 - program’s vs student’s responsibility to be informed on general matters
 - information concerning the individual student’s status
- evaluation of academic progress
 - in writing
 - timely
- right to due process
- Focus on student success
 - Opportunity to remedy deficiencies
 - Not limited to academia focus
- Right to privacy
- Adequate work environment
 - GTA training

Issue types:

- Cultural
- Structural
- Resource