

Graduate Policy Committee
October 16, 2013
10:00 – 11:30, MH 395

AGENDA

- 1) Welcome and call to order
- 2) Approval of minutes from the last meeting
- 3) Can doctoral programs restrict students from getting a master's in another program – review and vote on language discussed at last meeting
- 4) GTA and non-GTA graduate teaching assistant guidelines – Graduate students who aren't on an assistantship and hired as a non GTA who volunteer to teach; some do not do GTA training.
- 5) Expired course revalidation – not a formal mechanism in place.
- 6) Continuous enrollment policies for T/D students – 4-part policy. Confirm current policy or make changes as necessary.
- 7) Review of 7-yr extension due to Master's along-the-way – how difficult to distinguish independent earned master's degrees from the MAtW (practical certification issue)
- 8) Other issues
- 9) Adjournment

Policy Committee:

Cheryl Cabrera, CAH, School of Visual Arts and Design
Yoon Choi, CBA, Finance
Kevin Coffey, CECS, Materials Science and Engineering
Juli Dixon, CEHP, School of Teaching, Learning and Leadership
Steven Ebert, COM, Biomedical Sciences
Jim Moharam, Chair, COP, Optics and Photonics
Patrick Pabian, COHPA, Health Professions
Jeffrey Bedwell, COS, Psychology
Linda Colding, Libraries, Research and Information Services
Loretta Forlaw, CON, Nursing
Cheyenne Ro, RCHM, Hospitality Services
Ross Hinkle, CGS, *ex officio*

DRAFT POLICY:
Summer reprieve for thesis/dissertation continuous enrollment;
Elimination of part-time hours for thesis/dissertation enrollment

Definition: The term “continuous enrollment” is used in two different contexts:

1. Students are inactivated if they are not enrolled > 2 terms consecutively (not continuously enrolled)
2. Dissertation and Thesis students are required to be continuously enrolled (every term, until they graduate)

We are discussing modifying the second of these, in the following manner: requiring continuous enrollment for these students only in Fall and Spring terms, not including Summer.

Four-part policy:

1. Discontinue continuous enrollment requirement for Summer term; enrollment required in Fall and Spring terms

Communication concerning the procedure for Summer term enrollment:

- a. No enrollment necessary
 - b. If working on thesis or dissertation, they must be enrolled – chairs and directors must emphasize this
 - c. To decide (see point 4): If hired to work on their thesis or dissertation (as GRA), the university will cover their tuition (faculty on 9 month salary)
2. No partial thesis/dissertation hours (but research can be for any # of hours) (applies to all terms)
3 SCH as F/T already subsumes both classes of students (P/T and F/T)
3. Enforced LOA policy
 - a. Policy specifics
 - i. Fall or Spring non-enrollment requires LOA
 - ii. 1 yr max continuous LOA – requires justification
 - b. Implementation
 - i. Requires formalized submission and review infrastructure
 - ii. Monitoring?
 - iii. Inactivation?
 - iv. Consequence
 1. Registration hold? (not very effective – just dissertation, not classes)
 2. charge back tuition for missed Fall and Spring terms upon return?
4. Consider: University tuition support for 3 SCH summer dissertation/thesis enrollment for GRAs
 - As tuition payments; OR
 - As waivers: would need to change the BOT resolution to cover these

Rationale:

- a. Most aspirational universities do not require summer enrollment
- b. Makes tuition support cost neutral to faculty hiring T/D GRAs in summer
 - i. prevent strategies for circumventing tuition payment (OPS hires)
 - ii. maintain enrollment for truly actively-engaged students (state reimbursement)
- c. prior to Su2010, did not collect tuition from these students – all had waivers

- d. provide support for faculty:
 - i. many on 9 month salaries; they are mentoring free of charge to the university anyway (although the university still provides support resources for these students)
 - ii. modest, but widely distributed, and encourages research

Rationale for policy change

- Policy is not enforced – only some follow
- There are students who are legitimately not working on their thesis/dissertation in the summer
 - International student vacations
 - Summer internships
 - Faculty not available
 - Align a need for a break with the break in the academic year
- Enrollment in partial thesis/dissertation hours used as a poor mechanism to moderate the problematic issues
- Tracking lack of continuous enrollment would help expedite degrees

Scenarios: (in the absence of summer continuous enrollment policy)

- Non-thesis/dissertation students
 - are unaffected by this policy change – they are not required to be continuously enrolled in the summer term
- Supported students
 - Not enrolled – hired as OPS
 - Circumventing tuition payment
 - university underfunded by State
 - these must be strongly discouraged, OR disincentivized
 - Enrolled - must be F/T enrolled
- Unsupported students
 - The data – see handouts
 - Not-enrolled students - not maintaining continuous enrollment
 - Not-active (not really doing any work toward their degree)
 - Active
 - undercharged for their use of university resources
 - university underfunded by State
 - these must be strongly discouraged
 - P/T-enrolled students
 - Not active, maintaining continuous enrollment – charged unnecessarily
 - Active
 - undercharged for their use of university resources
 - university underfunded by State
 - F/T-enrolled students
 - Enrolled in credits they need
 - Enrolled in credits they do not formally need

Other relevant data:

- Need for summer hours to fulfill dissertation and/or degree credit requirements – data by program
- Comparative institution analysis
 - Vast majority of universities have no summer continuous enrollment requirement, despite having Fall/Spring ones
 - FL SUS universities are very idiosyncratic
- If TDFs are awarded
 - The cost of funding 3 SCH summer thesis/dissertation goes down by ~\$50,000 (60 TDFs x 3 SCH x I/S tuition rate)

Time Limitation and Continuous Enrollment

A student has seven years from the date of admission to the doctoral program to complete the dissertation and the doctoral degree. No courses used in a program of study can be older than seven years at the time of graduation. Credits that are part of an earned master's degree are exempt from this 7-year expiration, including those earned "along-the-way" in a doctoral program.

Students who anticipate being out for an extended period of three consecutive semesters or longer should apply for a Special Leave of Absence no later than the end of the add/drop period of the third semester of absence. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment without a Special Leave of Absence (see Continuous Attendance and Special Leave of Absence in the General Graduate Policies) must file for readmission to the university, although seven years is measured from when the student was first admitted to the program.

Readmission

If doctoral students do not maintain continuous enrollment (see Continuous Attendance in the General Graduate Policies), they must file for readmission to the university. To file for readmission, the student must complete a new online Application. For more information about readmission, refer to the Admissions in this catalog.

Readmission decisions are individually made, based on such factors as space in the program, reasons for the break in graduate education, progress in the degree program, among others. Readmission is not guaranteed.

Enrollment in Dissertation Hours

The university requires all doctoral students to take a minimum of 15 credit hours of doctoral dissertation hours; however, specific programs may require more than this minimum. Dissertation research is considered to be a full-time effort, and post-candidacy enrollment in at least three doctoral dissertation (XXX 7980) credit hours constitutes full-time graduate status. Doctoral students who have passed candidacy and have begun taking doctoral dissertation hours (XXX 7980) must enroll in at least three dissertation hours each semester (including summers, without skipping a semester) and continue doing so until they complete the dissertation and graduate. Students who need to interrupt their dissertation work for extenuating circumstances must submit a leave-of-absence form to the College of Graduate Studies. Submission and approval of the form must be obtained prior to the first day of classes for the term on non enrollment.

* Students wishing to enroll in part-time hours should consult with their adviser. Students enrolling in fewer than three credit hours are not eligible for financial assistance.