

UCF Graduate Council

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GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of October 30, 2008 meeting

Members Present Patricia Bishop, John C. Bricout, Jacquie Byers, Jim Moharam, Paul Rompf, Michael Stern

Recorder Patricia Bishop

Staff Members Tracy Jones

Files [2008-11-13 Meeting Draft CourseCategoryDefs](#) 
[2008-11-13 Meeting Draft Program Requirements](#) 

- Meeting began at 10 am. Dr. Moharam, chair, asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and approved by voice vote.
- Dr. Moharam asked everyone to please look at the new form that is being created to track new policies and asked if the routing of the form now reflected the actual way that policies are approved. He explained to the committee that if an existing policy were being clarified that often he would consult with the Chair of the Faculty Senate about the need for this to go to the Steering Committee. If a new policy were coming forward then this would be routed to the Steering Committee and possibly to the Faculty Senate for approval and then to the Provost. It was agreed that a new item was necessary to reflect this routing and Dr. Moharam suggested that a new item (4) be added to the list to reflect this, and that the existing item (4) become item (5). This was agreed and the committee voted to approve the use of the new form.
- Dr. Stern presented the definitions of courses that the committee had worked on the last time and asked for any suggested changes. It was agreed that the following changes would be made and reviewed at the next meeting: (1) concerning the Note, it was agreed that the note would state that these definitions would apply to the proper use of courses that could be used in a program of study, (2) that independent studies should be signed by the program director when they are used in a program of study, (3) that thesis or dissertation hours would be removed from definition of directed research courses, (4) that in the definition of courses - the phrase "which can include classroom-style classes, research hours or training hours would be deleted as not necessary, (5) and that media-enhanced would be added to the definition of "classroom-style" courses.

Dr. Bishop said that she would share this with the associate deans in the colleges to see if they had feedback on these definitions and report back to the Policy Committee.

Dr. Jasinski asked if programs could substitute one required course for another. The answer was yes, that the language states that this is the purview of the program.

Dr. Bowdon asked if the XXX 6973 was being used at the university. Dr. Bishop said that the Graduate College would check.

Dr. Stern asked whether professional experience could be taken into consideration as fulfilling a program requirement. Dr. Bishop replied that the catalog allows testing out of required courses, but that the hours needed to be fulfilled by enrolling in another course.

A clean copy will be prepared for the next meeting, to be sent separately to the Steering Committee.
- Discussion then began on master's program policies. It was suggested that the following edits would be made:

...the word "may" would be inserted into the first sentence to preclude having to provide a comprehensive list of the kinds of courses included in a master's program.

...in the sentence that began with "for the thesis option" that this be changed to include all master's degree programs so that the new sentence would read "for the master's degree, at least 24 semester hours of core and elective courses must be earned exclusive of thesis, directed research, or research reports".

...in the same vein, the sentence "for the non-thesis option..." - this sentence would be deleted.

...under thesis enrollment requirements, it was agreed to use the last clause as the start of the sentence and that this would make the intent clearer.
- In terms of doctoral program policies, the following edits would be made:

...the word "may" would be inserted into the sentence addressed degree program requirements to preclude a comprehensive list of kinds of courses included in the doctoral program.

...under candidacy, the plural would become singular and refer to "student" rather than "students" in the first sentence.

6. It was also agreed that further thought and discussion would be given to the sentence "the exam is administered by the members of the student's dissertation advisory committee" since this is handled differently by different programs.
7. Feedback was solicited by the committee on common curricular elements, a handout prepared by using last year's curricular submissions to the graduate catalog. It was agreed that an item "core" should be added under required courses. Also, exams needed to be added to the list. All thought this could be useful in allowing graduate catalog copy to be assembled in the future. Dr. Bishop said she would share this with the associate deans in the colleges to see if they have feedback on these elements.
8. Dr. Stern asked if rather than take the approach of providing specific limitations and restrictions to the overall policies, particularly with regard to independent studies, directed research, etc. that maybe the university would be willing to take a more positive approach and set basic policies on the classroom-style courses and dissertation courses and then leave the remaining hours up to the program. Dr. Bishop presented a list of classroom and dissertation hours for each doctoral program that she obtained from the Graduate Catalog and stated that it would be possible to get more exacting information if the committee liked this type of approach. The committee discussed this and seemed to prefer this approach and stated that they would be willing to gather more information on our doctoral programs and see if this approach could be taken. Dr. Bishop said that she would be willing to present this approach to the associate deans for their feedback as well.
9. The committee adjourned at 11:35 am.

Policy Committee Meeting
October 20, 2008

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Course category definitions:

Note: Please see Policies for limits on proper use of hours that can be applied to degrees.

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Independent Study (XXX 6908)

A course of study created outside of the standard-format classroom-style formal courses offered by the University. Independent Study must have a formally-defined core of knowledge to be learned by the student(s). ~~A written contract that clearly delineates~~ the core of knowledge to be learned by the student(s) must be ~~drafted~~ specified in written form and signed-approved by ~~both~~ the student(s), ~~and~~ the instructor, and the program coordinator prior to ~~the approval of~~ enrollment in Independent Study.

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Directed Research (XXX 6918) – graduate level research/scholarly work

Research hours taken at the graduate level. These can include laboratory rotations in addition to standard research and scholarly endeavors directed toward completion of a project, ~~a thesis, or a dissertation.~~

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Doctoral Research (XXX 7919) – doctoral level research/scholarly work

Research hours at the doctoral level taken prior to passing candidacy. These can include laboratory rotations, preparation for candidacy exams, or standard research and scholarly endeavors directed toward completion of a project or a dissertation.

Doctoral Dissertation (XXX 7980)

Research or scholarly hours taken after advancement to candidacy and directed toward completion of a dissertation.

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Thesis (XXX 6971/~~XXX 6973~~)

Research hours ~~taken to satisfy a thesis requirement~~ directed toward completion of a thesis.

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“Courses”

~~All e~~Enrollment hours with an official class number, ~~which can include classroom-style classes, research hours, or training hours.~~

“Classroom-style” Formal courses

Existing UCF courses that involve standard class instruction of a defined body of disciplinary knowledge. These courses involve interactions between a formal course instructor and the students that make up the class, and can be traditional, face-to-face courses and/or web-based media-enhanced courses. Such classes include both core/required courses as well as electives, but are distinguished from Independent Study (XXX 6908) and the various categories of individualized research and scholarly courses.

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Core/Required courses

Courses that cover a certain body of knowledge that is central to a program of study. These courses must be taken to fulfill degree requirements, and may only be substituted by equivalent formal formal coursework.

Elective courses

Courses that cover a certain body of knowledge that is important, but optional for a program of study.

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Master's Program Policies

Program Requirements

The program requirements for a master's degree may include core and elective courses, seminars, independent study, directed research, and thesis research. A minimum of 30 semester hours of post-baccalaureate, graduate work (5000-level or higher), which must be taken as part of an approved graduate program of study, is required. At least half of the program of study must be at the 6000 level. Only graduate-level work with a grade of "C-" or higher may be used to satisfy degree requirements. Some programs require more than the minimum of 30 hours because of the nature of the discipline and the standards of the associated profession. For the ~~thesis option~~ master's degree, at least 24 semester hours of core and elective courses must be earned exclusive of thesis and research. In no case will the number of thesis hours in excess of the amount required by a program be counted toward degree completion. ~~For the nonthesis option at least 27 semester hours of core and elective courses must be earned exclusive of directed research and research reports.~~ At least 50 percent of the credits offered for the degree must be in a single field of concentration. A research report, capstone course, comprehensive exam, or other culminating experience that demonstrates that graduate students have engaged in independent learning is required in a nonthesis option master's program. An explanation of how the culminating experience promotes independent learning is required in each program's curricular description.

Independent Study Hours

A maximum of three courses may be taken as independent study (XXX 6908), for a total of no more than six semester hours. Independent Study hours may be substituted only for course electives, not for core/required courses.

Thesis Enrollment Requirement

After completion of regular core and elective courses, Master's level students ~~who wish to~~ may be considered full-time ~~and who if they enrolled for at least three semester credit hours of thesis are engaged in thesis~~ or research report-related activity ~~must be enrolled for at least three semester credit hours of thesis (or research report)~~ each semester continuously (including summers) ~~after completion of regular core and elective courses~~ and until successful defense and graduation. This requirement does not negate other regulations regarding full-time enrollment or the requirement that all graduate students be enrolled in the term in which they graduate. (See Registration in Term of Graduation in the *Graduate Catalog*.) Students who wish to enroll in part-time hours should consult their adviser.

Doctoral Program Policies

The primary objective of doctoral study is to educate students to a point of excellence in conducting, disseminating, and applying scholarly research, with the explicit goal of making original, substantive contributions to their degree discipline. The advanced nature of doctoral education requires student participation, debate, evaluation, and discussion of diverse ideas and approaches. Careful analysis, independent research, and greater understanding and application of ideas are also expected.

Program Requirements

The doctoral degree program requirements will consist of core and elective courses, seminars, directed and doctoral research, independent study, and dissertation research. Each doctoral program of study will include a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the baccalaureate degree which must be taken as part of an approved graduate program of study. Some programs require considerably more than the minimum of 72 hours because of the nature of the discipline and the standards of the associated profession. All graduate credit in a doctoral program must be at 5000 level or higher. At least one-half of the credit hours must be in 6000 - level or 7000-level courses, including the allowed number of research and dissertation hours. For students with waived hours from an earned master's, this amount is at least one-half of the program hours remaining after the waived hours are applied. Only graduate level credit with a grade of "C-" or higher may be used to satisfy degree requirements. A university-wide minimum of at least 27 hours of formal coursework is required for all doctoral programs, although some programs require a greater number of formal coursework hours. A university-wide minimum of at least 15 hours of dissertation credits is required for all doctoral programs, although some programs require a greater number of dissertation hours. In no case will the number of dissertation hours in excess of the amount required by a program be counted toward degree completion. Students admitted with an earned master's degree from a regionally accredited institution or recognized foreign institution may be eligible to have up to 30 hours of their doctoral program waived without a course-by-course review of completed course work, provided the master's degree was earned in the same area of study. In cases where a student's master's degree is in an area that is different from the doctoral program into which he/she is admitted, programs must conduct a course-by-course review and can waive up to 30 hours of selected courses. If there are deficiencies in the student's master's degree program, the student may be required to take additional prerequisite or background courses which cannot be included in the program of study.

Independent Study Hours

No more than 12 total semester hours of independent study (XXX 6908; including up to six hours counted toward a master's degree) may be applied to a doctoral program of study.

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Independent Study hours may be substituted only for course electives, not for core/required courses.

~~Directed Research and Doctoral Research Hours~~

~~No more than a sum total of 21 semester hours of directed research (XXX 6918) and doctoral research (XXX 7919) may be applied to a doctoral program of study. All such hours must be above and beyond classroom-style course requirements. Directed research (XXX 6918) and doctoral research (XXX 7919) hours may not be substituted for classroom-style course requirements.~~

~~Dissertation Hours~~

~~Doctoral dissertation hours (XXX 7980) may not be used to satisfy other program requirements.~~

Candidacy

Admission to Candidacy

~~A s~~Students* must demonstrate his or her readiness for the Ph.D. program by successfully completing the candidacy examination before admission to full doctoral status and enrollment into dissertation hours. The Candidacy Examination should be taken when the student is nearing the end of coursework. The exam is administered by the members of the student's dissertation advisory committee. External committee members of the dissertation advisory committee are not appointed until after the student has passed the Candidacy exam. The admission to candidacy will be approved by the program director and the college coordinator and forwarded to the UCF College of Graduate Studies for status change. Only after admission to candidacy may a student register for doctoral dissertation hours (XXX 7980).

Doctoral students admitted to candidacy are expected to enroll in dissertation hours and to devote full-time effort to conducting their dissertation research and writing the required dissertation document. Students in doctoral candidacy must continuously enroll in at least three hours of dissertation course work (XXX 7980) each semester (including summer) until the dissertation is completed.

Candidacy Examination

The purpose of the Candidacy Examination is for the student to demonstrate a strong foundation of knowledge within the specific discipline, and the ability and preparation ~~for to conduct~~ independent scholarly research. ~~The committee may examine; a broad range of appropriate capabilities, including including~~ theory, bibliography, research methodology, and ~~some the evaluation of~~ preliminary research, when appropriate. The examination must have a written component and should be based on the student's plan of study; it also may include an oral defense of a written report or dissertation proposal. All written examination materials will be kept in the student's file in the program.

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Dissertation Defense:

The dissertation defense is an oral presentation and defense of the written dissertation describing the student's research. The advisory committee will evaluate and judge the dissertation defense. Successful students must demonstrate that they are able to conduct and report original independent research that contributes substantially to the discipline in which they study.