

UCF Graduate Council

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GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of January 20, 2010 meeting

Members Present

Deborah Breiter, John C. Bricout, Jacquie Byers, Wendi Kane, Jim Moharam, Eduardo Mucciolo, Saleh Naser, Eladio Scharron, Michael Stern

Recorder

Rhonda Nelson

Staff Members

Tracy Jones

Dr. Moharam called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. A quorum was established. The minutes from the December 9 meeting were approved by voice vote. The minutes of the January 13 meeting were approved with one change to the members present.

Graduate Z grade policy. Dr. Moharam asked Dr. Stern to give a summary of the discussion that was held at the last meeting. At that meeting, Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar described the undergraduate Z grade policy and stated that many other universities had similar policies. The general consensus was that the graduate policy would be more stringent than the undergraduate policy. Dr. Stern further pointed out that the UG policy provided three different options for contesting or removing the Z designation: (1) grade forgiveness; (2) attending a mandatory ethics course (1st violation only); and (3) the official grade appeal process. A number of existing examples were proffered by committee members: Dr. Byers indicated that Nursing has sent students to the Office of Student Conduct for academic dishonesty and that students have been required to take the standard university wide Ethics course; Dr. Bricout shared that students in COHPA are often counseled for first-time offenses of minor instances of academic dishonesty. The committee discussed mechanisms to ensure that the seriousness of the offense merited a Z designation by a faculty member. A consensus emerged that the faculty member should inform the department of the pending Z designation by submitting the form to the Department Chair or designee (e.g. the Graduate Program Director), who would sign the form to acknowledge the intended action. Dr. Scharron suggested that the new policy would have to be communicated to all graduate students, particularly since the Graduate Z grade policy is so stringent. The committee agreed that a statement included in all course syllabi would be an effective mechanism for promulgating the new policy. The committee also agreed that information about the Z grade policy should be included in the orientation sessions for international students. The committee further discussed an Ethics class requirement. Dr. Naser said their department has an ethics course that students can take and that he would forward the syllabus to Tracy. He indicated that there should be a list prepared of do's and don'ts to share with graduate students. Tracy agreed to put together some information on this.

The process of grade appeal and dismissal was discussed, and the committee clarified the policy language concerning student dismissal for academic dishonesty. A question was raised regarding whether a student had to sit out while the appeal was being processed. The committee requested clarification of appeal process that would be used. Dr. Stern will make the policy updates that were discussed.

Shared credit policy. Dr. Stern updated everyone on the changes to this document, and it was clarified that transfer credit policies apply to credits transferred in from outside UCF. The committee agreed that flexibility should be maintained in structuring the timing of student application to dual degree programs. This flexibility will allow these programs to balance assurances of student quality and suitability as well as marketability to students considering dual degree programs at other institutions. The current idea for tracking the program affiliations of these students is to create dual degree tracks in each of the component programs. The committee also agreed that formal proposals for dual degree programs should include:

- (1) a clear rationale for specifying whether joint or distinct documents can satisfy the thesis/dissertation requirements for each of the component programs;
- (2) a clear rationale for specifying whether joint or distinct examinations can satisfy the requirements for each of the component programs; and
- (3) a clear structure for the financial arrangements for supported students.

The committee further considered establishing limits to the number of credits that may be double counted in dual degree programs. Dr. Stern outlined that there are three basic types of limits: a fixed number, a percent of the total number of credits in the two programs, and a lower limit on the number of credits that are unique to each program (and not dually counted). Dr. Stern shared that the University of Arizona and Ohio State University both use the last type of limit, with the formula being: "A minimum of 50% of required credit hours must be unique to each degree and cannot be used for dual credit." In this case, the maximum number of shared credits is equivalent to 50% of the smaller program's credit requirement. This is equivalent to a maximum of 25% of the total number of credits, reached in the case that the two individual programs have equal numbers of program credit requirements. The committee agreed to adopt this limit.

Dr. Stern will update the document regarding today's discussion and bring back to the next meeting for further discussion. Still to discuss is the timing of the conferral of dual degrees.

Adjournment: The committee will continue review of the shared credit policy at the next meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

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