

Graduate Council Policy Committee

November 18, 2020 • 10:30 am • Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

Members Present: Keith Koons (CAH), Uluc Aysun (COB), Jim Moharam (Optics, **Chair**), Robin Back (RCHM), Kausik Mukhopadhyay (CECS), Laurie Neely (CHPS), Corinne Bishop (LIB), Ladda Thiamwong (CON), Ann Shillingford-Butler (CCIE), Stacy Barber (COS), Uluc Aysun (COB), Devon Jensen (CGS), Barbara Fritzsche (CGS), Jennifer Parham (CGS), Winston Schoenfeld (CGS)

Guests Present: Sevil Sonmez (COB), Ali Gordon (CECS), Lynn Hepner (CAH), Linda Rosa-Lugo (CHPS)

Recorder: Michele Pozdroll

Welcome and call to order

The meeting was called to order at 10:30am by committee chair Dr. Moharam. A quorum was established.

Approval of minutes from October 14th, 2020 approved with corrections from Dr. Fritzsche.

Old business-Discussion on GRE permanent new policy-Drs. Jensen and Moharam led this continued discussion. At this time, it was decided to make the motion to move the GRE language out of University regulation and put into UCF graduate policy. The motion will go to Dr. Klonoff who will then present it to the Board of Trustees. If approved, then the policy committee will begin working on changing the language. The policy committee consensus are that the GRE/GMAT should be a programmatic requirement and not an institutional requirement.

New business-Discussion on virtual defense policy-Devon brought this to the attention of the committee just as a discussion and not deciding or voting on anything at this time. Later may request a motion to change the language in the graduate catalog. Discussion outcome with different opinions on this agenda item. There is an emergency policy in place right now due to COVID-19. Some members had different opinions on this and stressed this should be a short-term exception from the required face-to face defenses. Some members suggested the default be face-to face. Devon mentioned the virtual defense is an option in our current policy. The current policy is shown below and a write-up from Devon prior to the meeting:

Virtual dissertation defenses – The current language in the Catalog – which is the policy on this matter – suggests that the first approach should be a face to face meeting. If this can't happen, then you can go the virtual route. I have had a few colleges reach out to me about going more the virtual route as the first approach and then face to face as the secondary option. They have had success since Covid19 at doing dissertation defenses remotely/virtually and would like to do them this way as a standard practice. Here is the language in the Catalog:

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. The defense is a formal academic requirement and should be accorded respect and dignity, and thus, no refreshments or other distractions should be served during the defense.

The dean of the college or his/her designee will normally attend all dissertation defenses. Dissertations will be approved by a majority vote of the dissertation advisory committee. Further approval is required from the Dean or Dean designee and the UCF College of Graduate Studies before final acceptance of the dissertation in fulfilling degree requirements.

Dissertation Virtual Defense

Graduate programs may elect to offer the option of a virtual dissertation defense (student off-campus defense) upon approval of the program coordinator/director, the department, and the college. Programs that choose to offer the option of a virtual defense must develop and ensure procedures for the implementation of the virtual defense process and procedures must be published in the program's handbook. These procedures should address the form and time for the student's request for a virtual defense, the process for seeking approval, the teleconferencing facilities and equipment to be used, the availability of technical support during the defense, alternative plans if needed, and other relevant.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30am. The next meeting will be held on December 2nd.