

Graduate Council Policy Committee

March 23, 2022, • 10:30 am • Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

Members Present: Keith Koons (CAH), Robin Back (RCHM), Laurie Neely (CHPS), Stacy Barber (COS, **Chair**), David Mohaisen (CECS), Uluc Aysun (COB), Claudia Andl (COM), Jim Moharam (COP), Ann Shillingford-Butler (CCIE), Annette Bourgault (CON), Barbara Fritzsche (CGS), John Weishampel (CGS), Jennifer Parham (CGS)

Guests Present: Elizabeth Klonoff (CGS), Sevil Sonmez (COB), Ali Gordon (CECS), Suha Saleh (CHPS), Natasha Stubbs (CGS), Tonya Walker (COS)

Recorder: Michele Pozdroll

Welcome and call to order

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

Approval of minutes from March 2, 2022

Policy Review/Discussion:

Virtual vs F2F Defenses-This item was discussed, voted on and approved. Dr. Fritzsche will send the new approved language onto Dr. Jensen to add into Kuali as a policy proposal and then it will go through the relevant workflow for the provost to approve. The new language is below:

Policy Changes 3.2.22

What is the change? Added language to specify that defenses must be announced publicly at least 2 weeks prior to the defense.

Rationale: To make the defense accessible to the public, the announcement must be made in advance of the defense. Two weeks seems appropriate to allow people to plan to attend.

Public Access

Students, faculty, staff, and other interested parties are strongly encouraged to attend dissertation final defense sessions. Notices providing the date, time, and location of such meetings must be announced at least 2 weeks prior to the defense to all academic departments.

These sessions are educational and informative for graduate students and provide an opportunity for colleagues to observe the work of their peers with students. At the discretion of the Chair of the Committee, questions may be invited from the audience. That part of the session involving committee discussion leading to a vote on the acceptance of the work will be closed. Sessions may be recessed briefly to excuse visitors and the candidate before this stage begins.

What is the change/rationale? Changed the language about virtual thesis and dissertation defenses to align policy with current practices (e.g., how virtual defenses were done during covid) and to keep it from becoming outdated (e.g., eliminating the specification of 'virtual' defenses and specific Zoom, Lync, Microsoft Teams, or Adobe Connect platforms).

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.

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.

Graduate programs may elect to offer alternatives to a face-to-face dissertation defense. Programs that choose to offer such alternatives must develop and ensure procedures for the implementation of the alternative 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 an alternative defense and the process for seeking approval.

Thesis Defense

The thesis defense is an oral presentation and defense of the written thesis describing the student's research. The advisory committee will evaluate and judge the thesis defense. 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.

These will be approved by a majority vote of the Thesis Advisory Committee. Further approval is required from the Dean or Dean designee and the UCF College of Graduate Studies before final acceptance of the thesis in fulfilling degree requirements.

Graduate programs may elect to offer alternatives to a face-to-face thesis defense. Programs that choose to offer such alternatives must develop and ensure procedures for the implementation of the alternative 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 an alternative defense and the process for seeking approval.

Transfer Credit Policy-The committee did not have enough time to discuss so it was decided to table this agenda item and to revisit next scheduled meeting on March 23, 2022. Dr. Fritzsche will start the draft of the new language and share with the committee.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:29 am. The next meeting will be held on March 23, 2022.

