

**GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
January 11, 2016**

The following members were present: Lee Stepina, Chair; Nancy Marcus, Dean, The Graduate School; Todd Adams, Physics; Sonja Siennick, Criminology; Gregory Gerard, Business; Sudhir Aggarwal, Computer Science; Ronald Braddock, Film; Diana Rice, School of Teacher Education; Ron Doel, History; Kimberly Van Weelden, Music; Linda DeBrunner, Engineering; Jamila Horabin, Biomedical Science; Elwood Carlson, Sociology; Tomi Gomory, Social Work; Fred Huffer, Statistics; Ulla Sypher, Communication & Information; Kimberly Hires, Nursing.

The following members were absent: Tahirih Lee, Law; Jeannine Turner, Education; Stanley Gontarski, English; Steven Webber, Interior Design; Anne Barrett, Sociology; Jasminka Ilich-Ernst, Human Sciences.

Also present: James Beck, The Graduate School; Jennifer Buchanan, Assistant Vice President, Faculty Development and Advancement.

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 P.M. by Lee Stepina, Chair.

Previous Meeting Minutes –With no further revisions or additions in mind, the meeting minutes from November 30, 2015 were approved.

Consent Items Inventory- Dean Marcus provided a brief explanation of the consent items inventory. She noted the instructors who received graduate status and the Action Plans, 2 Year Follow-Up Reports, and new majors/certificates approved by the Graduate School from September 11, 2015 until January 7, 2016.

Provisional Graduate Student Policy- The provisional graduate student policy was amended and approved by the GPC in spring 2015 but it never successfully made its way to the Faculty Senate for consideration. On September 21, 2015, the GPC discussed some minor changes to the language. Dean Marcus explained that after reviewing the policy with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee (FSSC) and reading the revised policy again with Melanie Booker (Graduate Admissions), they agreed that some additional amendments needed to be made.

The amended policy reads:

Provisional Graduate Students

An academic program may recommend that a student be admitted to the University as a provisional graduate student. This requires that the program stipulate conditions that the student must meet during the initial semester/term of enrollment. The student will remain in this provisional category for only one semester/term, and must meet all of the stipulated conditions during the initial semester/term to continue in the program. Students entering the University under this category

register in the same manner as regular degree-seeking students. International students cannot be admitted into the provisional category.

A provisional graduate student must be reviewed by the academic program and the University at the end of the initial semester/term to determine if the stipulated conditions were met. If the conditions are not met the student will not be able to continue in the program. While in provisional status a graduate student must register for graded graduate-level coursework (5000-level or above; excludes S/U courses) commensurate with the load requirements of the program, and must earn at least a 3.0 average on all graduate-level coursework taken. A hold blocking future enrollment will be placed on the record of a student who fails to meet the stipulated conditions during the initial provisional semester/term; such students will be ineligible to continue in the academic program. Students who met the minimum requirements for admission to the University either initially or during the provisional semester, but failed to meet the program-specific conditions may subsequently seek admission to a different academic program as a degree or non-degree seeking student.

A provisional student who does not earn at least a 3.0 average during the initial provisional term is not eligible for probationary status in the subsequent semester. Otherwise, a provisional graduate student is subject to the retention and dismissal regulations appropriate to a regular graduate student. For information on non-degree classification, see the subsection on 'Non-Degree Students' in this chapter.

Dean Marcus explained that this revised language accurately reflects how provisional students are handled in the Registrar's Office. She noted that the first paragraph clarifies that the decision to admit a provisional graduate student is up to the academic program and they determine the conditions the student must meet during the initial semester/term of enrollment. If the student does not meet the conditions set forth, the unit will notify Melanie Booker in the Registrar's Office and the student will not be able to continue in the program. Furthermore, she stated that the third paragraph clarifies what happens if a student does not meet the stipulated conditions (e.g., a hold is placed on the student's record preventing him/her from continuing in the program). She explained that if a student meets the university requirements, but not the program's requirements, then he/she can still seek admission in a different academic program, either as degree or non-degree seeking. Dr. Buchanan confirmed that if a student was blocked from continuing in one program for not meeting the provisional conditions and decided to seek admission in a different program, then both Deans would communicate to lift the hold.

Dr. Sypher asked if programs can set stricter conditions if need be (i.e., establishing a 3.5 average on all graduate-level coursework instead of a 3.0 average). Dean Marcus agreed.

Dr. Aggarwal was concerned with excluding provisional graduate students from taking S/U courses. Dean Marcus explained that a graduate student must register for graded graduate-level coursework (5000-level or above) his/her first semester in order to establish a graduate GPA.

Dr. Rice asked if the provisional conditions needed to be specified on a form and submitted to the Registrar's Office. Dean Marcus was unsure about the notification procedures, but stated that Melanie Booker should be informed.

Dr. Horabin asked if programs can establish their own conditions for their provisional graduate students. Dean Marcus confirmed this. Dr. Stepina stated that this "departmental flexibility is necessary for these types of situations."

Dr. Gomory asked if a provisional graduate student must earn at least a B letter-grade in each graduate course or if the overall average for the one semester/term must be a 3.0. He felt the third sentence from the second paragraph was a bit ambiguous and needed to be amended for clarity:

While in provisional status a graduate student must register for graded graduate-level coursework (5000-level or above; excludes S/U courses) commensurate with the load requirements of the program, and must earn at least a 3.0 average on all graduate-level coursework taken.

Dean Marcus explained that the university requirement is a cumulative GPA of a 3.0. She recommended the following revised language:

While in provisional status a graduate student must register for graded graduate-level coursework (5000-level or above; excludes S/U courses) commensurate with the load requirements of the program, and must earn at least an average of 3.0 for all graduate-level coursework taken.

The revised policy reads:

Provisional Graduate Students

An academic program may recommend that a student be admitted to the University as a provisional graduate student. This requires that the program stipulate conditions that the student must meet during the initial semester/term of enrollment. The student will remain in this provisional category for only one semester/term, and must meet all of the stipulated conditions during the initial semester/term to continue in the program. Students entering the University under this category register in the same manner as regular degree-seeking students. International students cannot be admitted into the provisional category.

A provisional graduate student must be reviewed by the academic program and the University at the end of the initial semester/term to determine if the stipulated conditions were met. If the conditions are not met the student will not be able to continue in the program. While in provisional status a graduate student must register for graded graduate-level coursework (5000-level or above; excludes S/U courses) commensurate with the load requirements of the program, and must earn at least an average of 3.0 for all graduate-level coursework taken. A hold blocking future enrollment will be placed on the record of a student who fails to meet the stipulated conditions during the initial provisional semester/term; such students will be ineligible to continue in the academic

program. Students who met the minimum requirements for admission to the University either initially or during the provisional semester, but failed to meet the program-specific conditions may subsequently seek admission to a different academic program as a degree or non-degree seeking student.

A provisional student who does not earn at least a 3.0 average during the initial provisional term is not eligible for probationary status in the subsequent semester. Otherwise, a provisional graduate student is subject to the retention and dismissal regulations appropriate to a regular graduate student. For information on non-degree classification, see the subsection on 'Non-Degree Students' in this chapter.

A motion was placed by Dr. Aggarwal to accept the amended policy language. The motion was seconded by Dr. Adams.

With no further discussion, a vote was placed for the amended language. All were in favor.

PASSED

Language of the Dissertation or Thesis- On September 28, 2015, the GPC discussed if it was acceptable for theses or dissertations to be written in a foreign language. The GPC was amenable to this alternative, but cautioned against writing the entirety of the thesis or dissertation in a foreign language. At the time, Dean Marcus stated that she would consult with the Department of Modern Language and Linguistics and work on some language.

Dean Marcus proposed the following new language:

Language of the dissertation

The typical language of the dissertation, treatise, or thesis is English. Under special circumstances the Major Professor and the Supervisory Committee may approve writing the body of the thesis/dissertation in a language other than English if doing so is essential for scholarly reasons. Lack of sufficient English competency is not an acceptable justification for using an alternative language. The Major Professor shall immediately notify the Department Chair, Dean of the College, and the Dean of the Graduate School for all cases where such approval has been granted. Notification requires completion of the ETD Alternative Language for the Dissertation /Treatise/ Thesis Form. All committee members must be completely fluent in the alternative language. It is the responsibility of the Major Professor and the Supervisory Committee to ascertain that the candidate's thesis/dissertation is written in acceptable English or alternative language, in an appropriate scholarly style. All non-English language dissertations, treatises, or theses must have the preliminary pages and main section headings in English. This would include the content of the title page, committee page, acknowledgments, abstract and biographical sketch in English. All main section headings, including chapter and appendix headings must be in English, but chapter/appendix titles may be in the chosen language.

Language of the defense

The defense shall be conducted in English.

Dean Marcus explained that this language was taken, for the most part, from the policy that had been developed by the Department of Modern Language and Linguistics. Differences include a statement indicating that lack of sufficient English competency is not an acceptable justification for using an alternative language. Furthermore, Dean Marcus noted that a form will need to be created requiring that all committee members acknowledge fluency with the alternative language of the thesis or dissertation. She added that the student will need to provide proper justification as to why writing in a foreign language is essential for scholarly reasons. She requested that the GPC consider when the major professor needs to notify the Department Chair and/or Dean since the prospectus is not uniformly required among all programs. She also asked the GPC to think about who should be part of the approval process (e.g., Department Chair, Dean of the College, Dean of the Graduate School).

Dr. Sypher explained that she once served on a committee where the student's dissertation was written in English, but he/she presented YouTube videos in Arabic. She stated that she felt uncomfortable with this because she couldn't understand the messages that he/she was studying. As such, she agreed that an acceptable justification is necessary and that all committee members should be completely fluent in the alternative language.

After some discussion, the GPC unanimously felt that the Department Chair or Unit Head should be included in the approval process. It was decided that the Academic Dean and Dean of the Graduate School needed to be notified of such circumstances, but did not need to evaluate the individual justifications. The GPC revised the second sentence to read:

Under special circumstances the Major Professor, the Academic Unit Head and the Supervisory Committee may approve writing the body of the thesis/dissertation in a language other than English if doing so is essential for scholarly reasons.

Dr. Sypher agreed with this revised language and stated that the approval process should not go higher than the Department Chair, as he/she should have content knowledge or at least a general idea of what is going on.

Concern was raised about when programs should notify the Department Chair, Dean of the College, and Dean of the Graduate School of such requests. Dr. Sypher suggested that "shall immediately notify" (fourth sentence) be amended to state the following:

The Major Professor shall immediately notify, but no later than 6 months before the defense date, the Department Chair, Dean of the College, and the Dean of the Graduate School for all cases where such approval has been granted.

There was a large discussion regarding this change, but inevitably the GPC felt that the language should remain as is. Dr. Carlson stated that the policy can always be amended and/or clarified in the future if notification issues arise.

Some minor grammatical amendments were made. The revised policy reads:

Language of the dissertation

The typical language of the dissertation, treatise, or thesis is English. Under special circumstances the Major Professor, the Academic Unit Head and the Supervisory Committee may approve writing the body of the thesis/dissertation in a language other than English if doing so is essential for scholarly reasons. Lack of sufficient English competency is not an acceptable justification for using an alternative language. The Major Professor shall immediately notify the Dean of the College and the Dean of the Graduate School for all cases where such approval has been granted. Notification requires completion of the ETD Alternative Language for the Dissertation /Treatise/ Thesis Form. All committee members must be completely fluent in the alternative language. It is the responsibility of the Major Professor and the Supervisory Committee to ascertain that the candidate's thesis/dissertation is written in acceptable English or alternative language, in an appropriate scholarly style. All non-English language dissertations, treatises, or theses must have the preliminary pages and main section headings in English. This would include the content of the title page, committee page, acknowledgments, abstract and biographical sketch. All main section headings, including chapter and appendix headings must be in English, but chapter/appendix titles may be in the chosen language.

Language of the defense

The defense shall be conducted in English.

A motion was placed by Dr. Carlson to accept the amended policy language. The motion was seconded by Dr. Gomory.

With no further discussion, a vote was placed for the amended language. All were in favor.

PASSED

With no further business to be presented, Dr. Stepina adjourned the meeting at 4:45 P.M.