



MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Department Chairs, Directors, Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Students

FROM: Nancy Marcus, Dean, The Graduate School, Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor

SUBJECT: **Graduate Academic Policies and Procedures**

DATE: August 31, 2010

****IMPORTANT POLICY REMINDERS AND UPDATES****
BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF FACULTY, STAFF, AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

This memorandum highlights key policies and procedures that are relevant to graduate education at FSU. Generally, the issues are summarized with pointers and links to websites and pdf documents containing the complete information. Please give careful attention to this memorandum, but please note that it is not exhaustive and faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with all policies affecting graduate education at FSU.

The policies and procedures affecting graduate education are posted on the following websites.

- **"GradSpace" Blackboard® site:** located under campus organizations
- **"Graduate School - Faculty/Staff" Blackboard® site -** located under campus organizations
- **Faculty Handbook -** <http://facultyhandbook.fsu.edu/>
- **Florida State University Graduate Bulletin 2010-2011**
http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/pdf/2010_grad_bulletin.pdf

A. Revised and new policies and procedures – Highlights

1. Termination of Registration Exemption

The Graduate School ended the registration exemption option for submission of Electronic Thesis/Dissertations (ETDs). In order to graduate in a given semester and not be liable for minimum registration requirements in the following semester, students must meet the established ETD submission deadlines.

B. Important policies, procedures, and general information - Reminders

1. Membership in the Graduate Faculty

- i. A person must hold an appropriate faculty appointment in order to be considered for status as a member of the Graduate Faculty.
- ii. Graduate Faculty Status (GFS) is limited (except for special circumstances) to faculty with tenure or holding tenure earning appointments. This status is necessary to teach graduate courses. Limitations, if any, as to who is eligible to serve on and supervise thesis and dissertation committees rests with the programs and must adhere to criteria previously approved by the GPC. Only tenured faculty with GFS can serve as the University Representative on doctoral committees. The GFS status formerly held by non-tenure track and temporary faculty is now designated GTS (Graduate Teaching Status). No changes were made in the criteria for co-directive status categories (co-MDS and co-DDS) required for non-tenure track faculty and courtesy faculty to serve on student committees.
- iii. The policy on Graduate Faculty Status and Graduate Teaching Status has been incorporated into the Faculty Handbook, Section 5: Faculty Development (<http://facultyhandbook.fsu.edu/section5.html#s9>).
- iv. The forms and procedures for nominating faculty for GFS, GTS, co-MDS, and co-DDS are available on the "[Graduate School - Faculty/Staff](#)" Blackboard® site under the "Forms" and "Graduate Faculty Status" tabs in the left-hand menu.
- v. Departments and colleges must request GFS status for all new faculty by submitting a completed *Graduate Faculty Status Appointment Recommendation for Tenure-Track Faculty Form* ([Form# GFS-01](#)) with a curriculum vitae. Nominated faculty require at least a 2/3 majority affirmative vote of all faculty holding GFS in the program. The form and CV should then be sent to the academic college dean and subsequently the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.
- vi. The graduate faculty categories for non-tenure track faculty are Graduate Teaching Status (GTS), Co-DDS, or Co-MDS. Programs must submit requests for new non-tenure track faculty as they have in the past. The new forms ([Form# DS01](#) and [Form#GTS01](#)) for these requests are available on the Graduate School Blackboard® site.

2. Annual review of graduate students

- i. The policy states –“Each year the supervisory committee, the major professor, or the student’s advisor, prior to the selection of a major professor, will assess the progress of the student in writing and make available copies of the annual review to the

- student, the department chair, and the academic dean.” (Graduate Bulletin, pdf version, Supervisory Committee, p. 61).
- ii. The Graduate School recommends that programs use standard templates to facilitate the review process of all students. The Graduate School has posted examples of such forms on "[Graduate School - Faculty/Staff](#)" Blackboard® site in the section for Graduate Program Directors.
 - iii. Programs must use the online Graduate Student Tracking system to indicate that a student has had his/her annual review. The written review should be uploaded into the system. For more information on how to use the tracking system, contact Chris Simonavice (csimonavice@fsu.edu) in The Graduate School. The Graduate School also recommends that master’s students be evaluated annually (e.g., review of timely progress towards completion of coursework and thesis research as appropriate).

3. Doctoral committee composition

- i. All doctoral committees appointed after August 24, 2009, must meet the minimum university standard of four members with GFS (new GFS definition). Included among these four members will be the University Representative who must also be a tenured member of the faculty. Non-tenured tenure track faculty from outside the degree program, department or college and holding GFS are eligible to serve as one of the four members, but they cannot serve as the University Representative. Non-tenure track faculty holding Co-DDS or Co-MDS are eligible to serve as additional members of the committee (beyond the minimum of four) and those with Co-DDS can serve as a co-advisor, (Graduate Bulletin, pdf version, Supervisory Committee, p.61).
- ii. It is important to note that with the new GFS designation, The Graduate School is no longer aware of which faculty in a program are eligible to serve on master’s and doctoral committees, and can no longer advise students regarding faculty who are eligible to serve. Therefore, programs, departments, and/or colleges must make this information available on their website to students, faculty, and staff. It is essential that the information be updated when a change in status occurs. The Graduate School continues to maintain the [Graduate Faculty Database](#), but the information for tenure track faculty only indicates if the person can serve as the University Representative. The Graduate School continues to maintain the information for non-tenure track faculty and courtesy faculty.

4. Defense of the dissertation or thesis

At the time of the defense, students should be expected to have given the committee a final or close-to-final version of the thesis, treatise, or dissertation. The student should only be awarded a PASS for the defense if minimal revisions and corrections are required (Graduate Bulletin, pdf version, Examination in Defense of Dissertation, p. 62; and Thesis, p. 60). The University Representative must submit the [Doctoral Defense Report](#) to the Manuscript Clearance Advisor within one week of the defense. Please note that the student must repeat the defense of the dissertation or thesis if the final electronic thesis/treatise/dissertation (ETD) is not approved by the Clearance Advisor in The Graduate School within 60 days of the defense.

5. Health insurance subsidy for graduate students for 2010-2011

- i. Select graduate assistants will be provided a health insurance subsidy towards the purchase of the university sponsored health insurance plan. The subsidy will be provided based on FTE appointment and will be disbursed by semester (fall; spring/summer).
- ii. For details regarding the subsidy and how it is disbursed please click on the [Health Insurance Subsidy Link](#) or contact The Graduate School at 644-3501. For more health insurance information please click on the [University-sponsored Health Insurance Link](#) or contact the Thagard Student Health Center's Health Insurance Office at 644-3608.

6. Tuition Waivers

- i. Information concerning tuition waiver policies and procedures can be found in "[Graduate School - Faculty/Staff](#)" Blackboard® site, under the submenu "Waiver Info/Forms." Students should access the "[GradSpace](#)" Blackboard® site, under the submenu "Funding and Awards". The GS contact is Brian Barton, bbarton@fsu.edu, at 644-3501.
- ii. The Waiver Receipt Form must be signed by each student receiving a waiver and given to the academic unit issuing the waiver for retention by the end of the first week of classes each semester. It is critical that each student signs the form as this is the official certification from the student regarding fee-liability should they withdraw or lose their assistantship. It is equally important that the academic unit has a record of the signed form in the event a student questions their fee liability at a later date.

7. Residence Requirements (not to be confused with In-State Residency requirement, for details see *Florida State University Graduate Bulletin*)

- i. Master's - There is no University-wide residence requirement for the master's degree beyond that implicit in the limitation upon transfer credit, the recency of work requirement, and the full-time student load requirement. Master's candidates are advised that some programs and departments may impose a stricter rule of residency as required by the specific program of study.
- ii. Doctoral - The intent of the residency requirement is to ensure **that doctoral students contribute to and benefit from the complete spectrum of educational, professional, and enrichment opportunities** provided on the campus of a comprehensive university.

After having finished thirty (30) semester hours of graduate work or being awarded the master's degree, the student must be continuously enrolled on Florida State University Tallahassee campus for a minimum of twenty-four (24) graduate semester hours of credit in any period of 12 consecutive months. Students in such programs should check residence requirements with their departmental chairs or program leaders, (Graduate Bulletin, pdf version, Residence, p.61).

8. Recency of Work

The work for the master's degree must be completed within seven years from the time the student first registers for graduate credit. Any graduate work transferred from another institution must have commenced not more than seven years prior to completion of the degree for the credits to be applicable to the master's degree, (Graduate Bulletin, pdf version, Recency of Work, p.60).

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within five calendar years from the time the student passes the preliminary examination, or the student's supervisory committee will require that a new preliminary examination be passed. (Graduate Bulletin, Time Limit for Completion of Degree Requirements, p.62).

9. Full-time and Part-time Status of Students

The required full-time or part-time status of graduate students is affected by their appointment or fellowship status, as well as their progress towards the degree. This status in turn affects eligibility for Financial Aid. Federal guidelines stipulate certain requirements for enrollment. The complete policy is highlighted in the Graduate Bulletin (pdf version), under the Academic Regulations and Procedures section, Full-Time Student Course Load on p. 69.

10. Thesis Hours

A student who has completed the required course work and continues to use campus facilities and/or receives faculty supervision, but **has not made a final thesis submission** shall include in the required full-time load a minimum of two (2) hours of thesis credit per term. Those with underload permission must register for at least two (2) hours of thesis credit per term. Underloads must be approved by the academic dean. Before registering for thesis hours, the student must consult the major professor as to the proportion of time to be devoted to thesis. The number of hours should not only reflect the effort of the student, but should take into account the use of campus facilities/resources and faculty interaction/supervision, (Graduate Bulletin, pdf version, Thesis, p. 60).

11. Dissertation Hours

- i. A student who has completed the required course work, passed the preliminary examination and submitted an Application to Candidacy form to the Office of the Registrar, and continues to use campus facilities and/or receives faculty supervision, but **has not made a final dissertation submission** shall include in the required full-time load of a minimum of two (2) dissertation hours per term. Those with underload permission must register for at least two (2) hours of dissertation credit per term. Underloads must be approved by the academic dean. Before registering for dissertation hours, the student must consult the major professor as to the proportion of time to be devoted to dissertation work. The number of hours listed will show the proportion of time to be devoted to the dissertation. The number of hours should not only reflect the effort of the student, but should take into account the use of campus facilities/resources and faculty interaction/supervision.
- ii. The minimum number of dissertation hours for completion of a doctoral degree shall be twenty-four (24) semester hours, (Graduate Bulletin, pdf version, Dissertation, p. 62).

12. Graduation

- i. During the **first two weeks of the term** in which a candidate expects to receive a degree, application must be made for graduation by visiting the "Secure Apps" section of the Blackboard® site. For additional information, contact the Office of the Registrar, Graduation Section, (850) 644-5850.

- ii. In accordance with the policy on registration for thesis or dissertation hours noted above, students must be registered for dissertation or thesis hours in the semester they hold the defense and submit the ETD.

C. ETD Requirements

All Electronic Thesis, Treatise and Dissertation content and information can be found exclusively on The Graduate School's Blackboard ® websites. All ETD content and information can be located in the "Theses, Treatises, Dissertations" submenu, found on the left-hand side of the screen. Students should access the "[GradSpace](#)" Blackboard ® website. Faculty and Staff should access the "[Graduate School - Faculty/Staff](#)" Blackboard ® website. In order for students to submit their manuscript successfully, they must adhere to the formatting rules found in the "Guidelines and Requirements for Electronic Theses, Treatises, and Dissertations," as well as meet the deadlines outlined in the semester of intent to graduate.

D. University-wide Standards for Teaching Assistants at Florida State University

These are University-wide standards that any student must meet prior to assuming one of the various instructional roles. These are meant to be university-wide minimum standards; departments may adopt additional or more stringent standards. Graduate Programs which do not use graduate students in instructional roles would not be affected by these standards. They are meant to cover the formal use of teaching assistants in course instruction. Extra help sessions and voluntary tutorials in addition to regular class meetings would not normally fall under these requirements.

E. Certification of Teaching Competence

1. Each semester in accordance with guidelines of the Commission on Colleges (SACS) and the standards outlined in the following sections, the Academic Dean of each College is required to certify in writing to the Dean of the Faculties and the Dean of The Graduate School that each student who serves as a Teaching Assistant is competent to teach and for International Teaching Assistants that they are also competent to teach in spoken English.
2. It is recommended that each program have a discipline-specific teaching manual for its teaching assistants to supplement the university teaching manual, *Instruction at FSU* which can be viewed on line (<http://learningforlife.fsu.edu/ctl/explore/onlineresources/I@FSU.cfm>).