



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 26, 2016

****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 the pdf version of the Graduate Bulletin 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 2016-2017**
http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/pdf/2016_grad_bulletin.pdf

NEW POLICIES – Please note the establishment of two new policies

1. Leave of Absence – This new policy was established to recognize that under exceptional circumstances a graduate student may need to interrupt the pursuit of a graduate degree. The circumstances justifying a leave include, but are not limited to: personal or family medical conditions, call to active military duty, parental leave, death in immediate family, or completion of an off-campus internship. The student must complete the “Leave of Absence Registration Form” ([Registration Form](#)), provide appropriate documentation and a rationale for the leave request. Requests for a leave should be scrutinized carefully and not be used as a means to simply avoid enrollment, especially at the dissertation stage; payment of tuition and fees; and the re-admission process. A leave of absence is a complete separation from the university. An approved leave acknowledges that there is a reasonable justification e.g., a serious health issue that requires the student to interrupt his or her studies. At the end of the leave the student need not re-apply and the time to degree clock resumes. Students on leave will not have access to university resources and faculty should not engage in academic interactions with such students. This new policy is published in the Graduate Bulletin, p. 70.

Faculty and administrators are encouraged to read the policy carefully as programs have the latitude to not approve leave requests, though there is an appeal process. In accordance with the policy, programs should note the Leave of Absence policy in the Graduate Student Handbook and clarify any restrictions or requirements that are unique to the program.

2. Language of the dissertation, thesis, or treatise and defense – This new policy clarifies that the typical language of the dissertation is English and that defenses shall be conducted in 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. The full policy is published in the Graduate bulletin, p. 75.

REVISED POLICIES – Please note the following policy revisions approved by the Graduate Policy Committee and Faculty Senate in 2015-2016.

1. Residence policy – The policy of requiring doctoral students to complete 24 graduate credit hours within a 12- month time frame to meet the residence requirement has been replaced with the **Scholarly Engagement** requirement. The new requirement is published in the Graduate Bulletin, p. 78. **Doctoral students are still required to complete a minimum of 24 dissertation hours and many students complete far more than this minimum.**
 - The purpose of the Scholarly Engagement requirement is to ensure that doctoral students are active participants in the scholarly community. To meet the Scholarly

Engagement requirement, doctoral students should interact with faculty and peers in ways that may include enrolling in courses; attending seminars, symposia, and conferences; engaging in collaborative study and research beyond the university campus; and utilizing the library, laboratories, and other facilities provided by the university. The goal is to prepare students to be scholars who can independently acquire, evaluate, and extend knowledge, as well as develop themselves as effective communicators and disseminators of knowledge. **Each academic unit with a doctoral program should include a program specific statement in its Graduate Handbook describing how its students can meet the Scholarly Engagement requirement.**

2. Provisional graduate students – The policy regarding the admission of graduate students in provisional status was revised and clarified. This policy is published in the Graduate Bulletin, p. 54. It is important to note that “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.” Thus, if the program is normally undertaken full-time, then the student would be expected to enroll in 9-12 hours. However, if it is a part-time program then it might be appropriate to stipulate enrollment in 6 hours. The previous policy required enrollment in 9 hours regardless of the nature of the program.

REMINDERS REGARDING SOME POLICIES

1. IRB and ACUC approval

Students must seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval prior to commencing any research involving human or animal subjects. **This includes all secondary data analysis.** The student’s name must appear on the IRB approval and/or application form as a PI or co-investigator for the period of time when the student’s research and data analysis were conducted. Students must be listed on an ACUC protocol in order to conduct any animal research.

Please note that certain research activities involving human subjects are exempt from the requirement that they receive IRB full or expedited review. However, the FSU Assurance with federal government’s Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) provides that all research, including those which may qualify as exempt, receive review and approval by the FSU IRB. Only the IRB may determine which activities qualify for an exempt review. Investigators are not authorized to make an independent determination that research involving human subjects is exempt and must contact the IRB concerning the status of proposed research or changes in ongoing research.

Failing to get the appropriate approvals is a serious breach of research integrity and standards. The Manuscript Signature Form requires major professors and committee members to acknowledge that proper approvals were obtained prior to the commencement of

research. The Graduate School also has a reporting procedure that will send reminders to students who are registered for thesis, treatise, or dissertation hours as well as to their major professors.

2. Membership in the Graduate Faculty

A person must hold an appropriate general faculty appointment in order to be considered for status as a member of the Graduate Faculty. **Graduate Faculty Status (GFS)** is limited (except for special circumstances) to faculty who hold tenure or 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/treatise 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. Persons holding specialized, non-tenure track or visiting in lieu of adjunct faculty appointments must be approved for **Graduate Teaching Status (GTS)** to teach graduate courses. In addition, specialized, non-tenure track and courtesy faculty maybe nominated for and granted **Co-Masters Directive Status or Co-Doctoral Directive Status (Co-MDS and Co-DDS)** to serve on student committees. As such they may also co-chair a student committee.

The policy on Graduate Faculty Status and Graduate Teaching Status is incorporated into the Faculty Handbook, Section 5: Faculty Development; Graduate Faculty Membership (<http://facultyhandbook.fsu.edu>). 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. The forms are also available on the Graduate School Website (<http://gradschool.fsu.edu/Forms>).

Departments and colleges must request graduate status for all new eligible tenure track faculty by submitting a completed *Graduate Faculty Status Appointment Recommendation for Tenure-Track Faculty Form* ([Form# GFS-01](#)) with a curriculum vitae. Such nominated faculty require at least a 2/3 majority affirmative vote of all faculty holding GFS in the program. The completed form and CV should then be sent to the academic college dean and subsequently the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

The graduate faculty categories for specialized, non-tenure track, visiting in lieu of adjunct faculty and courtesy faculty include Graduate Teaching Status (GTS), Co-MDS, or Co-DDS. The forms ([Form#DS01](#) and [Form#GTS02](#)) for these requests are available on the Graduate School Blackboard® site and website. Once completed these forms should be sent to the academic college dean and subsequently the Dean of the Graduate School for approval. Such approval must be obtained prior to engaging in these activities.

Fully retired faculty (includes Emerita/Emeritus status) may continue to serve as major professors for those students who have already begun their thesis/dissertation/treatise at the time of the professor's retirement. Fully retired faculty, however, may not accept additional students in this capacity. Fully retired faculty may serve as an additional member beyond the minimum number required on Master's and Doctoral committees of new students if they choose. Appointment to courtesy is not necessary, but department chairs must send a memo

to The Graduate School indicating the names of the student committees on which the professor serves and the approval of this continued service.

For faculty who depart the University for any reason other than retirement, the department or program that wishes to continue the faculty member in some or all of these roles must provide a courtesy appointment and nominate the faculty member for master's or doctoral co-directive status, as needed, so the faculty member may continue as co-chair or an additional member for those students who have already begun their thesis/dissertation/treatise at the time of the faculty member's departure. If the faculty member is serving as committee chair, the department will then designate a current or new member of the committee with appropriate directive status as co-chair of the committee. Faculty members who depart the University may not accept additional students in this capacity, nor may they serve as the University Representative on committees.

3. Appointment of graduate students on assistantships

The UFF-FSU-GAU Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) set forth the terms and conditions that affect the employment of students who are supported on graduate assistantships. These documents can be found on the FSU Human Resources website: http://hr.fsu.edu/?page=elr/collective_bargaining/collective_bargaining_home by clicking the link for UFF-FSU-GAU Bargaining Unit.

Recently, negotiations concluded regarding changes to the Successor Agreement for 2015-2018. Once the revised Articles are fully ratified, the new provisions will go into effect. Faculty and staff should familiarize themselves with the CBA and revised articles.

4. Graduate Assistant stipends

Article 23 was revised and when ratified, outlines stipend raises as follows:

- GA's with an appointment with a minimum of 0.25 FTE will receive a 2% increase in pay with a minimum amount of \$525, effective September 23, 2016.

5. Health insurance subsidy for graduate students for 2016-2017

There is no change in the Health Insurance Subsidy.

- Health Insurance Subsidies are \$1,662 for Graduate Assistants on a 0.50 FTE appointment for both fall and spring semesters; \$1,012 for Graduate Assistants on a 0.25 FTE appointment for both fall and spring semesters; and \$1,212 for Graduate Assistants on a 0.50 FTE appointment for one semester and a 0.25 FTE-0.49 FTE for the other semester.

For information regarding the process and payroll deduction dates, please visit <http://gradschool.fsu.edu/Funding-Awards/Subsidy-Benefit>.

6. Tuition Waivers

Information concerning tuition waiver policies and procedures can be found in the "[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.

The Waiver Receipt Form is now auto-generated in the Student's Service Center and must be printed and 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.

Waiver entry requests that occur after the deadline for waivers should be made through the FSU Service Center at:
<https://crm.omni.fsu.edu/psp/sprdcn/?cmd=login&service=https://crm.omni.fsu.edu/psp/sprdcn/EMPLOYEE/EMPL/h/?tab=DEFAULT&languageCd=ENG&>

Please note that entry of the late waiver by the Graduate School is not automatic. If the late waiver causes a Financial Aid over award, the College or Department will be responsible for correcting the over award with the Office of Financial Aid. Every effort should be made to enter waivers by the established deadlines due to the fact that the University is now disbursing financial aid earlier and we do not encourage over award situations.

7. Thesis, treatise, and dissertation committees

The department or college must enter the composition of the supervisory committee into the online Graduate Student Tracking system in a timely manner, but no later than the second week of classes in the semester that the student intends to graduate. (Graduate Bulletin, Supervisory Committee, pp. 76 and 78).

All doctoral committees appointed after August 24, 2009, must meet the minimum university standard of four members with GFS. Included among these four members will be the University Representative who must also be a tenured member of the faculty. Specialized, 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. Specialized and 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, Supervisory Committee, p.78).

8. Program of Study

A Program of Study should be prepared for each graduate student. The guidelines and timelines differ slightly for master's and doctoral students. For details, consult the Graduate

Bulletin, pp. 76 and 78 respectively.

9. Preliminary Examination for doctoral students

Satisfactory completion of a preliminary examination shall be required for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree. No student may register for dissertation or doctoral treatise hours prior to the point in the semester in which the preliminary examination was passed. An admission-to-candidacy form must be completed and filed in the Office of the University Registrar prior to registration for dissertation/treatise hours. After completion of the admission to candidacy process, the student may retroactively add dissertation hours for that semester in which the preliminary examination was completed. Retroactive changes are only permitted if the preliminary examination is passed by the end of the seventh week of the semester. For term specific deadline dates, please refer to the "Academic Calendar" in the *Registration Guide*. (Graduate Bulletin, Preliminary Examination, p. 79).

10. Submitting the thesis, treatise or dissertation in electronic format (ETD)

All information pertaining to the submission requirements for Electronic Thesis, Treatise and Dissertation content can be found exclusively on The Graduate School's Blackboard® websites. All ETD content and information is located in the "Manuscript Clearance" 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 they intend to graduate. Manuscripts not formatted in full accordance with the Guidelines brochure will NOT be reviewed and will NOT count as an initial submission to meet any deadline.

The Graduate School recommends that students submit their manuscript to the Manuscript Clearance Adviser for the initial format check when it is submitted to the supervisory committee in preparation for the defense. In any case students must submit the initial version of their manuscript by the appropriate deadline to submit for initial format review in the semester they intend to graduate. Students must then submit their final version and all forms by the deadline to submit the final version of a successfully defended thesis, dissertation, or treatise and all required forms. However, in all cases students must have their manuscript cleared* within 60 days of a successful defense or the student must be re-examined. In some cases, the 60-day deadline may occur before semester deadlines; in those cases, the 60-day deadline takes precedence over the semester deadlines.

Semester deadlines are posted in the Manuscript Clearance menu of GradSpace in the Dates and Deadlines submenu. For Fall Semester 2016 the last day to submit a doctoral dissertation or treatise for initial format review is October 31. The last day to submit master's thesis for initial format review is November 14. The last day to submit the final version of a successfully defended thesis, dissertation, or treatise, and all required forms is November 28. The last day for thesis, dissertation, or treatise students to receive an email

from Manuscript Clearance confirming final clearance of their manuscript for Fall 2016 graduation is December 16.

For Spring 2017, the last day to submit doctoral dissertation or treatise for initial format review is March 20. The last day to submit master's thesis for initial format review is April 3. The last day to submit the final version of a successfully defended thesis, dissertation or treatise, and all required forms is April 17. The last day for thesis, dissertation or treatise students to receive an email from Manuscript Clearance confirming final clearance of their manuscript for Spring 2017 graduation is May 5.

*Cleared = Manuscript formatting approved by the Manuscript Clearance Adviser AND all forms received by the Manuscript Clearance Adviser.

11. Annual review of graduate students

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, Supervisory Committee, p. 78)

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.

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.** 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).

12. 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 (p.66), under the Academic Regulations and Procedures section, Student Course Load. This section also states the minimum requirement of 24 dissertation hours for completion of a doctoral degree.

13. University-wide Standards for Graduate Teaching Assistants at Florida State University

There are University-wide Standards for Graduate Teaching Assistants at Florida State University that were updated this past year as noted above. The standards are posted on various websites and are also included in the Graduate Bulletin (p. 93). These are meant to

be University-wide minimum standards; departments may adopt additional or more stringent standards.

14. Non-Discrimination and Reasonable Accommodation

As noted in FSU's Title IX Statement (www.titleix.fsu.edu)

"No person in the United States, shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX).

FSU does not discriminate on the basis of sex in education programs and activities, and, as a recipient of Federal financial assistance for education activities, is required by Title IX to ensure that all of its education programs and activities do not discriminate in such a manner. Sexual harassment or violence, stalking and/ or harassment or violence based on an individual's LGBTQIA status are all forms of sex discrimination and are prohibited by Title IX. Faculty, staff, postdocs, and students are reminded that pregnancy and some parenting-related issues fall under this umbrella, are subject to non-discrimination laws, and may require the provision of reasonable accommodations.

As noted on the Human Resources website (http://hr.fsu.edu/?page=eoc/ada/ada_home) "As a public entity, FSU is required by Title II of the ADA to make all of its activities, programs and services equally available to persons with disabilities. FSU has many resources available to students, faculty, staff, and visitors who have disabilities, which help ensure a quality, educational and work environment. Reasonable Accommodations that do not pose an undue hardship shall be made for any qualified individual with a disability to ensure equal opportunity and equal access to programs and benefits enjoyed by those who are not disabled. Some health-related issues that stem from pregnancy may be an example of a temporary disability and fall under the umbrella of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

For more information about Title IX, including how to make a report of Sexual Misconduct or Sex Discrimination, contact:

Jennifer Broomfield, LISW, JD
Title IX Director
408-H Westcott Building
Tallahassee, FL 32306-1310
jbroomfield@fsu.edu
(850) 644-6271
www.titleix.fsu.edu

For more information about ADA academic accommodations and disability resources contact:

Dr. Shelley Ducatt
Student Disability Resource Center
Assistant Dean/Director
Student Services Building Rm 108

sducatt@fsu.edu

(850) 644-9566

For more information about filing a discrimination or harassment report against a faculty or staff member, or ADA and pregnancy employment accommodations, contact;

Amber Wagner

HR Administrator

Office of Equal Opportunity & Compliance

Human Resources

University Center. Building A

(850) 645-1458

amwagner@fsu.edu

15. EthicsPoint

The Florida State University has established an EthicsPoint Hotline to provide members of the FSU community a simple anonymous way to confidentially report activities that involve certain suspected misconduct or violations of our policies and procedures, regulations, or state and federal laws. To report a potential issue using the hotline, please click the EthicsPoint link: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/32441/index.html> or call toll-free 855-231-7511 (24 hours a day, 365 days a year).