

**GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
February 16, 2015**

The following members were present: Lee Stepina, Chair; Nancy Marcus, Dean, The Graduate School; Elwood Carlson, Sociology; Peter Hoeflich, Physics; Karla Schmitt, Nursing; Gary Burnett, Communication & Information; Steven Webber, Interior Design; Fred Huffer, Statistics; Sudhir Aggarwal, Computer Science; Jamila Horabin, Biomedical Science; Tomi Gomory, Social Work; Jasminka Ilich-Ernst, Human Sciences; Diana Rice, School of Teacher Education; Brian Gaber, Film/Music; Anne Barrett, Sociology; Patricia Born, Business; Tahirih Lee, Law; Jeannine Turner, Education.

The following members were absent: Linda DeBrunner, Engineering; Ron Doel, History; Stanley Gontarski, English; William Fredrickson, Music.

Also present: David Beck, The Graduate School; Judy Devine, 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 revisions or additions in mind, the meeting minutes for February 2, 2015 were approved.

Graduate Bulletin Revisions–Dean Marcus reviewed a few amendments that have been made to the "master's degree program requirements" section of the Graduate Bulletin. She explained that several departments have contacted the Graduate School's manuscript clearance advisor indicating that the master's thesis defense process was confusing and needed to be explained in the Graduate Bulletin. In response to this, Dean Marcus stated that a new section was added by the manuscript clearance advisor, titled "Examination in Defense of Thesis." This new section mirrors what is done for the doctoral defense, but some changes were added and/or removed to be in line with the master's thesis process (e.g., no university representative is mentioned). She also noted that the "supervisory committee" section of the Graduate Bulletin was revised a bit.

Dr. Rice asked if the submission of the thesis electronically to the manuscript clearance advisor was required and prior to any earlier clearance process. Dean Marcus clarified that it is ideal and highly recommended for a student to submit his/her thesis to the manuscript clearance advisor prior to the deadlines. For example, if a student intends on defending his/her thesis early in the semester and in advance of the clearance deadlines, it is preferred that the student submits the thesis to the manuscript clearance advisor at that time instead of holding on to the document and waiting until the deadline.

Dean Marcus asked for further discussion on the "Language and Statistical Requirements" section of the Graduate Bulletin:

“When proficiency in statistical analysis is permitted or required, the criteria shall be established by the Department of Statistics. This proficiency can be met by satisfactory grades in STA 5126, by passing the statistics department’s proficiency examination, or by other procedures approved by the chair of the Department of Statistics.”

Dean Marcus asked if individual departments are deferring to the Department of Statistics to determine the criteria for proficiency in statistical analysis. Dr. Rice and Dr. Gomory explained that many departments who have a statistics requirement have their own statistics courses or come up with alternative and internal mechanisms to meet the statistical proficiency requirement without having to defer to the Department of Statistics. Dean Marcus explained that she contacted the Department of Statistics and they responded that the department has “not had any requests for this in years.” Thus, she was interested if the language should be kept or removed from the Graduate Bulletin. Dr. Gomory and Dr. Aggarwal agreed that the language should be removed.

Dr. Schmitt proposed a motion to approve the proposed changes to the Graduate Bulletin.

With no further discussion a vote was placed. All were in favor.

PASSED

Revisions to Current University Residency Policy- Dr. Carlson gave a brief overview of the revisions made by the GPC subcommittee this February to the current University residency policy. The GPC subcommittee consisted of Dr. Schmitt, Dr. Horabin, Dr. Carlson, and Dean Marcus. It was decided by the GPC subcommittee that it is outmoded to expect students to meet the residency requirement by physically being present on campus. As such, a number of recommendations to the residency policy are suggested below:

First, it was recommended that the residency requirement be dropped completely for doctoral students, but emphasize that all doctoral programs are expected to provide an enriching environment that encourages scholarly engagement with a “new segment.”

Second, it was recommended that the “new segment” from page 73 of the Graduate Bulletin be replaced with the following statement about Scholarly Engagement:

“The Scholarly Engagement requirement ensures that graduate students benefit from and contribute to the complete spectrum of educational, professional, and enrichment opportunities provided by a comprehensive research university. 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. The purpose of the Scholarly Engagement requirement is to ensure that doctoral students are active participants and immerse themselves in the global scholarly community. Each academic unit with a doctoral program should include a program specific statement in its Graduate Handbook describing how their students can meet the Scholarly Engagement requirement."

Third, it was recommended to insert language relating to student scholarly engagement into the Template for GPC Program Review Reports. To avoid having scholarly engagement overlooked or assumed to be part of the student annual evaluation, it was preferred to see a separate item included in the GPC guidelines for program reviews (item # 6), asking what steps the program is taking to facilitate/ensure students are active participants in the global scholarly community. The language to be inserted into the Template for GPC Program Review Reports would read:

6. What steps does the program take to facilitate/ensure that students are active participants and immerse themselves in the global scholarly community, e.g. attend seminars, symposia and conferences, engage in collaborative study and research beyond the university campus, engage in interprofessional scholarly endeavors, etc.

Fourth, it was recommended to revise and insert language into each College/Department's Annual Review of Doctoral Students Policy and/or forms to assure the versions are aligned to reflect the same language and to clarify/communicate the intent of the annual review. For example, should it communicate "assurance of timely progression" in their program of study and/or coursework? Should it consider ongoing scholarly engagement? An example of the language to insert into the Annual Review of Doctoral Students Policy and/or forms was suggested:

Example: The intent of the annual review is to assure that each has opportunity for scholarly engagement and continues to make timely progression toward completion of their degree program.

Finally, it was recommended to revise the title and delete the "residency wording" from the "Full-time and Part-time Status of Graduate Students" policy section on page 80 of the Graduate Bulletin. The revised title would read: "Enrollment Requirements for Full-time and Part-time Status of Graduate Students." The rationale for this change is to clarify that intent is about the number of hours required for a graduate student to be enrolled unless otherwise approved under a college's full and part-time programs of study.

Dr. Gomory and Dr. Aggarwal expressed interest in the idea that units will be allowed to decide for themselves what scholarly engagement is and how their students will meet the scholarly engagement requirement (e.g., distance interaction, attending seminars, symposia, conferences; engaging in collaborative study, etc.). Dean Marcus clarified that scholarly

engagement will need to be appropriately documented and articulated by each department in the student handbook, annual evaluations, and will be evaluated during the 7-year program review cycle. If a question arises about whether or not enough scholarly engagement was provided sufficiently by the department or unit, it will be addressed and evaluated during the review process.

Dr. Stepina also expressed interest in this revision to the residency policy, as it allows a lot of flexibility for departments, but still requires a certain degree of special approval.

Dr. Rice was interested if the Graduate School would provide oversight over departmental selection of scholarly engagement opportunities to avoid any misinterpretations of the policy. She explained that it would be unfortunate for a student if it was decided during the 7-year program review that the scholarly engagement opportunities being provided by the program was not adequate. Dean Marcus concurred. Dr. Carlson explained that the student annual evaluations and 7-year program reviews should identify such inconsistencies with scholarly engagement, if any exist. Dr. Schmitt added that if a department's scholarly engagement requirement was identified as not being "scholarly enough" during the 7-year program review, that this would not adversely affect or jeopardize the students of the program. A recommendation to fix and improve the scholarly engagement requirement would simply be implemented.

Dr. Stepina explained that it may be appropriate to insert the scholarly engagement requirement into the Template for the GPC Program Review Reports for evaluation during the 2016-2017 academic year to give programs enough time to report on this proficiency.

Dr. Carlson explained that the intent of this policy change was not to add more work on departments, but rather create a policy showing what departments are truly doing at the moment.

Dr. Carlson asked if students will be able to choose between the old residency policy and the new scholarly engagement requirement in lieu of the policy changing so abruptly. Dr. Buchanan stated that in general, with university wide changes, that put a new burden on students, the university is very careful to grandfather-in every student. However, in situations like this in which a new rule will provide more flexibility for students, she has often seen, especially at the undergraduate level, students be allowed to adopt the requirements in the new catalog. She further explained that there is a formal process for a student to change their bulletin year at the Registrar's Office.

Dean Marcus asked what the effective date should be. She advised the GPC that the start of the semester is preferred, but explained that it could become very complex if one thinks about the notion of "grandfathering." She was also concerned about how the Registrar's Office will check this requirement to clear a student for graduation. Dr. Stepina asserted that the implementation date should be the start of fall 2015 and anyone currently enrolled should be grandfathered-in. Dr. Aggarwal agreed that the requirement should be implemented as soon as

possible and stated that it should not be necessary for the Registrar's Office to check if a student meets his/her scholarly engagement requirement, as it is "on the books."

Dr. Buchanan explained that a few options currently exist for implementation of the policy that can be specified: 1.) the policy can be effective immediately, 2.) every student defaults to the bulletin of the year they entered their program with no changes allowed, or 3.) every student defaults to the bulletin of the year they entered their program, but they can change their catalogue year. Dean Marcus suggested setting the effective date of the policy to fall 2015 and state that the residency requirement no longer applies and the Registrar's Office no longer has to check for it. She also noted that this should be articulated in the departmental handbooks for the upcoming year. Dr. Schmitt concurred with fall 2015.

Dr. Stepina proposed an additional recommendation that the effective date for the scholarly engagement requirement be set to fall 2015 for all students.

He explained that any student graduating during summer 2015 would follow the old residency requirement.

Dr. Schmitt moved to accept this recommendation.

With no further discussion a vote was placed for all of the recommendations. All were in favor.

PASSED

Discussion: 4000 Level Courses Counting towards Graduate Coursework: Dean Marcus explained that a question has been raised to her regarding whether 4000 level courses taken during a master's student's graduate career can/should count towards a student's graduate coursework. She added that in the College of Education, 6 hrs of 4000 level coursework can count towards a master's student's graduate career, but only if the student has already met his/her minimum university requirement of 30 or 32 hrs. She noted that in most other departments this is not clearly specified and it is topic she will be exploring further.

With no further business to be presented, Dr. Stepina adjourned the meeting at 4:42 P.M.