

Graduate Policy Committee  
2019-2020 Annual Report

As in past years, the Graduate Policy Committee conducted work in three main areas this year: (1) the review of graduate programs across campus, (2) the consideration of new graduate program proposals, and (3) the discussion of graduate academic policies that affect university-wide programs.

ad (1): Due to circumstances that will probably never be repeated, only five programs were reviewed by the GPC in 2019/2020: Mathematics, Scientific Computing, Statistics and Biostatistics, and the Nurse Anesthetist Program on the Panama City campus (Fall 2019), and Modern Languages and Linguistics (Spring 2020). Look for a much heavier season of reviews next year, with eleven programs scheduled for review.

ad (2): One proposal for a completely new program was reviewed, and four for the implementation of existing on-campus programs in an online format. The College of Applied Studies at FSU's Panama City campus put forward a proposal for a new Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice program, which was approved by the GPC. The College of Engineering proposed to offer two existing on-campus graduate degrees in an online format: Civil Engineering (M.Eng.) and Industrial Engineering (MS in Systems Engineering). The College of Education proposed to offer the Counseling and Human Systems/School Counseling graduate degree in an online format. These proposals were approved by the GPC.

ad (3):

The GPC conducted extended discussions of a number of policy issues related to graduate programs, some of which were taken up for the first time this year. Four of the latter were subsequently approved by the Faculty Senate. The GPC made some changes to its program review process, with an eye to streamlining it.

1) Changes to the Program Review process.

Two changes were approved. 1) It was noted that information required for two sections of the GPC review report could readily be copied and pasted from the unit's QER Self-study by a member of that unit most familiar with the self-study (the Faculty Representative on the GPC subcommittee). This change will eliminate two detailed sections from needing to be written by one of the core subcommittee members, i.e. the history section and the faculty/instructional personnel area. 2) This then facilitated the reduction of the number of members in a subcommittee by one. Starting in Fall 2020, GPC subcommittees will consist of a chair, one outside FSU member (instead of two outside FSU members), a GPC representative, a faculty representative, and a graduate student representative (3 core members and two departmental representatives).

2) Policy pertaining to the definition of Master's Thesis and Non-Thesis Programs.

Previously, the Graduate Bulletin distinguished between two types of master's programs – thesis and non-thesis. The Graduate School, along with the Co-Chairs of the GPC, with advice from the University Registrar and the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement, proposed to change this to three types: thesis, coursework-only, and project.

The goal of this policy was to: 1) recognize creative achievement and activity taking the scope of a terminal project as its own master's-type program, 2) distinguish between work taking the scope of a thesis , and 3.) work taking the scope of a course or capstone experience.

3) New Language to be added to the section in the General Bulletin pertaining to the composition of Supervisory Committees for Master's and Doctoral:

The suggested changes to the language in the *Graduate Bulletin- Supervisory Committee Section for Master's and Doctoral Programs (page 75 & 76)* seeks to tighten the restrictions on relationships allowed on graduate committees, articulate exceptions for review, and define what "immediate family" actually means. The overriding principle behind the GPC recommended changes is ensure that all possible steps are taken to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

4) New Language to be added to the section in the General Bulletin pertaining to the Grade Appeals System.

The new language approved by the GPC (and subsequently the Faculty Senate) clarifies a number of ambiguities in the previous iteration of this section of the General Bulletin.

5) The GPC approved a temporary GRE and GMAT waiver for the Fall 2020 term for Master's and Specialist's applicants only.

This proposal, originating in the Graduate School, was prompted by the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on graduate enrollments. Among its chief benefits are these:

- It still leaves the admission decision autonomy to departments.
- Streamlines the application process for students and departments.
- Removes barriers for students who cannot meet ETS requirements for at home testing and are thus discouraged from applying in the first place.

For the GPC,



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