



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020
FSU ZOOM
3:35 P.M.

I. Regular Session

The regular session of the 2020-21 Faculty Senate was held on Wednesday, April 22, 2020. Faculty Senate President Eric Chicken presided.

The following members attended the Senate meeting:

T. Adams, S. Aggarwal, I. Alabugin, P. Aluffi, E. Alvarez, J. Ang, J. Appelbaum, A. Askew, J. Atkins, J. Bahorski, E. Bangi, A. Barbu, H. Bass, B. Birmingham, D. Bish, M. Blaber, M. Bourassa, R. Brower, J. Brown Speights, M. Buchler, G. Burnett, M. Carrasco, E. Cecil, E. Chicken, I. Chiorescu, P. Doan, J. Du, R. Duarte, M. Duncan, D. Eccles, V. Fleury, H. Gazelle, R. Goodman, T. Graban, S. Grant, A. Gunjan, K. Harris, E. Hilinski, E. Hinchman, P. Hoeflich, C. Hofacker, P. Hollis, A. Huber, M. Hurdal, P. Iatarola, J. Ingram, E. Jakubowski, K. Jones, C. Kelley, H. Kern, E. Kim, E. Klassen, T. Lee, V. Lewis, T. Mariano, P. Marty, C. Marzen, C. McClive, M. McFarland, C. Moore, R. Morris, J. Munn, A. Muntendam, I. Padavic, J. Palmer, C. Patrick, E. Peters, D. Peterson, J. Proffitt, A. Rhine, L. Rinaman, N. Rogers, E. Ryan, G. Salazar, A. Semykina, J. Sobanjo, S. Stagg, J. Standley, L. Stepina, R. Stilling, B. Stults, P. Sura, G. Tyson, T. Van Lith, A. Vanli, M. Ye, Q. Yin, and I. Zanini-Cordi.

The following members were absent. Alternates are listed in parenthesis:

A. Ai, P. Andrei, P. Beerli, T. Chiricos, F. Dupuigrenet, S. Foo, D. Kim, S. Lester (**James Elsner**), I. MacDonald, C. Madsen, K. Reynolds, R. Singleton, and M. Swanbrow Becker (**Fengfeng Ke**).

II. Approval of the Minutes, March 25, 2020 meeting

The minutes were approved as distributed.

III. Approval of the agenda, April 22, 2019 meeting

The agenda was amended to have announcements by President Thrasher and announcements by Provost McRorie to follow the election of the steering committee. The agenda was approved as amended.

IV. Election of the Faculty Senate President—Paul Marty

The Faculty Senate President is elected annually. Nominations from the floor were opened. Dr. Eric Chicken was nominated and seconded. No additional nominations were made. **Eric Chicken was unanimously elected as Faculty Senate President for the 2020-2021 term.**

V. Election of the Steering Committee—Arda Vanli

Biographies of the nominees were posted on the Canvas page. There are four vacancies on the Steering Committee. All four vacancies are for two-year terms (2020-2022). The election ballot consisted of Enrique Alvarez, Bridget Birmingham, Charles Hofacker, Elizabeth Jakubowski, Paul Marty, Jennifer Proffitt, Nancy Rogers, Jayne Standley, Lee Stepina, and Gary Tyson. No additional nominations were made. Each round of elections took place via Qualtrics survey during the Zoom meeting as emails were sent to senators and alternates.

On the first ballot, **Gary Tyson** was elected.

Enrique Alvarez, Bridget Birmingham, Charles Hofacker, Elizabeth Jakubowski, Paul Marty, and Nancy Rogers were placed on the second ballot.

On the second ballot, **Bridget Birmingham** and **Nancy Rogers** were elected.

Enrique Alvarez and Elizabeth Jakubowski were placed on the third ballot.

On the third ballot, **Enrique Alvarez** was elected.

Enrique Alvarez, Bridget Birmingham, Nancy Rogers, and Gary Tyson were elected to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. Elizabeth Jakubowski was runner-up. Returning committee members are Todd Adams, Petra Doan, and Erin Ryan.

VI. Special Order: Announcements by President Thrasher

- Congratulated Eric Chicken for continuing as Faculty Senate President and serving on the FSU Board of Trustees (BOT).
- There are many people around FSU contributing to the university being open, functioning, and providing students with education.
- The Board of Governors (BOG) meets every Monday to go over issues related to the coronavirus.
- There is a weekly meeting with the ACC presidents to primarily discuss athletics, the impact to student athletes, and the economic impact of the coronavirus.
- FSU is in the process of preparing the budget. The process is difficult because the Florida Governor has until July 1, 2020 to sign the budget that was enacted by the legislator three weeks ago.
- The Florida Governor created a task force on reopening the state of Florida. It has met every day since its creation. There is a committee focusing on higher education.
- FSU is hosting a virtual graduation on Saturday, May 2, 2020 to honor graduates.
- An emergency fund was created to help students. Over \$450,000 were raised.
- There will be \$15,000,000 in federal money to help with student aid. There is another \$15,000,000 expected to help with the loss of revenue.
- FSU has not yet had furloughs or layoffs.

VII. Special Order: Announcements by Provost McRorie

- Welcomed Eric Chicken for continuing as Faculty Senate President.
- Thanked the Faculty Senate Steering Committee for their work and adaptations this year.

- Changing teaching styles mid-semester was unexpected. Provost McRorie thanked everyone for their efforts.
- There have been additional courses added to the summer terms. The summer 2020 enrollment is projected to be higher than usual.
- The fall semester has yet to be determined, but a decision is expected to be made in July.
- FSU BOT Chairman Burr is in talks with President Thrasher to continue his presidency.
- FSU Libraries has received national and international attention because of breaking the big deal with Elsevier.
- **Gary Tyson, Arts & Sciences** – Referred to the statewide Faculty Senate meeting discussion of the fall semester being online, not online or a phase-out of online. Inquired if FSU has discussed the transition back to in-person teaching. Provost McRorie responded that every possible model of teaching has been discussed. Some universities are looking at only offering labs and experiential kinds of classes, such as the arts, for in-person learning and having everything else taught online. A difficulty is student behavior outside of the classroom. Senator Tyson then inquired about faculty who may feel less comfortable going back to in-person teaching due to safety concerns. Provost McRorie responded that the provosts from other universities and members of the BOG have met and continue to discuss the best ways to move forward.
- Provost McRorie meets with the provosts of the ACC and SUS. The larger institutions have similar issues.

VIII. Report of the Steering Committee, Professor Erin Ryan

a. Welcome

- Welcomed everyone to the first Senate of the year.
- The Faculty Senate Steering Committee (FSSC) met four times since the last senate meeting. The committee continues to discuss academic continuity, pass/fail grading, and other changes in policy and procedure this semester mostly due to the coronavirus.
- Thanked the administration for their collaboration with the Faculty Senate, FSSC, and faculty while adjusting to and making changes.
- The committee met with President Thrasher and Provost McRorie to receive continuing updates on responses to the coronavirus.
- The committee met with Vice President Janet Kistner to discuss adjustments for faculty going through the promotion and tenure process and how to fairly handle the spring 2020 student evaluations.
- The committee has been following updates from the BOG and BOT about how FSU and the State University System, in general, will manage the financial hits associated with coronavirus.
- The committee was asked by some senators to consider the impact of remote teaching for spring and summer 2020 on future expectations for remote teaching. The committee has asked the Student Evaluations Committee to consider how the Senate may gather relevant data about student experiences in this period of experimentation to help assess the differences and how the Senate may respond.
- The committee also discussed how to accept papers and presentations in FVAS, immigration issues involving faculty and graduate student admissions, summer instruction plans, and the difficulty vulnerable faculty may face if FSU returns to in-person teaching in fall 2020.

- Last week, the FSSC held the first Senate orientation for new and returning members.
- b. 2020/2021 Faculty Senate Meeting Dates (See Addendum 1)**
 - The proposed dates for the 2020-2021 Faculty Senate Meetings are below. Dates were adjusted from the 3rd Wednesday of the month to accommodate holidays.
 - a. Wednesday, September 16, 2020
 - b. Wednesday, October 21, 2020
 - c. Wednesday, November 18, 2020
 - d. Wednesday, December 2, 2020
 - e. Wednesday, January 20, 2021
 - f. Wednesday, February 24, 2021
 - g. Wednesday, March 24, 2021
 - h. Wednesday, April 21, 2021 (Note: first meeting of the 2021-2022 Faculty Senate)
 - i. The motion to approve the 2020-2021 Faculty Senate meetings schedule was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

IX. Reports of Standing Committees

a. University Curriculum Committee—Elizabeth Jakubowski (See Addendum 2)

- The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) in consultation with the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) worked on a revision of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) statement used on syllabi. The reason for the modification is (1) the office has been renamed, and (2) the process for notifying instructors about a student's need for accommodation and what type is now being done electronically. It will still be expected of the student to contact the instructor and review what the accommodation entails.
- **Jayne Standley, Music** – Sought clarification about the timeline students have to seek accommodation. Senator Jakubowski responded that due to the turnaround time OAS faces, students have more than the first week of classes to request accommodation.
- **Jennifer Mitchell, Director, Department of Student Support and Transitions** – The OAS removed the first week timeframe some time ago and allows ongoing registration.
- **Jayne Standley, Music** – The ongoing registration makes it difficult for classes with proficiency or skill requirements in the middle of the class that the student then asks for accommodation. This senator inquired if it was appropriate for an instructor to state in the syllabus the need to request accommodation during the first week of class. Jennifer Mitchell responded that it is not appropriate because the student has the right to use or not use accommodations. However, if a student requests accommodation in the middle of the semester, the accommodations will not be retroactively applied. If there are proficiencies or skill requirements that seem difficult to accommodate, reach out to OAS for support on how to make those accommodations.
- **Monica Hurdal, Arts & Sciences** – Inquired if it could be required that the accommodation letters be sent through university channels, such as Canvas, because sending the letters through email or Skype are not confidential as the letters should be, referring to point three of the proposed statement. Jennifer Mitchell responded that the general counsel reviewed the proposed statement. It is recommended that Zoom for HIPPA be used when meeting with students. The accommodation letter will come from OAS through confidential software.

- **Linda Rinaman, Arts & Sciences** – Sought clarification about the purpose of point three if the instructor is already receiving a letter from OAS. Jennifer Mitchell responded that the instructor meets with the student to discuss how the instructor will accommodate the course to the student’s needs.
- **Amy Huber, Fine Arts** – This senator likes to meet with the students to discuss accommodations because a lot of studio courses are taught. Inquired about the start of the accommodations for students who do not show up or continue to reschedule meetings about accommodations. Jennifer Mitchell responded that the accommodations are effective once the instructor receives the letter, but there is a week to implement them. If a student is non-responsive, reach out to OAS to see if they are able to get a response from the student.
- **Kathryn Jones, Arts & Sciences** – Inquired if it was acceptable to state on the syllabus the preference of email correspondence for standard accommodations. Jennifer Mitchell responded that the best thing to do would be to keep the standardized statement.
- **Tarez Graban, Arts & Sciences** – Commented about working with students on accommodations is a partnership between OAS and the faculty and was appreciative for retaining statement three on the proposed ADA statement. This senator commented about most students not meeting and the use of OAS working with faculty. Inquired about the removal of the statement “Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided” from the proposed ADA statement, echoed from Paul Marty in the Zoom chat. Jennifer Mitchell responded that the language was removed to simply state the steps needed to receive accommodations. Students do have responsibilities and expectations while working with OAS. Students must sign a statement of understanding every semester.
- **Robin Goodman, Arts & Sciences** – Inquired if the proposed ADA statement must be included on syllabi being put on the portal for approval. Elizabeth Jakubowski responded that the statement must be included and there will be a phase-in period.
- **Hank Bass, Arts & Sciences** – Sought clarification regarding points two and three of the language “must” for point two and “should” for point three. Jennifer Mitchell responded that students must request a letter of accommodation from OAS before faculty can provide accommodation. The students must also meet with faculty to discuss accommodations. This senator encouraged changing the language of the proposal to remove “should” from the top line of the proposal, insert “must” for point two, and insert “should” for point three.
- **Sudhir Aggarwal, Arts & Sciences** – Commented about the change of language. Students do not have to request accommodations even if they need them. Jennifer Mitchell responded that if students want accommodations, they must request a letter and register with OAS.
- **Patrice Iatorala, Education** – Commented about inserting “must” in place of “should” on the top line of the proposal.
- **Nancy Rogers, Music** – Inquired about accommodations and the use of “should” and “must”. Jennifer Mitchell responded that students should meet with faculty within one week of the faculty receiving the accommodation letter from OAS, but faculty can still

accommodate the student's needs. Point three used "should" instead of "must" because of this option.

- **Veronica Fleury, Education** – Sought clarification about academic accommodations and disabilities. Jennifer Mitchell responded that accommodations should only be given to students with a letter from OAS, and only the accommodations listed should be given. Sought clarification about students needing a diagnosis of a disability. Jennifer Mitchell responded that any student who goes through OAS must have a diagnosis and provide documentation. Senator Fleury input that points one and two are both a "must".
- **Erin Ryan, Law** – **Made a motion to postpone discussion on this change to the ADA statement. The motion passed.**

b. Graduate Policy Committee—David Johnson (See addenda 3-5)

- The Graduate Policy Committee (GPC) conducted program reviews this year: scientific computing, mathematics, statistics, nurse anesthetist program at the Panama City campus, and modern languages and linguistics.
- The Conflict of Interest policy proposed changes to the graduate bulletin- supervisory committee section for the master's and doctoral programs (see addendum 3). The change seeks to tighten the restrictions on relations allowed on graduate committees to articulate exceptions that can be reviewed and define immediate family.
- **The motion to amend the Conflict of Interest policy was made.**
- **Nancy Rogers, Music** – Sought clarification about what problem this change in policy is solving. This senator gave the example of frequently serving on the same committee as an immediate family member because of them both being in a small department and being the only ones able to serve on the committee. This senator acknowledged the proposed change allows for exceptions but noted that it is possible to not be granted an exception. David Johnson responded that there have been instances of related colleagues serving on the same committees, which creates a perception of conflict of interest. David Johnson also explained that the change to the policy would likely not impact Senator Rogers ability to serve on a committee with an immediate family member.
- **Petra Doan, Social Sciences & Public Policy** – Supported Senator Rogers sentiment with a similar example of working on committees with an immediate family member. This senator recommended stating that a request for an exception should be stated rather than saying it is not an option to serve on the same committee. This senator commented that this change makes it more difficult for dual career couples to work at FSU. David Johnson responded that there are possibilities for exceptions and that people could continue to serve on committees with an immediate family member. Committees are approved by a chair or dean, so those issues would be addressed if needed.
- **Gary Burnett, Communication & Information** – Commented about past service on committees with an immediate family member and serving on the GPC. This senator expressed support for the proposed change to the policy.
- **David Johnson** – Responded to a question in the Zoom chat from Robin Goodman regarding if the proposed policy change would impact current committees. David Johnson responded that existing committees would be grandfathered in and the policy would only apply to future committees.
- **The amendment to the Conflict of Interest policy passed.**

- The second policy change brought forth by the GPC regards the master's level program definitions (see addendum 4). There was a problem with the Registrar and how master's degrees were listed for students enrolled in programs not strictly thesis programs but enrolling in thesis hours. This policy defines thesis programs, non-thesis programs, coursework only programs, and programs that involve completion of a project.
- **The motion to adopt the master's level program types policy was made. The motion passed.**
- **Erin Ryan, Law – Motioned to have a special Senate meeting. The motion was seconded.** Senator Adams indicated that the Senate bylaws require a written record to hold a special Senate meeting with a minimum of 10 senators and four colleges represented.
- **Erin Ryan, Law – Motioned to suspend the requirement of a written record due to the nature of these Zoom meetings. The motion was seconded. The suspension passed.**
- **Mark Riley, Dean of The Graduate School – Discussed the proposal to temporarily suspend the GRE and GMAT for admission to FSU Master's and Specialist's degrees for fall 2020 (see addendum 5).**
- **The motion to adopt the temporary suspension of GRE and GMAT for admission was made.**
- **Bridget Birmingham, University Libraries – Called to question.** This invokes an immediate vote, without discussion, of the call to question. **The call to question passed.**
- **The motion to adopt the temporary suspension of GRE and GMAT for admission passed.**

X. Old Business

a. FSU Constitution

- Postponed.

XI. New Business

a. Kim Barber & Robert Fuselier

- Postponed.

XII. University Welfare

a. United Faculty of Florida, Florida State University Chapter, Robin Goodman

- The UFF did impact bargaining, which is when the UFF discusses with administration how faculty are impacted by the current situation.
- There has been an extension of the tenure clock and evaluations were removed from classes that moved online unexpectedly due to the coronavirus.

XIII. Announcements by Deans and other Administrative Officers

No announcements were given.

April 22, 2020

Faculty Senate Minutes

The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Eric Chicken Digitally signed by Eric
Chicken
Date: 2020.04.27
17:03:20 -04'00'

Eric Chicken
Faculty Senate President



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

PROPOSED DATES FOR
FACULTY SENATE MEETINGS
2020-2021
DODD HALL AUDITORIUM
3:35 P.M.

FALL SEMESTER 2020

CLASSES BEGIN: MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2020

FINALS END: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2020

SENATE MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020

(**VETERAN'S DAY HOLIDAY**, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2020)

(**THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**, NOVEMBER 26-27, 2020)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2020

SPRING SEMESTER 2021

CLASSES BEGIN: MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021

FINALS END: FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 2021

SENATE MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2021

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021

(**SPRING BREAK: MARCH 15 - MARCH 19, 2021**)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 2021



Florida State University

**OFFICE OF
ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES**

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT
SUPPORT & TRANSITIONS

Updated Syllabi Statement

Americans With Disabilities Act:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services; and
- (2) request a letter from the Office of Accessibility Services to be sent to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and
- (3) meet (in person, via phone, email, skype, zoom, etc...) with each instructor to whom a letter of accommodation was sent to review approved accommodations.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For the latest version of this statement and more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Office of Accessibility Services

874 Traditions Way

108 Student Services Building

Florida State University

Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167

(850) 644-9566 (voice)

(850) 644-8504 (TDD)

oas@fsu.edu

<https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Originally Approved by GPC on 11/7/11. Amended by GPC and approved by Faculty Senate Steering Committee on 2/27/12. Discussed by GPC on 3/9/20. Revisited for review by GPC on 3/23/20. Approved by GPC on 3/27/20.

Title:

Revision: Conflict of Interest Policy

Current Policy:

Graduate Bulletin- Supervisory Committee Section for Master's and Doctoral Programs (page 75 & 76)

"A supervisory committee's judgments on the quality of a student's thesis or dissertation should be based solely on the academic merits of the work before them. Any other standard risks a breach of professional ethics or law and undermines the integrity of the process and those involved. Any personal or financial relationships (e.g. involving the major professor, committee members, and/or student) that may create the perception of bias in that process must be avoided. This would not include the typical practice of hiring a student on a university assistantship in the home unit but would include the student being hired by the major professor's private company. If any such conflicts of interest could exist, they should be reported to the administrative head of the student's academic unit, who will evaluate same for potential harm and take appropriate action."

Suggested Revised Policy Language:

"A supervisory committee's judgments on the quality of a student's thesis or dissertation should be independent, unbiased, and based solely on the academic merits of the work before them. Any other standard risks a breach of professional ethics or law and undermines the integrity of the process and those involved. Any personal, professional, or financial relationships (e.g. involving the major professor, supervisory committee members, and/or student) that may create the perception of bias in that process must be avoided. Immediate family members, domestic partners and married couples are restricted from serving together on the same supervisory committee in any capacity as this could potentially lead to a perception of bias. For the purposes of this policy, immediate family members are defined as a parent, grandparent, spouse, sibling, child or grandchild by blood, adoption or marriage. Exception requests for extenuating circumstances can be submitted by the unit's academic dean to the Dean of The Graduate School for consideration. However, for doctoral supervisory committees, under no circumstances can a Committee Chair (or Co-Chair) and University Representative be immediate family members, domestic partners, or a married couple. The University Representative must be drawn from outside the student's department (as well as outside the student's degree program for interdisciplinary programs) must be a fully-tenured member of the faculty with Graduate Faculty Status (GFS) and should be free of conflicts of interest with other members of the supervisory committee. Financial conflicts of interest would not include the typical practice of hiring a student on a university assistantship in the home unit but would include the student being hired by the major professor's private company.

Commented [JB1]: The subcommittee felt that the policy should be stricter than simply saying "should not" serve on supervisory committees together but allow for exceptions to be submitted for extenuating circumstances. The group also felt the necessity to define what "immediate family members" actually means.

If any such conflict of interest exists, it should be reported by the department chair to the academic dean's office of the student's academic unit, who will evaluate the situation for potential harm and take appropriate action. If questions or irregularities arise that cannot be resolved within the academic unit, the dean's office should contact the Dean of The Graduate School or designee for resolution by submitting an exception request to The Graduate School."

Implementation :

Takes effect Fall 2020 for new thesis and doctoral admits.

Grandfathering will be allowed for thesis and doctoral students (those admitted to candidacy) who currently have immediate family members, domestic partners or married couples serving on the supervisory committee together, as long as it does not involve a Committee Chair (or Co-Chair) and University Representative for doctoral students.

Commented [JB2]: Seems reasonable to allow grandfathering if the student has passed the prelim, been admitted to candidacy and may be close to defending.



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Discussed by GPC on 2/17/20. Revisited and approved by GPC with edits on 3/9/20.

Title:

Defining Master's Thesis and Non-Thesis Programs

Introduction:

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

The goal of this policy is 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.

At present, various units use thesis-type language for courses and student work that are not equivalent in scope to a thesis. In addition, some units register students for thesis credit hours though the student is in a non-thesis program. These irregularities are an issue and we need to move forward with clear definitions, so students' transcripts correctly reflect the type and scope of work they have completed. However, without centrally defined language, no guideline exists for units as to classifying student work appropriately. The growth and evolution of the broad array of graduate programs required a policy to define and differentiate the nature of the different programs. The policy below provides clear definitions, defines the scope, and sets minimum requirements while allowing units flexibility in nomenclature that suits their discipline-specific needs.

Origin and Reasoning for Definitions:

In Spring 2017, the previous Dean of the Graduate School, Dean Nancy Marcus, attempted to tackle an inquiry involving thesis vs non-thesis programs. The concern was unavoidably dropped because her health rapidly declined. The concern involved graduate students in some of the non-thesis programs on campus taking thesis hours, a thesis defense, and in some cases, courses with "thesis" in the title. This created confusion in determining whether a graduate student is truly completing a formal thesis. It raised the question of whether the university should define what a "thesis-type program" requires versus a "coursework-only program," especially for procedural purposes, and led to the idea of developing a third category of master's programs called "project."

At many external institutions, such as UF, programs being considered "thesis-type" and completing a traditional thesis necessitates the manuscript being sent to the Graduate School for formatting review and publishing.

Currently, a potential risk exists in which outside employers could perceive a non-thesis graduate student (who is enrolled in a course-type program) as a thesis student if he/she is taking thesis hours

and/or completing a thesis defense. Neither diploma nor transcript notates whether a graduate student completed a thesis or non-thesis track. Outsider employers could misidentify non-thesis students as thesis students if the transcript shows thesis hours, a thesis defense, or a course with the title of "thesis" in it. This could lead to the interpretation that the student completed a formal thesis, submitted the manuscript to the Graduate School, and went through the standard formatting and publishing process.

In light of this issue, the following definitions and procedures are being suggested with the hope of providing transparency and consistency to avoid any potential academic misrepresentation. Please keep in mind that the credit hour requirements outlined below for both the thesis- and course-type master's programs are straight from the Graduate Bulletin and have not been amended in any way.

Suggested Policy:

Definitions and Minimum Academic Requirements

Thesis-Type Master's Program

A thesis-type degree program is focused on research and scholarship, culminating in written output in the form of the thesis. Thesis-type programs usually include graduate coursework in specific content areas, research methods, analysis, and theory. The scope of the thesis is discipline-specific and typically requires more than one semester of intensive work. A thesis clearly exceeds the requirements of a typical course paper and follows the traditional model of academic, publishable work (i.e., consists predominantly of written work). The thesis must present original research conducted by the student under the close supervision of the student's faculty supervisory committee.

To qualify for a master's degree under a thesis program, the student must complete a minimum of thirty semester hours of credit including thesis credit. At least eighteen of these hours must be taken on a letter-grade basis (A, B, C). The minimum number of thesis hours for completion of a master's degree shall be six hours.

Theses can only be completed by students in a thesis-type program and require two course codes: one for thesis credit hours and one for thesis defense. Graduate students pursuing a thesis-type program must adhere to all committee composition requirements set by the university and their academic unit. Additionally, students in a thesis-type program must electronically submit their manuscript to The Graduate School for format review and adhere to all manuscript clearance deadlines.

Coursework-Only Master's Program

A coursework-only program may include capstone options such as comprehensive exams, graduate-level internships, or cumulative projects (written or creative). Coursework-only programs are not required to include one of these capstone options by the university. These capstone options exceed the scope of a typical course assignment but are smaller in scope than master's thesis or project-track. Typically, capstone experiences are completed at the end of the program under the supervision of one faculty member while students are registered for a capstone-type course. Each unit may choose its own nomenclature for the capstone option (including but not limited to: "capstone," "capstone project," "capstone experience," or "comprehensive project"), as long as the terminology does not include the word "thesis" and is distinct from terminology chosen for the project programs within that unit.

To qualify for a coursework-only master's degree, the student must complete a minimum of thirty semester hours of credit. At least twenty-one of these hours must be taken on a letter-grade basis (A, B, C). In a coursework-only master's program, graduate students complete a degree broadly sampling discipline-specific and/or interdisciplinary content courses, theories, and methods.

Capstone options can only be completed by students in a coursework-only program and require one course code for the course during which the capstone experience is completed. The capstone option may take any format and students are not required to submit evidence of the completed work to The Graduate School, only to their unit. Any capstone option is subject to unit requirements, but not subject to university rules regarding committee composition, manuscript formatting, or manuscript deadlines.

Project Master's Program

A project master's program is primarily focused on creative achievement and activity culminating in a terminal project distinguished by its predominantly non-written output. While project master's programs include graduate coursework in specific content areas, the emphasis is on applied and/or creative activity, interpretation, and theory. The project in a project master's program does not follow the traditional model of academic, publishable work and does not need to be limited to writing. There may or may not be a written component included in the project (e.g., students may do both a performance and written assignment), but the majority of the work should be in a format other than written. The project may take a variety of specialized interactive formats, including but not limited to: audio/digital (e.g., film, video, photography, or static image), performance (e.g., dance, theater, music), or art (e.g., exhibit). The scope of the project is discipline-specific and typically requires more than one semester of intensive work and exceeds the requirements for a typical course project/assignment. The project must present an original artistic and/or professional endeavor produced by the student under the close supervision of the student's faculty supervisory committee. Each unit may choose its own nomenclature for the project (including but not limited to: "creative project," "project in lieu of thesis", etc.), as long as the terminology does not include the word "thesis" and is distinct from terminology chosen for the coursework-only program within that unit.

To qualify for a master's degree in a project program, the student must complete a minimum of thirty semester hours of credit. At least twenty-one of these hours must be taken on a letter-grade basis (A, B, C). The minimum number of project hours for completion of a project master's program shall be six hours.

Projects in lieu of thesis can only be completed by students in a project master's program and require two course codes: one for project credit hours (or unit-specific nomenclature) and one for project defense (or unit-specific nomenclature). Additionally, graduate students completing a project master's program are required to submit a record of their output (e.g., copy of digital file, photographs of an exhibit, footage from a performance, etc.) to The Graduate School in electronic format for storing and cataloging.

UF Example – Project Tracks:

At the University of Florida (UF), similar to FSU, they have programs with project master's tracks in which the programs sometimes require their students to produce a project in lieu of thesis, but this is

Commented [JB1]: Project Master's Programs will be coded in Student Central as being equivalent to a non-thesis, as it has been confirmed that these projects cannot be deemed equal to a traditional thesis.

Commented [JB2]: An example of a potential Project Master's Program could be the MFA in Art in the College of Fine Arts in which the degree culminates in a creative/performance-based terminal project involving a 10-page research paper that puts the artwork to be displayed at the thesis exhibition in historical context. This would not be considered a formal thesis paper, nor should the students be enrolled on a thesis track.

not considered a formal/traditional thesis paper. Such programs are titled “project in lieu of thesis programs.” At UF, for a project master’s program, some form of documentation is submitted to the library for storing and cataloging. For example, a student who completed an art project with an art/thesis exhibition must submit the research paper and/or pictures of art to the library for storing. Further, UF requires all students in such programs to enroll in one specific course (6973) instead of allowing them to enroll in thesis hours, a thesis defense, or courses with thesis in the title. This course is only used for project master’s students and signifies that they are working on a project and not conducting formal research or producing a traditional thesis. This helps avoid confusion and academic misrepresentation.

The Graduate School has been continuously monitoring the COVID-19 crisis and the impacts it is having to graduate enrollment, and we need to move quickly to protect our gains over the last 2 years. Our office has been monitoring the various committees on campus for continuity of operations, non-FSU professional organizations, and other universities. In the past two weeks we have been involved with virtual meetings with the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to find out the latest information regarding graduate enrollment.

While our point-in-time Fall 2020 admissions numbers look strong we must try and do everything we can to offset any potential enrollment shortfall we could suffer from the lingering impacts of COVID-19 travel restrictions etc. Additionally, it would be prudent to bring-in as many self-paying master's students as possible including our own FSU undergrads who may not have been previously thinking about going to grad school but may do so now given the present employment landscape. I have discussed this temporary waiver proposal with the Provost and she is supportive and in favor of us moving forward with this initiative as are the Deans we have spoken to.

While ETS and the GMAC have rolled-out online test at home options for the TOEFL, GRE, and GMAT, it is clear that the GRE online testing process leaves many roadblocks for applicants. Examples of this are: it cannot be done via Mac or tablet, test takers can have no one in the room, and there are other software/microphone/camera requirements that will likely be major roadblocks for many students.

With all of these items in mind, we would like for you to approve a temporary GRE and GMAT waiver for the Fall 2020 term for Master's and Specialist's applicants only.

We believe this has the following benefits:

- 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.

As you are well aware many colleges have been moving in this direction, please see the attached file showing all of the graduate programs with GRE or GMAT waivers that have recently been approved by the GPC.

This waiver will not apply for doctoral applicants. Under the Graduate Policy Committee's rules, programs with approved GRE or GMAT waivers in place can continue to offer these waivers. Programs that do not have waivers approved by the GPC, but want to waive the GRE or GMAT for doctoral applicants, may do so if it is approved by the Academic Dean on a student-by-student basis.

If this is approved, we will work with Deans, Graduate Program Directors, and other personnel to market this as much as, and as soon as, we can.