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REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, October 21, 2021

3:30 – 5:00 p.m., Zoom Meeting

Committee members present: Melissa Hines (Co-Chair), Patricia Bamwine, Julie Bonom (proxy for Allyson Neal), Luis Finotti, Hunter Hamock (GSS President), Greg Kaplan, Siris Laursen, Mohammed Mohsin

Other attendees: David Anderson (CVM), Bruce Behn (HCB), Sara Bradberry, Amy Broemmel (Past Graduate Council Chair), David Cihak (CEHHS), Kristina Gordon (CEHHS), Stefanie Ohnesorg (Graduate Council Chair), Paula Schaefer (CL), Dixie Thompson, and Catherine Cox (Graduate Council Liaison)

Melissa Hines called the Zoom meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Agenda Items:

1. Composition of a Master's Committee (Dixie Thompson, Dean of the Graduate School)

- Do we need a master's committee of 3 people for every master's student? Example, do we need a committee of 3 for those students in coursework-only programs?
- Should we open the committee assignments to people who are not at the rank of assistant professor?

Current Catalog Language

Master's Committee

A master's committee is composed of the major professor from the student's academic program and at least two other faculty members, all at the rank of assistant professor or above and should be formed as early as possible in a student's program, and must be formed by the time a student applies for admission to candidacy. If the student is pursuing a minor, the student in consultation with the major professor, should consider adding a committee member from the minor department.

The responsibility of this committee is to

- assist the student in planning a program of study and carrying out research or other scholarly work,
- serve as the review panel for thesis or project proposals,
- prepare a final comprehensive examination, and
- assure fulfillment of the program's degree requirements.

S. Bradberry:

For the Coursework only options – from the programs I reached out to:

- 20 programs are in favor of eliminating the committee.
- RSM (Recreation and Sport Management Major, MS) is in favor of keeping 3 committee members.
- Who should be the official signoff signature (DGS or Advisor)?

If you imagine that programs would have one person to be over the program - would it be the academic director who would signoff?

One person would review the Candidacy Application, and signoff as the official member.

Finotti: Math. I received very little feedback from the Math Department. Our instructors are lecturers.

Nursing: we have moved all our programs to the doctoral level. No issues for us.

Hunter Hammock, GSS: from the student's perspective, I think committee members as mentor's are very important. The reality if these programs are just "course only" then maybe there is no mentoring. If it is just a rubber stamp – then I agree.

CVM – stay “as is” – not a blanket change. Have exceptions to the policy.

HCB

We have several lecturers with JD’s or PhD’s – and faculty thought they should be able to sign.

G. Kaplan: Modern Foreign Languages – The chair does most of the work, but the other members contribute to the research.

L Finotti:

What are we looking at to do with this proposal? Is this for the Thesis option and comprehensive exams?

The chair should be tenure track at the level of assistant professor or above and the other two members.

D. Thompson: Sara and I will work on the language. We will send it out for all to review and add input.

2. Proficiency Exams for Specialist in Education (EdS) students – submitted by David Cihak, Associate Dean and Director, Office of Professional Licensure

Currently, Proficiency Examinations are only available for master’s students. The College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences would like to see this option also be available for our Specialist in Education (EdS) students.

Cihak:

Generally, EdS students have earned the master’s degree. We expect that EdS candidates, from earning their master’s degrees and from their professional experiences, would have some of the competencies. We also could possibly look at this as a recruiting tool. In the education world, you get a pay raise when the EdS is earned. Also, could this be available for the Distance Education (DE) students?

B. Behn: We might also look at this as a recruiting tool.

D. Thompson: It appears there is a consensus to support having competency-based proficiency opportunity, which should be limited, as the majority of classes for any degree should be earned on campus with credit-bearing courses. This is an opportunity to recognize the skills our students have and as mentioned, possibly use as a recruiting tool.

This will require conversations with the Office of the University Registrar. I will discuss this with the associate deans. And, I will poll the SEC deans and ask how they use competency-based proficiency at their institutions. I will have data to share at our next meeting.

Current catalog language:

Proficiency Examinations

A proficiency examination measures the level of knowledge a student has in a specific body of knowledge. By taking a proficiency examination, a student may earn course credits and apply them towards a **master’s degree**. A maximum of one-fourth of the total credit hours in a master’s degree program may be earned by this method, subject to approval by the student’s graduate committee.

A proficiency examination may be given in academic courses offered for graduate credit. Applications for proficiency examinations are only available in the Office of the University Registrar, 209 Student Services Building. They are not available online.

- Students should check with the department offering the course on the availability of proficiency examinations and check with their advisor to determine if their own program allows coursework completed by proficiency examination to be applied towards the master’s degree program of study.
- A student must be admitted to graduate study. Proficiency examination is not available to students in non-degree seeking status.

- The request for examination must be approved by the head of the department offering the course.
- The student applying for this privilege must present evidence to the department head that he/she has the knowledge and abilities expected of graduate students who have taken the same course.
- A per credit hour fee must be paid before each examination.
- Upon passing the examination with a minimum grade of B, the student will receive graduate credit.
- Proficiency examinations **may not be used** to raise the grade or change the credit in a course previously completed, nor may such an examination be repeated.
- Proficiency examinations taken at other institutions are not transferable.

Dr. Hines thanked everyone for the discussion and questions of these agenda two items.

Meeting adjourned at 4:38.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Cox
Graduate Council Liaison