

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS COMMITTEE OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR CHANGES TO SELECTED GRADUATE SCHOOL DOCTORAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DOCTORAL STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Background

In April, 1993, George W. Keulks, Dean of The Graduate School and Research, appointed a task force to review The Graduate School policies and procedures used by UWM doctoral programs. No systematic faculty review of these policies and procedures had been conducted for two decades. Given the changing climate concerning institutional obligations and liabilities on educational matters, it seemed timely and important that a careful review be given to the formal as well as informal policies and procedures used. The task force was asked to explore the following:

1. General requirements for the PhD
2. Attrition and time to degree
3. Climate for women and minorities
4. Potential for streamlining of domestic and international graduate student procedures

The task force met throughout the remainder of the spring term and during the summer, focusing their attention primarily on the first item, general requirements for the PhD. As a result of those meetings, the task force developed a set of recommendations that were then given to the Regulations and Requirements Committee for consideration and implementation. An important recommendation of the task force was that a doctoral studies advisory group be created that would allow for continued study of issues and concerns relevant to doctoral studies on campus, reviewing these issues and recommending possible actions to the Regulations and Requirements Committee .

GFC Document No. 636 presents the doctoral task force recommendations as approved by the Regulations and Requirements Committee of The Graduate School.

The January 26, 2015 revision reduces the dissertation committee size from 5 to 4 members.

Task Force Report and Recommendations

1. Eliminate submission of the Program of Study to The Graduate School. Require programs to maintain and provide written documentation of program requirements to the student and develop a program of study jointly with the student.
2. Change the name of preliminary comprehensive exam to Doctoral Preliminary Exam.
3. Decouple the preliminary exam requirements from attaining Dissertator Status. Make them two separate doctoral stages with their own requirements.
4. Preliminary Exam Requirements and Procedures

- Program determines timing, structure, and specific requirements in order to take the exam. This information must be documented and communicated to The Graduate School.
  - There must be a minimum of three graduate faculty members, which may include the major professor, on the Doctoral Preliminary Examination committee.
  - Student applies and receives approval from the program to take the exam. The application is forwarded to the Graduate School for final approval.
  - The Graduate School checks the student's record to verify the student is in good standing (earned a cumulative g.p.a. of 3.0)
  - The Graduate School issues a warrant authorizing the exam. The warrant will have an expiration date of one semester. If the exam does not take place within one semester, a new application for prelims must be submitted by the doctoral student.
  - If the student passes the exam, The Graduate School notifies the student that Doctoral Candidacy has been achieved. The department must have a written statement of the procedures for the student who does not pass the exam.
  - The Graduate School will change the preliminary exam form to facilitate the revised process. The revised application form will include the student's request to take the exam, a place to show that the program approves student taking the exam, exam committee members, their signatures, and a place to indicate the results of the exam.
5. Formalize "Candidate for Degree." The Graduate School will communicate in writing to the student and to the major professor, the expectations of the Candidate for Degree stage, i.e., conduct a proposal hearing, form a dissertation committee, and update the program of study.
6. Revise Dissertator Requirements as follows:
- Preliminary exam must be passed.
  - Submit a proposal dissertation title and a brief summary of the dissertation topic to the Graduate School.
  - Major and Minor coursework requirements completed; (certified by program)
  - Residency requirement satisfied.
  - If required by program, language requirement completed.
  - Student has earned a cumulative g.p.a. of 3.0.
  - Program requirements met.
  - The Graduate School will check to make sure that student is still within Graduate

School Doctoral degree time-limit requirements.

7. Implement a "Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Hearing Requirement"
  - The Graduate School will prepare a form to facilitate the processing of this requirement.
  - The form will capture the following information:
    - Committee members' signatures. A minimum of three graduate faculty members, including the major professor, are required to serve on the committee.
    - Date of the hearing
    - Title of dissertation and a brief summary of the dissertation topic
    - Graduate School sign off
8. The Graduate School will monitor dissertator students every semester to be sure continuous registration is maintained and that the student is registered properly for this category. The Graduate School will have the authority to remove a student from dissertator status who is not in compliance with UW-System Dissertator regulations. The Graduate School will notify the student and department of dissertation requirements, and of any registration problems.
9. The Graduate School will prepare a form to facilitate the certification of dissertator status.
10. Change the name of the final oral exam to Doctoral Dissertation Defense.
11. Implement the following Dissertation Defense rules and procedures.
  - Scheduling the defense - There are two deadlines that the student must meet during the semester of graduation. First, the dissertation defense must be held at least two weeks prior to the graduation ceremony date. Second, the dissertation must be accepted by The Graduate School by the published Graduate School submission deadline. This deadline is one week prior to the graduation ceremony date.

If these deadlines are not met the student must apply and graduate in the next semester. However, the student will not be required to register for the next semester if the Doctoral Dissertation Defense has been held, passed, and the dissertation is accepted by The Graduate School prior to the first day of classes for the next semester. The date of graduation, however, will be the next semester.

- Committee Structure
- Form one committee of a minimum of four members, including the Major Professor. (Eligibility for committee membership is found in GFC Document 1173.) The Chair of the doctoral committee is the Major Professor. All committee members are responsible

for reading and voting on the dissertation.

- Recommend that guidelines be prepared for students, Major Professors, and Doctoral Committee Members concerning the responsibilities and expectations of each during the defense process. The Regulations and Requirements Committee recommends that the proposed Doctoral Studies Advisory Committee produce these guidelines.
- Absenteeism: No absentee ballots allowed.
- Voting: In order for the student to pass, a positive vote by a simple majority of the committee is required. The warrant will be revised to allow each committee member to show their vote. Create a new category: deferral. Definition of deferral: If deferral is checked on the warrant, reasons for the deferral must be given. The substance of the dissertation findings are acceptable to the committee, but some aspects (minor mechanical and editing) need refining before final acceptance. The purpose of deferrals is to keep students informed of their status.

The student in dissertation deferral status cannot graduate and needs to register for the next semester if the deferral is not changed to a "pass."

If the deferral status is not cleared by the time limit imposed by the dissertation committee (up to a maximum of four months), the deferral reverts to a failed dissertation defense.

The Dissertation Defense Committee designates the time limit for redefending the dissertation up to a maximum of one year.

- Redefending the Doctoral Dissertation after a failure: Student is allowed to redefend once after a waiting period. The Graduate School will require that the redefense take place within one calendar year from the date of the first defense.
- The doctoral program may decide on a shorter waiting period for the redefense.
- Replacement of the Major Professor: Recommend that the proposed Doctoral Studies Advisory Committee, in conjunction with R&R Committee develop requirements for replacement of the major professor. (Note: this has been done per GFC Doc. No. 763).
- The Graduate School will notify the program and student of the results of the defense and when all the requirements have been met for the doctoral degree.
- The Graduate School will prepare a new application and warrant to incorporate these changes.
- Grading the dissertation: No letter grades. Adopt pass or fail grades.

Additional recommendations:

12. Create a standing Doctoral Studies Advisory Committee that will study issues and concerns relevant to doctoral studies on campus. The Committee will review these

issues, report back to GFC, and recommend possible actions to the GFC.

13. Suggested agenda items for the Doctoral Studies Advisory Committee:

- Prepare a doctoral studies handbook or a set of guidelines to assist Major Professors and their students during the various doctoral stages set forth.
- Require "annual reviews" for doctoral students.
- Develop guidelines for doctoral graduation attendance.
- Study doctoral student 'time to degree.'
- Review doctoral student "environment" issues on campus.

October 18, 1993 Recommendations for Action

1. That the policies and procedures described in this document be approved.
2. That the approved policies and procedures be implemented by The Graduate School, effective with the 1994-95 academic year or on a schedule that provides for timely notification of faculty, staff, and students.
3. That a Doctoral Studies Advisory Committee be constituted, effective immediately (Fall Semester, 1993).

Regulations and Requirements Committee of The Graduate School

David Buck, Chair  
Khalil Khavari  
Donald Solomon  
Judith Senkevitch

Dean Keulks, ex officio  
Associate Dean Wierenga, ex officio  
Wendy Fall, Director, ex officio

**January 26, 2015 Recommendations for Action**

**That the policies and procedures in this document be approved, effective Spring 2015.**