MINUTES
The Graduate Council
January 23, 2019
Student Lounge, 111 Susan Campbell Hall

Members Present:  Adell Amos, Lara Bovilsky, Ron Bramhall (ex officio), Burke Hendrix, Elim Hernandez Santos, Andy Karduna (ex officio), Alison Kwok, Seth Lewis, Jeremy Piger, Jana Prikryl (ex officio), Nicholas Proudfoot, Leslie Straka, and Angie Whalen

Members Absent: Celeste Mena Morales, Fabienne Moore, Phil Scher (ex officio), Hailin Wang, Janet Woodruff-Borden (ex officio), Mark Watson (ex officio) and Hong Yuan

Graduate School Staff in Attendance: Jered Nagel, Marcia Walker

The meeting was called to order at 3:35pm.

The November 2018 minutes were approved as distributed.

Associate Professor Bovilsky reported that the UO Senate has asked if the Graduate Council has any objection to requiring graduate employees to use Canvas to report grades. Associate Professor Whalen said that there may be some objection from the College of Education because some programs within the College of Education use a different program than Canvas. Associate Dean Amos said the Graduate Council would need to know why the UO Senate was making this request. Professor Kwok noted that there are departments where faculty don’t use Canvas, and asked why graduate employees would be required to do so when it isn’t required of the faculty. Associate Professor Bovilsky said that she would take these questions back to the UO Senate before asking the Graduate Council to vote on it.

Old Business

Update of Past Approvals

Associate Professor Bovilsky reported that the Graduate Council has approved several programs:

1. The Sports Product Management – Online Masters,
2. A New Graduate Program in Ethnic Studies,
3. A New Master’s Industrial Internship Program Track: Chemical Design of Materials for Sensing and Detecting.

New Business

Proposed Change to Grading Policy for Thesis and Dissertation Credits

Associate Professor Bovilsky noted that currently available grades for thesis and dissertation are “I” (incomplete) or “N” (no pass). If students are making progress as expected, a grade of “I” is entered. Upon awarding the degree, the Office of the Registrar changes all thesis and dissertation grades from “I” to “P” (pass).

The Graduate Council Subcommittee on Policies and Procedures has recommended that the available grades for thesis and dissertation are “P” (Pass: Student has made appropriate progress during the term toward completing the thesis or dissertation); “N” (No Pass: Student has failed to submit work of acceptable quality or is otherwise not making adequate progress toward completing the thesis or
dissertation); and "I" (Incomplete: Used when the quality of work is satisfactory, but some minor yet essential requirement has not been completed in the timeframe expected.)

Associate Professor Bovilsky noted that there is some anxiety about assigning a lower grade that future employers may question and that might affect student funding. Also, the Graduate School wants better tracking and early intervention with meaningful help in cases where students need it. Associate Professor Bovilsky suggested a simultaneous method for reporting student progress.

Associate Professor Bovilsky motioned to recommend to the Dean of The Graduate School the proposed change to grading policy for thesis and dissertation credits. Professor Kwok seconded the motion. The Graduate Council unanimously voted to recommend to the Dean of The Graduate School the proposed change to grading policy for thesis and dissertation credits.

**Proposed Policy on Repeatable and Non-Repeatable Graduate Courses**

Assistant Dean Nagel outlined the proposed policy on repeatable and non-repeatable graduate courses.

**Repeatable Courses**

1. Some UO courses are repeatable for credit (for example, when the content of the course differs from previous offerings of the course). If a course has been approved by the Committee on Courses as repeatable for credit, any restrictions for the course are listed in the course catalog, including limits to credits and number of times the course may be repeated.

2. Students who have reached the limit will not be permitted to register again for the course without petitioning for prior approval from the Academic Requirements Committee (ARC) through the Office of the Registrar—or through the Graduate School?

3. Credits for repeatable courses are awarded each time the course is completed, up to the established limits.

4. All graded attempts of repeatable courses are calculated into the term and cumulative GPAs.

**Non-Repeatable Courses**

5. Students who earned a B or better or Pass in a course that is non-repeatable may not register again for the course without petitioning for prior approval from the ARC through the Office of the Registrar—or do we want them to petition the Graduate School?

6. Students who have not earned a B or better or Pass in any course may enroll in non-repeatable courses without prior approval, but no more than three times in total. All attempts, including those prior to fall 2019, are counted towards this limitation. Exceptions to this policy may be granted by petitioning the ARC through the Office of the Registrar—or do we want them to petition the Graduate School?

7. Credits for non-repeatable courses are awarded only one time.

8. When a student re-takes a non-repeatable course, only the most recent graded attempt is calculated into the term and cumulative GPA.

With regard to non-repeatable courses Assistant Dean Nagel noted that if a student passes with a grade of B or better they cannot enroll again in that class unless petitioning to do so. If the student receives a grade of less than B, the student can repeat the course three times. Credit for the course is awarded only once.
Senior Instructor Prikryl asked if previous attempts are removed from the GPA. Associate Vice Provost Bramhall noted that for undergraduate students all attempts count in calculating the GPA.

Professor Proudfoot posed a situation where a student asks the instructor for a grade of F instead of the B he would have received, just so that student can retake the class.

Associate Professor Lewis noted that the previous version of this policy used the grade of C instead of the current policy’s grade of B. He did not think a student would be upset if they received a grade of B in a class. Associate Professor Bovilsky stated that in her department a GPA of 3.5 is required, so a grade of B could be in the danger zone.

Associate Professor Whalen stated that there are courses that are required for professional licensure. We may allow a student to retake a class or not if there are circumstances like unprofessional conduct. In that case, the department would want to have the ability to say no at some point.

Assistant Dean Nagel suggested that there could be a departmental document that specified when a student would or would not be allowed to retake a class.

Associate Professor Bovilsky suggested adding language to the proposed policy that departments would have the ability to approve or disapprove when a student wanted to re-take a non-repeatable course. Associate Dean Karduna suggested adding language that the department policy would supersede the Graduate School policy.

Professor Proudfoot asked why there needs to be a cut-off grade. Assistant Dean Nagel said the idea is that if a student has already taken a class and passed it, they shouldn’t be allowed to keep retaking it. Associate Vice Provost Bramhall stated that there were no limits before. Students could keep retaking the class and getting A’s to inflate their GPAs.

Associate Professor Bovilsky brought up a situation where a student is doing great in their program, but takes an interdisciplinary course outside their program and does poorly. This low grade affects a graduate student’s GPA more severely than it would an undergraduate student. This proposed policy would correct that situation.

Professor Proudfoot suggested getting rid of the cut-off grade for non-repeatable courses and specifying that the student would only receive credit once for that course. Professor Kwok stated that the Graduate School should check with the Office of the Registrar about the policy.

Associate Vice Provost Bramhall stated that the Graduate School needs to set parameters for the departments or it will be confusing for the Office of the Registrar, particularly if department policies vary about which grade will be counted—the grade from the second attempt or the best grade received in the course.

Assistant Dean Nagel stated that he would confer with the Office of the Registrar. Associate Dean Karduna said the Graduate School would rewrite the policy based on the Graduate Council’s reflections, check with the Office of the Registrar, and bring it back to the Council.

**Proposed Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

Associate Dean Straka asked about the language in the proposed policy which states, “A violation of the Student Conduct Code may also affect a graduate student’s standing and can result in the student being ineligible for consideration under policies that require that the student be in good standing.” Assistant Dean Nagel said the language was intentionally vague to cover a variety of situations. An example would be plagiarizing.

Associate Professor Bovilsky said she would welcome clarification from the Graduate School around conduct issues. Assistant Dean Nagel said the language could be revisited.
Associate Professor Bovilsky noted that Unsatisfactory Academic Progress has now been codified to include:

- Academic Warning – The graduate program is expected to notify each student in writing and send a copy of the written notice to the Graduate School.

- Academic Probation – A graduate program may place a student on probation for up to two consecutive quarters. The department must notify the student in writing of their probationary status and clearly outline the requirements for regaining good academic standing, as well as the consequences of not meeting the requirements (e.g., loss of GE funding, dismissal from the program, etc.).

- Disqualification – A graduate program may recommend to the Dean of their school or college that a student be disqualified from their program after at least one quarter of probation. Exceptions to this policy will be considered by the Graduate School only in extenuating circumstances. The final dismissal recommendation to the Graduate School must come from the Dean of the school or college. This is the final action to be recommended for students who have not corrected the condition(s) that caused the probation recommendation within the time limit specified by the graduate program.

Professor Kwok gave the example of a student whose bulk of credits were studio credits with six to eight credits being Pass/No Pass. If that student takes a challenging course and gets a grade of B, it would be problematic by giving disproportionate weight to graded courses. Students then get blocked from registering the next term. Professor Kwok believes there should be notice given on the Graduate School’s website about potential consequences.

Assistant Dean Nagel noted that the proposed policy adds a requirement that departments complete an annual review for each student and provide a simple report to the Graduate School. He said the Graduate School can develop templates for the departments to use in tracking student progress. Associate Professor Bovilsky added that currently there is a problem with students not being provided feedback about their progress.

Associate Professor Whalen stated that some units have policies to make sure students meet accreditation requirements.

Associate Professor Hendrix stated that he likes having the progressive steps of warning, academic probation and then disqualification.

Professor Piger said that Deans may not in all cases be the appropriate person to make the final dismissal recommendation to the Graduate School. It might be better to change the language in the proposed policy to “Department Head, Associate Dean or Dean.”

Associate Professor Bovilsky said the subcommittee needed to look at the language of the proposed policy, especially regarding licensure. After the subcommittee makes the revisions, the proposed policy will be brought back to the Graduate Council for review.

The Council adjourned at 4:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

______________________________
Nicholas Proudfoot
Graduate Council Secretary