



**Graduate Executive Committee**  
**September 13, 2013**  
**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Terry Schwartz; Karen Sangermano; Cathy Claiborne; Windy Adorette; Mike Kisley; Mandi Elder; Katie Kaukinen; Ron Koch; Steve Miller; Jose Mora; Rory Lewis; Leslie Grant; Amy Silva Smith; Eugenia Killian; Bob Camley; Sherry Morreale; Edwardo Portillos; Steve Tragesser; Rob Block; Al Schoffstall, Taryn Bailey; Kelli Klebe

**Announcements**

- Graduate Student Association: We have a new Graduate Student Association. It will have social events as well as sponsor professional development activities that the graduate students initiate.
- Graduate Student Travel Awards: A new call for graduate student travel awards has gone out to students. Awards are for up to \$400 and are for graduate students who are presenting at research conferences or are participating in professional development activities that support the campus research mission.

**Business**

- **Change in degree requirements for Communications** (see attached documents; presented by Sherry Morreale). Request to change the number of credits for a degree to 33 from 36 for plan II (non-thesis plan) option. Proposal approved unanimously.
- **Doctoral program minimum number of credit requirements:** This is a discussion about a change in the graduate school rules:  
Current rules: Students are required to complete 75 semester hours of graduate level credit, including dissertation credit. Each doctoral program shall determine how many credits from an earned Master's degree may be included in this total. Ph.D. programs will require 30 units of dissertation credit; however, other types of doctoral programs may require fewer research credits.

The following changes were unanimously approved. Recommendations must be approved by deans, provost, chancellor, and possibly other decision making bodies.

Approved changes: Students are required to complete **at least 60** semester hours of graduate level credit, including dissertation credits. Each doctoral program shall determine how many credits from an earned Master's degree may be included in this total. Ph.D. programs will require **at least 30** units of dissertation credit; however, other types of doctoral programs may require fewer research credits.

Next steps require getting approval from Deans and other governance groups and administrators.

Also, our current policy on enrollment requirements for dissertation credits does not seem to match our practices (see below). GEC said to see what Boulder does. Will report back.

- **Course Validation Process Change** (see attached form): See yellow highlighted text. In some programs, the directors do the validation. Do we want to allow broader participation in the validation process than what is currently listed? Also the graduate school rules say the program director must approve the request, but the director signature is not required on the validation form. GEC members unanimously approved changing the form to be more general in who does the

actual testing (e.g., allow program director when appropriate) and to change “Graduate Advisor” to “Program Director” on form.

- **Certificate processes and policy:** Members were sent the draft certificate policy and asked to send any concerns to Kelli.
- **Dean’s Report**
  - **Electronic Forms:** We are trying to change all forms to electronic forms. Need to have Deans agree on number of signatures from each college.
  - **Graduate Faculty Appointments and Graduate Course Instructors:** We have instituted a process in the graduate school to check each semester on whether all graduate courses are being taught by graduate faculty. We will inform you when a person teaching a graduate course is not a graduate faculty. We will also inform you each semester if people appointed as associate faculty are about to expire. We are trying to make a web version of the list so that you can look up people.
  - **Provision Admission**

People are not taking students off provisional admission. We found 245 people still on provisional admission for admissions from 2010 – 2013; 7 of whom graduated already. Please remember to take people off provisional admission. We will be changing the form and establishing a procedure to follow up with you.

Graduate School Policy: “When the conditions for regular status are met, the program director must reclassify the student's status to fully admitted, and inform the student in writing.”

**Up Coming Meetings** (10:00 – 11:30, Brooks Room, UC 126)

10/11/13      11/8/13      12/13/13

**Commencement December 20, 2013: One ceremony for Fall graduation, 2:00 pm**

# Master of Arts in Communication

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Director of Graduate Studies

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## REQUEST TO CHANGE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR NON-THESIS OPTION

### Description of Degree Requirements

#### Current Program

The Master of Arts (M.A.) in Communication at UCCS offers students the opportunity to engage in advanced study and develop graduate-level expertise for addressing complex communication problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Presently, thesis and non-thesis options are available, as follows.

- Plan I is with thesis. This plan requires a minimum of 33 hours of course work, of which 12 hours are four of the core courses (does not include the capstone course), six hours are thesis credit, 12 hours are four elective courses, and three hours are one out-of-department course.
- Plan II is without thesis and requires a minimum of 36 hours of course work, of which 15 hours are the core courses (includes the capstone course), 18 hours are six elective courses, and three hours are one out-of- department course.

#### Current Coursework Requirements for the Thesis and Non-Thesis Options

##### Plan I (THESIS – minimum of 33 hours credit)

- four core required courses (12 credits)
- minimum of four graduate elective courses in Communication (12 credits)
- one graduate level course from outside the department (3 credits)
- six hours of thesis credit (6 credits)

##### Plan II (NON-THESIS – minimum of 36 hours credit)

- four core required courses (12 credits)
- required capstone course (3 credits)
- six graduate elective courses in Communication (18 credits)
- one graduate level course from outside the Communication Department (3 credits)

### Requested Change

Graduate faculty in Communication, voted to change the number of credits for the non-thesis option from 36 to 33. This three-credit reduction in number of credits for the non-thesis option will only affect the number of elective courses; students will take five elective courses rather than the present six. All graduate students in both tracks will continue to take the four basic required core courses. Students in the non-thesis track take one additional required course, the capstone course, as the culmination of their degree program. Students in the thesis track have the thesis itself as the culmination of their degree program. A brief rationale for reducing the non-thesis option from 36 to 33 credits is now presented. The Communication Program herewith requests approval by our campus of this change.

## **Rationale for Change of Degree Requirements for Non-Thesis Option**

At a May 2013 meeting, Communication graduate faculty voted unanimously to change the degree requirements for the non-thesis option from 36 to 33 credits hours. At a September 2013 meeting, the Graduate Executive Committee approved this decision, based on the following rationale:

1. The non-thesis option requires students to take the Capstone Course that includes a comprehensive exam. Some students choose the thesis option in order to avoid the Capstone Course and thus the comprehensive exams; in addition, they also can graduate one semester earlier.
2. The thesis option of 33 credit hours sometimes is perceived by some graduate students to be less rigorous and more easily accomplished than the 36 credits hours for the non-thesis option. As a result, students who otherwise might prefer the non-thesis option sometimes choose the thesis option.
3. Current Communication graduate faculty members did not participate in designing the two options and are not aware of any reason for continuing with a different number of credit hours in the two options.
4. Other similar MA degrees in the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, that offer a thesis and non-thesis option, have the same number of credit hours for both options. (For example, Sociology offers both options and requires 30 credit hours for both).

## Policy & Procedure Manual: Section G: Thesis/Dissertation Requirements

### Master's Thesis

Every candidate pursuing a master's degree under Plan I (thesis option) is required to write a thesis, which may be of a research, expository, critical or creative type. Each thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree must satisfy the specifications of the University of Colorado Colorado Springs Thesis and Dissertation Manual, and shall represent 6 semester credit hours of work.

### Doctoral Dissertation

Every candidate pursuing a doctoral degree is required to write a dissertation based upon original investigation and showing mature scholarship and critical judgment, as well as familiarity with tools and methods of research. The subject must be approved by the student's program director. Each dissertation presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral degree must satisfy the specifications of the University of Colorado Colorado Springs Thesis and Dissertation Manual. The dissertation shall represent 30 semester credit hours of work for Ph.D. candidates, but may be less in other doctoral programs.

### Doctoral Dissertation Credit Hour Requirements

1. A doctoral student may take no more than one half of the total number of dissertation credit hours required for the degree prior to or during the semester in which the comprehensive examination is passed.
2. Following successful completion of the doctoral comprehensive examination, a student must register each fall and spring semester for five to ten semester units of dissertation credit, until the requirements for the degree are completed. A student may register for no more than ten dissertation credit hours in any semester and for no more than seven credit hours during a summer semester.
3. If, following the completion of the doctoral comprehensive examination, there is a semester during which a student will be using no university resources, the student may petition to register for a minimum of one unit of dissertation credit. Such a request must be approved by the program director.
4. A student must be registered for at least 5 dissertation hours during the semester (or summer session) in which the dissertation defense is held.

### Doctoral Capstone.

Students pursuing clinical doctoral degrees are required to complete a capstone project in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a clinical doctorate at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. The capstone courses shall represent 10 semester credit hours of work. Style requirements and format for the Capstone are determined by the department.

### ISSUES:

How to handle credits taken for another master's degree or a concurrent master's degree?

Do we want a minimum and maximum number of dissertation credits?

Do you want continuous enrollment?

If finish all requirements, students can enroll in candidate for degree or do you want them to enroll in dissertation credits? Must student be registered for 5 dissertation hours the semester of the defense (as opposed to just registered)?

## **Policy/Procedure Manual**

### **Section H: Time Limits for Completion of Degrees**

#### Master's Degree

Although students are normally expected to complete a master's degree in one to three years, master's degree students have six years, from the date of the start of course work, to complete all degree requirements (which includes filing the thesis if Plan I is followed). A student who fails to complete the degree in this six-year period must file a petition for extension with the program director and have it approved by the Graduate School Dean. The petition, giving reasons why the student should be allowed to continue in the program, must be endorsed by the program director.

The program director must approve applying any course to the degree that was taken more than six years prior to the semester of graduation, and all such courses must be validated by special examination.

#### Doctoral Degree

Doctoral students are normally expected to complete all degree requirements within seven years from the date of the start of coursework in the doctoral program. A student who fails to complete the degree in the seven years must file a petition for extension with the program director and have it approved by the Graduate School Dean. The petition, giving reasons why the student should be allowed to continue in the program, must be endorsed by the program director or by three members of the student's dissertation advisory committee. If the Graduate School Dean approves, the student may continue studies for one additional year. If the Graduate School Dean does not approve the request, the college/school dean, with the concurrence of the program director, may dismiss the student from the program. If the Graduate School Dean and the program director do not agree on whether a student should be continued in the program, the Graduate Executive Committee shall make the final decision.