Policy Revisions for AY 15-16

• Graduate Minors
• Registration Requirements for Fellows
• Non-Degree Exchange Student English Proficiency Requirements
• Signature Requirements for Doctoral Committee and Thesis/Dissertation Paperwork
• Criteria for External Committee Members
Policy Update #1: Policy for Graduate Minors

Current Policy: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/2/chapterix

“The spirit of a minor is the development of additional academic strengths. For this reason, credit used toward the completion of a minor may not be applied toward the completion of any other transcripted credential (i.e., coursework completed for one minor cannot be counted toward another minor nor toward the major degree). Some minors may require that a member of the unit(s) offering the minor serve on the student’s master's or doctoral committee.”

Revised Policy:

Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee February 10, 2015 and the Faculty Senate on April 6, 2015:

“The spirit of a minor is the development of additional academic strengths. For this reason, credit used toward the completion of one minor may not be applied toward another minor but it is at the discretion of the major degree department to determine which, if any, of the courses used to fulfill the minor will also be used to fulfill the requirements of the graduate major degree.” Some minors may require that a member of the unit(s) offering the minor serve on the student’s master’s or doctoral committee.
FAQ: Graduate Minors

Q. When can I add a Graduate minor?
A. Students will need to work with the graduate minor department to obtain information about applying to the minor program. Minors can not be added retroactively to a student’s record.

Q. Who determines what courses can count towards both my graduate minor and my major degree hours?
A. The student’s major degree department.

Q. Can I pursue multiple minors?
A. Yes, however students will need to work closely with their major department and both minor departments to ensure that requirements are met for each credential.

Q. How do I formally declare a graduate minor to ensure it will show on my transcript at the time of graduation?
A. Students must file a Graduate Student Request Form to request that a Graduate Minor be added to their student record. Directions on what to include with that request can be found at: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gsas/curriculum-transfer. Only campus approved graduate minors will appear on the transcript.
Policy Update #2: Registration Requirements for Fellows

Current Policy: [http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterII/section03](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterII/section03)

“Fellows and Trainees with waiver-generating appointments are required to maintain a full course load each term of registration unless a reduced course load has been approved by the Graduate College Fellowship Office. This applies whether or not a student holds a concurrent assistantship. Fellows who are international students must also have a reduced course load approved by International Student and Scholar Services. See [Registration for Fellows](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterII/section03) for details.”

Revised Policy: Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee on April 14, 2015:

“Fellows and Trainees with waiver-generating appointments are required to register during each semester of the appointment”.
FAQ: Registration Requirements for Fellows

Q: Can departments continue to set minimum registration requirements for fellows?
A: Yes, departments can set and enforce minimum registration requirements.

Q: Will the Graduate College do any monitoring of registration of Fellows?
A: Yes, only that they are registered during the term in which they hold the fellowship. This can be for as little as 0 hours if appropriate.

Q: What about a fellowship from an external sponsor?
A: Students will need to follow registration requirements set by their sponsor. You should contact the Fellowship office with any questions about compliance.
Policy Update #3: Non-Degree Exchange Student English Proficiency Requirements

Current Policy: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapteriia/section3

“All applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit the results of the TOEFL or IELTS as evidence of English proficiency. Official scores are required to be submitted directly from TOEFL/ETS or IELTS.”

Revised Policy approved April 14, 2015 by the Graduate College Executive Committee:

All applicants, except for a non-degree exchange student at an admitting program’s request, whose native language is not English are required to submit the results of the TOEFL or IELTS as evidence of English proficiency. Official scores are required to be submitted directly from TOEFL/ETS or IELTS.

Only at the request of an admitting program, a non-degree exchange student whose native language is not English could verify English proficiency by either submitting sufficient TOEFL or IELTS results, or an International Student and Scholar Services form submitted from the exchange student’s home institution that documents and certifies the student’s English proficiency.
FAQ: Non-Degree Exchange Admits

Q. Do international non-degree exchange students have to submit a TOEFL or IELTS?

A. Yes, but you can request an exception with a letter of justification and additional documentation from the student’s home institution showing proof of English proficiency.

Q. What is acceptable for proof English proficiency from the student’s home institution?

A. We can accept a letter from the home institution documenting an interview with the student or that the student has been through English language training at their institution. The home institution’s documentation must include the following statement: “based on the assessment (interview or English language training), we have determined that the individual has sufficient proficiency in the English language to successfully participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day bases in the United States.”

Q. Why is this additional justification required?

A. A TOEFL/IELTS test, or documentation of an interview or from an academic institution is required per Federal Regulations for issuing DS-2019s for students to apply for an J-1 visa.

Q. Do all exchange students have to come on a DS-2019 (J-1 visa)?

A. All non-degree students coming as exchange students, must come on an J-1 visa. We are not permitted to issue I-20s to non-degree students to apply for F-1 visas.
Policy Update #4: Signature Requirements for Doctoral Committee and Thesis/Dissertation Paperwork

Current Policy: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterVI/section04

“The Preliminary Exam Result (PER) form and the Final Exam Result form (FER) verify that the student has completed the examination, regardless of the outcome. All voting members of a doctoral student’s examination committee are required to sign the Exam Result form; signatories must sign for themselves.

The committee chair, who bears additional responsibilities for the examination, must provide an original (wet) signature.

Department heads are also required to sign the Exam Result form. Persons authorized by the department to sign this form (as recorded on the Authorized Signatures Form filed with the Graduate College) may sign in place of the department head. The signature of the department head, or the authorized signatory, is an assertion of the authenticity of the committee signatures and of the acceptability of the result of the examination to the department; therefore this signature must be original (wet).

All required signatures must be submitted to the Graduate College on the same form.”
Policy Update #4: Signature Requirements for Doctoral Committee and Thesis/Dissertation Paperwork (Continued)

Revised Policy: Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee on October 17, 2014

“The Preliminary Exam Result (PER) form and the Final Exam Result form (FER) verify that the student has completed the examination, regardless of the outcome. All voting members must record their vote. The department head (or authorized person) must affirm the accuracy of the result.

The result of the examination is communicated to the student and to the Graduate College as soon as possible after the conclusion of the exam. The result must be received by the Graduate College no later than 180 days after the appointment of the committee. Examination result decisions are maintained by the Graduate College.”
FAQ: Thesis/Committee Paperwork

Q. Who can submit the TDA/PER/FER forms electronically?
A. People who have the “Academic Records” permission which is included for all Graduate Contacts.

Q. How can I submit the forms electronically?
A. Use the link under “Thesis Deposit & Doctoral Committee Forms” on http://www.grad.illinois.edu/forms.

Q. Are scanned/copied signatures OK?
A. For forms submitted through the electronic system, we don’t verify wet signatures. For forms submitted in hard copy, the departmental signature must be wet (original). Each person must sign for themselves.

Q. If I submit electronically, do I need to mail the original?
A. No, we only need one. We recommend submitting electronically because of faster processing and you will receive a confirmation that it has been submitted.

Q. When should I submit a PER (or FER or TDA)?
A. As soon as it is completely signed! PERs and FERs must be received by the end date of committee appointment.
Policy Update #5: Criteria for External Voting Doctoral Committee Members

Current Policy: [http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterVI/section04](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/chapterVI/section04)

“Membership Requirements:

The final examination committee must include at least four voting members, at least three of whom must be members of the Graduate Faculty, and at least two of whom must also be tenured at the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois.

- Departments may request the inclusion of non-Graduate Faculty members who make a significant contribution as voting members of the committee. The dean of the Graduate College must approve, in advance, individuals who are not members of the Graduate Faculty who will serve as voting members of the committee. To request the approval of a non-Graduate Faculty member to vote, a curriculum vitae for the individual and a justification from the chair of the committee must accompany the request for appointment of the doctoral committee, and the individual must have earned a terminal degree in their field of study.
- The tenure requirement can be met by term members of the Graduate Faculty who retired or resigned with tenure for a period following their resignation or retirement, according to the Policy on Graduate Faculty Membership.
- If there are more than four voting members on the committee, at least half of the voting members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Upon departmental request, the dean of the Graduate College may also appoint non-voting members to doctoral committees. Non-voting members do not need to be present at the final examination.

The student’s dissertation adviser (i.e., director of research) need not be the chair of the committee. Co-directors of research are acceptable.”
Policy Update #5: Criteria for External Voting Doctoral Committee Members (Continued)

Revised Policy: Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee

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The final examination committee must include at least four voting members, at least three of whom must be members of the Graduate Faculty, and at least two of whom must also be tenured at the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois.

- Departments may request the inclusion of non-Graduate Faculty members who make a significant contribution as voting members of the committee. The dean of the Graduate College must approve, in advance, individuals who are not members of the Graduate Faculty who will serve as voting members of the committee. To request the approval of a non-Graduate Faculty member to vote, a curriculum vitae for the individual and a justification from the chair of the committee must accompany the request for appointment of the doctoral committee. Voting members, must have earned a terminal degree in their field of study and must have demonstrated expertise that qualifies them to judge the quality of the student’s research and its contribution to the field. Each voting member must be well-positioned to vote independently and must be free from conflicts of interest. Additional guidance for nominating external members is available at http://www.grad.illinois.edu/exams-committees.

- The tenure requirement can be met by term members of the Graduate Faculty who retired or resigned with tenure for a period following their resignation or retirement, according to the Policy on Graduate Faculty Membership.

- If there are more than four voting members on the committee, at least half of the voting members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Upon departmental request, the dean of the Graduate College may also appoint non-voting members to doctoral committees. Non-voting members do not need to be present at the final examination.

The student's dissertation adviser (i.e., director of research) need not be the chair of the committee. Co-directors of research are acceptable.”
FAQ: External Members

Q. How early should I submit a request with an external member?
A. We advise submitting requests at least 3 weeks in advance to allow for the dean to review the request.

Q. How recent is a “recent” CV?
A. We encourage you to include a CV updated within the last year. Older CVs may cause additional information to be requested and take more time for the review process.

Q. Who can provide the justification for an external member?
A. The justification must be written by the chair or co-chair of the committee.

Q. Can the exam be held while the request is being reviewed?
A. No, the committee must be appointed before the exam can be held. If the committee has not been appointed, the exam must be delayed. For this reason we encourage early submission of committee requests.

Q. Where can I get more guidance?
A. More guidance is available here: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/exams-committees
Questions?

Contact: Allison McKinney, Director Academic Programs & Policy
Call: 244-3140 or Email: agrindly@Illinois.edu

Graduate College Handbook: http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook