The Graduate Council met at 3:00 p.m. on September 21, 2015, in McCain Library, Room 203 with Dr. Douglas Rust, Chair of the Graduate Council, presiding.

The following voting members were present: Dr. Wendy Atkins-Sayre, Dr. Janie Butts, Dr. Jonathan Barron, Dr. Leisa Flynn, Dr. David Holt, Dr. Susan Hrostowski, Dr. Faquing Huang, Dr. Sarah Morgan, Dr. Bonnie Nicholson, Dr. Ras Pandey, Dr. Scott Piland, Dr. Kyna Shelley, Dr. Amy Slagle, Dr. Teresa Welsh and Dr. Chaoyang Zhang.

The following voting members were represented by proxies to constitute a quorum: Dr. Douglas Rust for Dr. Dana Fennell.

The following non-voting members were present: Dr. Karen Coats, Dr. Douglas Masterson for Dr. David Hayhurst, Dr. Bill Powell, Ms. Tamanna Shanta, Dr. Eric Tribunella for Dr. Maureen Ryan and Dr. Kathy Yadrick for Dr. Michael Forster.

The following guests were present: Ms. Desira Bailey, Ms. Shelby Brown, Dr. Sam Bruton, Ms. Nichol Green, Ms. Kathryn Lowery, Dr. Mark Miller and Ms. Dawn Porter.

1.0 Call to Order
Dr. Rust called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2.0 Adoption of Agenda
Dr. Rust presented the agenda with the following amendments for approval:

- Add item 8.4 Revision to Proposal Guidelines

Dr. Pandey moved and Dr. Piland seconded a motion to approve the amended agenda. The motion passed.

3.0 Approval of Minutes
Dr. Rust presented the May 11, 2015 and June 22, 2015 minutes for approval. Dr. Hrostowski moved and Dr. Welsh seconded a motion to approve the May 11, 2015 and June 22, 2015 minutes for approval. The motion passed.
4.0 Course and Program Proposals

4.1 College of Arts & Letters – No Business

4.2 College of Business
Dr. Rust presented the request to modify the admissions requirements for the College of Business MsEd programs by waiving the GRE/GMAT test requirements for applicants who have 5 years or more of progressively responsible work experience. Dr. Hrostowski moved and Dr. Piland seconded a motion to table the request to modify the admissions requirements for the College of Business MsEd programs by waiving the GRE/GMAT test requirements for applicants who have 5 years or more of progressively responsible work experience. The motion passed. Council needs clarification of what constitutes progressively responsible work experience from the College along with a comparison of graduate entrance requirements from other business colleges.

Dr. Rust presented the request to modify the admissions requirements for the College of Business MsEd programs by waiving the GRE/GMAT test requirements for applicants who already earned a master’s degree. The motion passed.

4.3 College of Education and Psychology

Department of Psychology
Dr. Rust presented the request to modify the Ph.D. in Psychology (Experimental emphasis). Dr. Barron moved and Dr. Piland seconded a motion to approve the modification of the Ph.D. in Psychology (Experimental emphasis). The motion passed.

Dr. Rust presented the request to add PSY 535. Dr. Hrostowski moved and Dr. Shelley seconded a motion to approve the addition of PSY 535. The motion passed.

4.4 College of Health – No Business

4.5 College of Nursing – No Business

4.6 College of Science and Technology

Department of Geography and Geology
Dr. Rust presented the request to add GHY 543. Dr. Pandey moved and Dr. Shelley seconded a motion to approve the addition of GHY 543. The motion passed.

Department of Coastal Sciences
Dr. Rust presented the request to add COA 640. Dr. Piland moved and Dr. Hrostowski seconded a motion to approve the addition of COA 640. The motion passed.
5.0 Officers Report
5.1 Chair – Dr. Douglas Rust
   In lieu of a report, Dr. Rust circulated a membership roster for the Council
   including committee assignments for each member.

5.2 Chair-Elect – Dr. Janie Butts
   No report.

6.0 Standing Committee Reports
6.1 Bylaws Committee – Dr. Janie Butts
   No report.

6.2 Credentials Committee – Dr. Jake Schaefer
   Dr. Rust submitted the Credentials report for September 2015 for approval. The
   report was approved. (see attached)

6.3 Election Committee – Dr. Teresa Welsh
   Dr. Rust presented a report to Council. (see attached).

6.4 Policies and Procedures Committee – Dr. Bonnie Nicholson
   No report.

6.5 Program Review Committee – Dr. Kyna Shelley
   No report.

7.0 Liaisons to University Committees
7.1 Assessment Committee – Dr. Janie Butts
   No report.

7.2 Teaching Evaluation Committee – Dr. Bonnie Nicholson
   No report.

7.3 Strategic Planning Committee – Dr. Bonnie Nicholson
   No report.

8.0 New Business
8.1 Consider modifications to RSIA policy statement (RCR requirements for faculty)
   Dr. Rust presented Council with Dr. Bruton’s plan to modify the RSIA policy
   statement (RCR requirements for faculty). (See attached) The Council decided to
   table the request to modify the RSIA policy. Council needs a justification of
   current ethics training requirements and a comparison of our policy with those of
   similar institutions.

8.2 Graduate Student Senate Report
   Ms. Tamanna Shanta presented a report to Council.
8.3 Dean’s Report
Dr. Coats presented a report to Council. (See attached)

8.4 Consider changes to Proposal Guidelines
Dr. Rust presented a draft to Council of changes made to the proposal guidelines. Dr. Nicholson moved and Dr. Hrostowski seconded a motion to approve the modifications to the proposal guidelines. The motion passed.

9.0 Announcements

10.0 Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for October 19, 2015 at 3:00. The deadline for submitting materials to the Graduate School for the Agenda is Friday, October 2, 2015.

___________________________
Greg Pierce, Recording Secretary

___________________________
Dr. Douglas Rust, Chair
College of Business

Modify: Admissions requirements for the College of Business MsEd programs by waiving the GRE/GMAT test requirements for applicants who already have a master’s degree or higher. Effective fall 2016.

Tabled: Admissions requirements for the College of Business MsEd programs by waiving the GRE/GMAT test requirements for applicants who have 5 years or more of progressively responsible work experience. Effective fall 2016.

College of Education and Psychology

Department of Psychology

Modify: Ph.D in Psychology (Experimental)

To: Ph.D in Psychology (Brain and Behavior)
Effective fall 2016.

Add: PSY 535 Health Behavior Counseling
3 hours. Effective spring 2016.

College of Science and Technology

Department of Geography and Geology

Add: GHY 543 Sustainable Planning & Development
3 hours. Effective spring 2016.

Department of Coastal Sciences

Add: COA 640 Quantitative Fisheries Management
3 hours. Effective spring 2016.
DATE: September 21, 2015
TO: Graduate Council
FM: Graduate Credentials Committee
RE: Graduate Faculty Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Recommendation Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Associate Level 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Batastini, Ashley B.</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
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<td>Bishop, Sandra B.</td>
<td>Systems Leadership &amp; Health Outcomes</td>
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<td>Catledge, Sharon W.</td>
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<td>Goins, Johnell A.</td>
<td>Educational Studies &amp; Research</td>
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<td>Grice, Tony</td>
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<td>Shin, Dong Y.</td>
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<td><strong>Associate Level 2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Associate Level 3</strong></td>
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<td>Polymers &amp; High Performance Materials</td>
<td>A3</td>
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<td>Courts, Jennifer</td>
<td>Art &amp; Design</td>
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<td><strong>Regular Level 2</strong></td>
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<td>Greene, Kevin D.</td>
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<td>Biswas, Amitava</td>
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<td>Forest, Danielle E.</td>
<td>Curriculum, Instruction, &amp; Special Ed.</td>
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<td>Fowler-Calisto, Lauren</td>
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<td>Gaudet, Cyndi H. (Syr. Review)</td>
<td>Human Capital Development</td>
<td>R3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marx, Charles G.</td>
<td>Speech &amp; Hearing Sci.</td>
<td>R3</td>
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Credentials Committee
Dr. Jake Schaefer, Chair
RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTEGRITY ASSURANCE

Policy Statement

All University personnel involved in research and scholarly activities must participate in the Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth The University of Southern Mississippi’s requirements for participation in the Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program, also referred to as the Integrity Assurance Program (IAP). The purpose of the program is to 1) enhance understanding and foster discussion of the relevant ethical and professional norms of research and scholarship; 2) to encourage USM researchers and scholars to follow best practices of research and scholarship in their work; and 3) to provide the educational opportunities and resources necessary for Southern Miss to meet the demands of various sponsor RCR training requirements, including the National Science Foundation’s implementation of the America COMPETES Act (NSF), the latest National Institutes of Health regulations (NIH), and the latest Public Health Service (PHS) regulations concerning disclosures of financial conflicts of interest (FCOI).

Who Needs to Know This Policy

This policy applies to all members of the University Community involved in research, scholarly or creative activities under the aegis of the University: graduate faculty members, including regular, research, clinical, part-time, and adjunct faculty; all graduate students; all of those involved in human subjects research, including members of the University’s IRB and investigators; all of those involved in animal research, including members of the University’s IACUC, investigators, and animal facilities managers and employees; all research staff, including scientists, postdoctoral fellows, project or lab directors and managers, technicians and assistants; and Honors College and selected other undergraduate students.
Website Address for this Policy

www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-rsch-vp-001

Definitions

CITI Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative, which provides USM with a series of educational modules written by various national experts.

FCOI Financial Conflicts of Interest.

IACUC Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

IRB Institutional Review Board.

ORI Office of Research Integrity.

RCR Responsible Conduct of Research, the phrase used by the federal agencies to refer to mandated research ethics training.

SPA Sponsored Programs Administration.

Policy/Procedures

I. PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

This policy requires all individuals involved in research, scholarly or creative activities under the aegis of the University to participate in the University’s Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program. The IAP includes two components: online educational course modules hosted by CITI and on-campus workshops and forums.

I.A Online Courses

All program participants must complete a CITI “Common Course.” Different versions of the Common Course are designated depending on an individual’s discipline of interest and relationship to the University. Faculty members, graduate students, staff members, and undergraduates each have their own Common Course, as do USM Arts & Humanities faculty members and graduate students, as do Honors College students and select other undergraduates. Additional courses also may be required, depending on an individual’s activities and responsibilities. The relevant Common Course must be completed by the end of an individual’s first semester at USM.
Members of the University’s IRB and investigators applying for IRB approval must complete the IRB course.

Members of the University’s IACUC and animal facilities managers and employees must complete the IACUC Members course; investigators applying for IACUC approval must complete the IACUC course.

Investigators applying for a grant from one of the Public Health Service agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), must complete the FCOI course.

Individual departments, Deans or graduate advisory committees may expand these requirements for individual students.

To pass a course, a cumulative score of 85% or better is required for all (but not each) of the quizzes in the course.

As developed, ORI may substitute a USM-produced online module hosted on Blackboard or a comparable mode of online delivery, in place of one or more of the CITI modules.

I.B On-campus Forums and Workshops

All program participants should receive 8 hours of credit for attending on-campus forums and workshops sponsored by ORI. Topics may include scholarly misconduct, research on human and animal subjects, conflicts of interest, collaborative research, mentorship, data management and record-keeping, and grant-writing.

II. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

ORI is responsible for providing access to the CITI course modules, and also for scheduling, promoting and managing on-campus workshops and forums. Materials related to both are maintained and continuously updated on the ORI website. ORI is also responsible for keeping up-to-date and accurate records of all program participation. Upon passing an online course, CITI sends a certificate of completion to ORI. Individuals should download a copy for their own records. ORI also records attendance at online workshops and forums.

Graduate Faculty status is dependent on completion of the Common Course requirement. The Graduate School is responsible for assigning Graduate Faculty status and also monitors that the appropriate Common Course has been completed. **Completion of refresher courses is required every five years. It may require completion of refresher courses at the time of cyclical review of Graduate Faculty status every five years.** The Graduate School adds completion of the Common Course requirement to graduate students’ Degree Requirements and is responsible for ensuring that this requirement is satisfied.

SPA is responsible for ensuring that investigators submitting grant proposals have completed the appropriate requirements.
The Honors College is responsible for ensuring that HON 300 students have completed the appropriate Common Course.

Principal Investigators are responsible for ensuring that all staff members reporting to them complete the relevant requirements. Research supervisors are responsible for ensuring that postdoctoral fellows involved in research have completed the appropriate Common Course.

ORI is responsible for ensuring that the relevant IRB, IACUC, and Financial Conflict of Interest requirements have been satisfied. Investigators submitting protocols to the IRB must attach copies of completion certificates for both the Common Course and IRB Course to their submissions.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed every four years by the Vice President for Research and the Director of the Office of Research Integrity with recommendations for revision presented to the University Research Council for consideration.

**Forms/Instructions**

N/A

**Appendices**

N/A

**Related Information**

N/A

**History**

06/25/10: Origination
05/31/12: Amended
03/14/13: Formatted for template. Name change from Responsible Conduct of Research.
Authorization

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTEGRITY ASSURANCE
RSCH-VP-001

As the Responsible Officer, I have reviewed this policy and believe it represents the current policy.

______________________________________     ______________________________
Responsible Officer                                   Date
Aiming High: Highlights and Updates from the Graduate School at Southern Miss

Dean’s Report (September 2015)

Student Spotlight

On July 30 thirteen students completing the M.S. in Hydrographic Science were recognized at ceremony at the John C. Stennis Space Center. These students were awarded the highest level certification (CAT A) from the International Hydrographic Organization. The Class of 2015 included students from the United States, the Philippines, Gambia, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Fiji Islands, and the United Kingdom. Receiving special recognition was Lt. Brandon Charles Adams, US Navy Fleet Survey Team, who was awarded the Hydrographer of the Navy Education Award. A resident of Mandeville, Louisiana, Lt. Adams received his B.S. in Marine Biology from Louisiana State University in 2009. Since its establishment in 1999, this program has produced 174 graduates, including 32 international students from 24 countries. The M.S. in Hydrographic Science degree program is an academic program of the Department of Marine Science in the College of Science & Technology.

Top: M.S. in Hydrographic Science Class of 2015; Bottom: Lt. Brandon Charles Adams (right) was presented the Hydrographer of the Navy Education Award by Capt. Rich Delgado (left), US Navy Chief of Staff, Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command.
Bragging Points from Graduate Programs

- The speech-language pathology, audiology, and education of the deaf graduate programs in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences have a 98.5% graduation rate, and a 100% employment rate since 1995.

- Students completing the master’s program in Marriage and Family Therapy have a 100% pass rate on the national licensure examination (national average is 65-70%), and 97% are employed within three months of graduation.

- The Ph.D. program in English, nationally ranked by U.S. News and World Report, is one of only about 30 programs in the U.S. that offer a Ph.D. with an emphasis in creative writing and one of about a dozen with dedicated faculty and coursework in children’s literature.

- The College of Business launched a brand new MBA with emphasis in Sport Security Management, the first graduate sport security program in the country. This program was established in partnership with the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS4), housed at Southern Miss, and offers the flexibility of either face-to-face or online formats.

- Dr. Anita Boykins, Associate Dean in the College of Nursing, received a $1.6 million grant from Health Resources and Services Administration to educate and train doctoral level nurse practitioners. According to Dr. Boykins, the grant will “produce a more qualified workforce to address key health problems in Mississippi”.

Graduate School Staff Changes

On July 1 the Graduate School welcomed Vanessa Molden to the staff as Coordinator of Special Projects/Admissions Specialist. In addition to coordinating special events, projects, and initiatives, Vanessa will take the lead in Graduate School marketing and communications. She will also assist with graduate admissions as needed. Vanessa holds both a B.S. in business education and an M.S. in public relations from Southern Miss. She comes to the Graduate School after serving eight years as promotions and communication manager in USM’s Office of Professional Development and Educational Outreach, preceded by a long history of related service at USM and the University of West Florida.
Shelby Brown joined the Graduate School as Accountant on August 31. Shelby earned a B.S.B.A. in Accounting in 2014 and completed her Master of Professional Accountancy in August 2015. Both degrees were earned at Southern Miss. She served as a graduate assistant in the Department of Finance, Real Estate, & Business Law, and she holds the certification Microsoft Office Specialist, Expert Level. Shelby replaces Jackie Moore who resigned her position as Accountant in the Graduate School effective August 17 to assume the position of Accountant in the School of Music.

Both Vanessa and Shelby bring exceptional expertise and enthusiasm to the Graduate School. We are excited to have them join our staff to help us better serve our students and faculty. Please welcome them.

Professional Development

- Professional in Preparation
  The 2015-16 Professionals in Preparation pilot program kicked off with a meet and greet luncheon on Friday, August 28. Twenty-three students representing four colleges are participating in the professional development program, supported by the Southern Miss Fund and the Graduate School. Fall events will feature seminars, workshops, and panel and roundtable discussions on publishing and peer review, communication, and mentorship. PIP scholars will participate in the Three Minute Thesis competition in November and compete for $500 travel awards in the spring. A graduate/undergraduate mentorship program pairing PIP participants with McNair Scholars and undergraduate research scholars (Eagle SPUR) will begin in the spring semester. A schedule of events will be posted on the Graduate School website. Many events will be open to the university.
• “Communicating Effectively without Fear”
  Mandi Stanley, Certified Speaking Professional, will lead a workshop designed to help students and faculty develop the skills to communicate with any audience. This event is open to all students and faculty.
  Date and Time: Friday, October 9 from 1:00 – 5:00 PM
  Location: Trent Lott Center (first floor A-D)
  Co-sponsors: Southern Miss Fund, the Graduate School, Learning Enhancement Center, and the Vice President for External Affairs.

• Three Minute Thesis
  The 2nd Annual Three Minute Thesis® (3MT) competition is scheduled for November 4-6 beginning at 2:00 pm each day in the Trent Lott Center first floor (A-D). 3MT requires students to articulate the importance of their research to a general audience in three minutes or less using only a single, static, PowerPoint slide as a visual aid. Preliminary competitions on November 4 and 5 will feature presentations by master’s/specialist and doctoral students in the following four categories: 1) Arts and Humanities; 2) Life, Health, and Environmental Sciences; 3) Physical Sciences and Mathematics; 4) Social and Educational Sciences and Business. Master’s/specialist and doctoral winners from each category will be awarded a $250 prize, and the eight finalists will compete in the finals competition on Friday, November 6. The following awards will be presented:
  ▪ Grand Champion $1000
  ▪ Runner Up $750
  ▪ People’s Choice $500
  The Grand Champion will compete in the regional competition at the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Annual Meeting in Charlotte, NC in mid-February with all expenses paid. More information on this competition will be posted soon. Please encourage your students to participate.

Recruiting
• Graduate Info Fair
  The Graduate School is hosting a Graduate Info Fair at the Union on Wednesday, September 2 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. More than 10,000 of our undergraduates received emails informing them about the fair. The Info Fair provides a great opportunity to introduce our undergraduate students to graduate programs here at USM. Please encourage undergraduate students to attend.
• Off-campus Recruiting
The Graduate School recruiting team will be attending fairs at 25 universities in 5 states this fall. The team will display program brochures provided by departments and collect prospect information. Prospect data will be made available to departments via AdmissionPros prospect portal.

Graduate School Policy and Operational Updates
• On April 20, 2015 Dr. Bonnie Nicholson, Chair of the Policies & Procedures Committee of Graduate Council, submitted a report of graduate policy changes adopted during spring 2015 by the Graduate Council to Associate Deans for distribution to department chairs and graduate coordinators. That report is attached and appropriate changes were included in the 2015-2016 Graduate Bulletin.

• Additional operational changes include the following:
  o Graduate Non-degree and Certificate Applications
    Non-degree and certificate applications must now be completed electronically through the Graduate School admissions portal. Paper applications are no longer being accepted. Departments should disable links to certificate and non-degree forms, destroy any paper applications, and direct students to the online application.

  o Change in Conditional Admission Standards
    Beginning with fall 2015 applications, applicants with a GPA as low as 2.0 on the last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework can be admitted conditionally if departments choose to do so. Departments have the option of maintaining the exact same admission standards used before. All conditionally-admitted students must earn at least a 3.0 on the first 9 hours of graduate-level coursework before they can be moved to regular status. A conditionally-admitted student who does not earn at least a 3.0 on the first 9 hours must be dismissed. The Graduate School will now send applications forward to the departments for review if the student has a 2.0 GPA or better. This policy change was approved by Graduate Council in a called meeting on June 22. The performance of students who were admitted under these circumstances will be reviewed annually, and the policy will return to the previous standard if the change appears to impact retention negatively.

  o Thesis/Dissertation/Capstone Template
    The electronic template for theses, dissertations, and nursing capstone projects is nearing completion. Testing will begin next week with hopes of launching the template for voluntary use this semester. Thanks to Jeanne Stewart, Reviewer of Theses, Dissertations, and Nursing Capstone Projects, and Robin Jackson, Graduate Assistant, for their hard work on the project. This project was done in consultation with Mr. James Nail, Serials Specialist at Mississippi State University Libraries.
Policies and Procedures Committee Report

Approved Policy & Procedure Changes:

Application Deadlines
The Committee recommends that the Graduate School require that each program have posted application deadlines.

Non-degree Course Policy Recommendations:
We suggest that the credit hour limitations in place for Master’s degrees (see items B-D in the current Graduate Bulletin) also be extended to doctoral degrees. These are subject to approval by the department. The Graduate Bulletin should include this statement regarding use of non-degree coursework for BOTH Master’s and Doctoral degrees: These are subject to approval by the advisor or advisory committee, whichever is consistent with departmental policies.

B. A total of no more than twelve (12) semester hours of work earned as a non-degree student may be applied toward a doctoral degree. Please note D below.

C. As many as six (6) semester hours of graduate credit from other accredited institutions may be transferred to the student's program with the approval of the appropriate department chair and dean of the Graduate School provided that the course work transferred falls within the period allowed for the degree. Such course work must carry a letter or numeric grade of "B" or better, may not be counted toward another graduate degree and cannot be a pass/fail course. The transfer grade is not calculated in the USM GPA.

D. A total of no more than twelve (12) semester hours of transfer work and non-degree work may be applied toward a doctoral degree.

Policies Regarding Deferment
We suggest the Graduate School not place a limit on deferments, but is empowered to adjust fees regarding multiple deferments to discourage such practices.

Policies Regarding Probation
We suggest the Graduate School consider the following limitations related to students on probation: Students must be in good standing in order to engage in progress toward degree activities which include: defend a thesis or dissertation, and participate in qualifying or comprehensive examinations.

A student whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) or program GPA falls below 3.0 or who earns a grade of "C" or lower will be placed on academic probation for the next regular semester of enrollment (fall or spring). During the probationary semester a
student will not be allowed to take qualifying comprehensive exams or defend a thesis, dissertation, or capstone project. The student will be required to achieve all requirements that are necessary to return the student to good academic standing. The program coordinator will prepare a letter informing the student that he/she will be placed on probation for one semester or as dictated by the program (if full time) or up to two semesters (if part time) which includes a set of expectations for the student’s return to good academic standing and approved by the major professor, the department chair and the graduate dean. Once the terms of the probationary period have been met, the department is responsible for informing the Graduate School and the student in writing. Failure to return to good academic standing by the end of the probationary period will result in dismissal from the program.

Policies Regarding Certificate Programs
The Graduate School should develop an enrollment process for Graduate Certificates as currently no standard procedures are in place to allow degree-seeking or non-degree students a mechanism to enroll in a certificate program. It is assumed that these do not need to be subject to the same admission criteria as other graduate programs and can be left to the discretion of the department offering the certificate and filed with the Graduate School using the Plan of Study (to be developed) specific to that Graduate Certificate.

I. Credit Hours
A minimum of twelve semester hours credit is required for any graduate certificate. Many departments require more than the minimum. Consult specific departmental requirements for additional information. A 3.0 GPA in the certificate program and no grade below a C are required for completion. Some departments require a higher GPA and restrict the number of C grades for graduation.

II. Plan of Study Form
Students must submit a certificate "plan of study" form to The Graduate School before receiving the certificate. See www.usm.edu/graduateschool/planofstudy.

III. Time Limitation
The student must complete the graduate certificate within five calendar years from the date of initial enrollment in a certificate program. Graduate credits may apply toward a Graduate Certificate only within five years of being earned. The dean of the Graduate School, under extenuating circumstances, and special petition, may approve revalidation of some over-age credit hours if the original credit was earned at The University of Southern Mississippi and if the department chair approves the revalidation. The revalidation is secured by the student’s successfully passing a special examination on the course. However, any student who fails to complete the certificate program within the four-year time period becomes subject to any changes in the certificate’s requirements made at any date four years prior to graduation. The fee charged for the
special revalidation examination is to be paid before the revalidation examination is taken. Over-age extension and transfer courses cannot be revalidated. Revalidation forms are available in the Graduate School.

IV. Transfer Credit – no courses allowed. Courses must be taken at USM.

V. Research and Scholarly Integrity Education
All graduate students must complete the RSIE training modules required by the Graduate School and their departments the first semester they are enrolled in graduate school. The RSIE policy and training information are found on the Graduate School web page – [www.usm.edu/graduate_school](http://www.usm.edu/graduate_school). Students should contact the Dean of the Graduate School if they have any questions regarding the policy of training information. The RSIE completion certificate is valid for 5 years.

VI. Application for Degree and Audit
Students should submit to the graduate degree auditor a signed, completed application for degree by the specified deadline the semester before they wish to graduate. The graduate degree auditor will check the application and notify the student and his or her major professor of any problems. (See [www.usm.edu/graduateschool](http://www.usm.edu/graduateschool) for specific directions and deadlines). Students who do not graduate the semester for which they applied must contact the graduate degree auditor, submit a deferment form, and pay a deferment fee.

Policies Concerning Thesis/ Dissertation

Graduate Committee Membership

- **3-4 members Thesis**
- **4-5 members Dissertation**

Need simple majority vote to pass.

Credit hour requirements

Students should be enrolled in at least 1 credit the semester they defend and have to have met all credit hour requirements (3-6 Thesis; 9-12 Dissertation). Programs can develop more stringent policies.

Continuous Enrollment

Part-time enrollment should be permitted by the Graduate School but may be disallowed by specific department policies. With the approval of the department, while adhering to the standard time to completion policies, students do not need to be continuously enrolled during the Fall and Spring semesters while they are completing
the coursework-only phase of their graduate program. Upon completion of all coursework and until the completion of any final, capstone project, thesis, or dissertation, students need to be continuously enrolled for at least one credit each semester until the semester they graduate. Departments may set more stringent policies.

**Course numbering system**

Grade numbering as designated on the transcript should appear in the bulletin. New courses being proposed are expected to adhere to the numbering designations when justifying courses. All graduate courses that have an undergraduate counterpart (e.g., split level courses) should be appropriately numbered using the standard numbering system found in the Graduate Bulletin. Therefore split level courses should be 400/500; any deviations from this practice require sufficient justification beyond convenience. Only 400/500 level classes will be approved to be cross-listed (e.g., 600 level courses that are cross listed need to be moved to 500 level).

**Admission standards**

The expectation is that the Graduate Bulletin will continue to reflect an expectation that a standardized testing requirement be in place for admission to all graduate programs. Individual programs can petition the Graduate Council for an exception to this policy by detailing the specific method of application review used, a clear rationale for the exception, and the instances where the exception may be granted.

**Grade Policy recommendations**

A minimum of thirty (30) semester hours credit is required for any master's degree. Many departments require more than the minimum. Consult specific departmental requirements for additional information. A 3.0 GPA in the master's program and no grade below a "C" is allowed for graduation. No more than 2 grades of C+ or below across six credit hours is allowable in any coursework attempted (not including course retakes). Some departments require a higher GPA and restrict the number of "C" grades for graduation.

A graduate student may retake one course to improve the GPA or a course grade, but the grade earned during the original attempt will remain on the transcript. While this grade remains on the transcript, the grade will not compute in the cumulative GPA once a retake has been recorded. If a student intends to retake the course in order to raise the GPA and be removed from probation, the course must be retaken as soon as possible (e.g., at the next opportunity).