

Shared Governance Proposal

- I. **Date:** April 2, 2018
- II. **Sponsoring Constituents:** Graduate Council, Graduate Council Policy Group, Office of Academic Affairs and Research
- III. **Statement of the Issue:** Modify the Graduate Bulletin to clarify time-to-degree policies for doctoral, specialist, and master's degree programs (pg. 45-48)
- IV. **Rational for Proposal:**

On September 21, 2017, the Graduate Council formed a subcommittee, the Graduate Policy Group (GPG), to discuss policies regarding university graduate programs. The GPG is comprised of Joan Henley (COEBS), Elizabeth Hood (AET), Karen Wheeler (AAR), Shawn Drake (NHP), Gil Fowler (CLAC), John Mello (BU), Amanda Wheeler (COEBS), Thomas Risch (CSM), and Ashley Schulz (GSC). At its first meeting, the GPG determined that the time-to-degree policies for all graduate degrees (*Graduate Bulletin*, page 45-48) are a top priority.

The proposed revision of the time-to-degree policies for all graduate degrees addresses a recurring issue for which there was no University policy that established minimum guidelines. Leaders of graduate programs and graduate records requested established guidelines to follow.

These proposed guidelines were established using data from every existing program's graduation data. From the data, the GPG concluded that for the master's and specialists degrees, the vast majority of those who hadn't completed in six (6) years, typically never completed. In the doctoral degrees, the vast majority who hadn't complete in eight (8) years, typically never completed. Therefore, the master's and specialist time-to-degree was established as six (6) years, and the doctoral degree time-to-degree as eight (8) years. In certain circumstances, graduate coordinators or department chairs can request exceptions.

- V. **Type of review (i.e., expedited, full, or extended):** Expedited

Graduate Degree Policies

DOCTORAL DEGREE POLICIES

Specific Doctoral degree policies can be found in the respective degree sections for those programs.

TIME-TO-DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The time allowed for completion of the doctoral degree is eight (8) years from first enrollment in the program, exclusive of time spent in the armed forces of the United States. Graduate work completed outside of the eight-year time frame cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements. Transfer credit taken prior to admission to A-State may be included in the eight-year, time-to-degree limit.

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Policies specific to the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership degree may be found in the College of Education and Behavioral Science section.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HERITAGE STUDIES PROGRAM

Policies specific to the Ph.D. in Heritage Studies may be found in the College of Liberal Arts and Communication section.

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE

Policies specific to the D.N.P. may be found in the College of Nursing and Health Professions section.

DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Policies specific to the D.P.T. may be found in the College of Nursing and Health Professions section.

DOCTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Policies specific to the OTD may be found in the College of Nursing and Health Professions section.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES PROGRAM

Policies specific to the Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences degree may be found in the College of Sciences and Mathematics section.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN MOLECULAR BIOSCIENCES PROGRAM

Policies specific to the Ph.D. in Molecular Biosciences degree may be found in the College of Sciences and Mathematics section.

Specialist Degree Policies

THESIS

A thesis is required for the Ed.S. in Reading and is optional in other Ed.S. degree programs. Where required or elected, the thesis will carry six hours of credit. Students may not register for thesis credit until they have formed a committee and the committee has approved the proposed topic. Credit is awarded only upon completion and approval of the thesis. The student must be enrolled for thesis credit the semester it is completed and approved by committee, even if all required thesis-credit hours have already been met. No letter grade is given. An oral examination over the thesis is required.

The thesis must demonstrate the student's capacity for creative expression, research, ability to organize and interpret data, and ability to report research in an acceptable style. The thesis subject is approved by the major professor and by the student's thesis committee no later than the close of the semester preceding that in which the student is planning to complete degree requirements. If degree completion is planned for a summer session, the thesis subject must be approved no later than 60 days after the first day of classes in the spring semester. The thesis shall be in the form prescribed by the University as presented in the Guide for Writers of Dissertations and Theses, available on the Graduate Programs website.

The acceptance of the thesis, including its defense, lies with the student's thesis committee. The thesis must be delivered to the major professor at least four weeks before the commencement date.

The original, with the Thesis Defense Form signed by all thesis committee members, must be submitted to the Registrar by the deadline listed in this Graduate Bulletin. The completed thesis will be submitted online through ProQuest according to the Thesis/Dissertation guide. The student is required to purchase three copies of their thesis for: the Library, their advisor and their department.

THESIS COMMITTEE

The department chair and college dean, upon recommendation of the major professor, will appoint the student's thesis committee. This committee will consist of the major professor as chair, two additional graduate faculty members representing areas of the student's major, and others as deemed appropriate. The Thesis Committee Appointment form should be completed and submitted to the Registrar.

TIME-TO-DEGREE

The time allowed for completion of the specialist degree is six (6) years from first enrollment in the program, exclusive of time spent in the armed forces of the United States. Graduate work completed prior to outside of the six-year time frame ~~from the students' date of completion of the degree~~ cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements. Transfer credit taken prior to admission at A-State will may be included in the six-year limit.

Master's Degree Policies

THESIS

A thesis is required for the Master of Science in Biology and the Master of Science in Engineering. A thesis is optional in other master's degree programs. Where required or elected, the thesis will carry six hours of credit. Students may not register for thesis credit until they have formed a committee and the committee has approved the proposed thesis topic. Credit is awarded only upon completion and approval of the thesis. The student must be enrolled for thesis credit the semester it is completed and approved by committee, even if all required thesis-credit hours have already been met. No letter grade is given and an oral examination over the thesis is required.

The thesis must demonstrate the student's capacity for creative expression, research, ability to organize and interpret data, and ability to report research in an acceptable style. The thesis subject is approved by the major professor and by the student's thesis committee no later than the close of the semester preceding that in which the student is planning to complete degree requirements. If degree completion is planned for a summer session, the thesis subject must be approved no later than 60 days after the first day of classes in the spring semester. The thesis shall be in the form prescribed by the University as presented in the Guide for Writers of Dissertations and Theses, available on the Graduate Programs website.

The acceptance of the thesis, including its defense, lies with the student's thesis committee. The thesis must be delivered to the major professor at least four weeks before the anticipated commencement date. The original, with the Thesis Defense Form signed by all thesis committee members, must be submitted to the Registrar by the deadline listed on the University's Academic Calendar. The completed thesis will be submitted online through ProQuest according to the Thesis/Dissertation guide. The student is required to purchase three copies of their thesis for: the Library, their advisor and their department.

THESIS COMMITTEE

The department chair and college dean, upon recommendation of the major professor, will appoint the student's thesis committee. This committee will consist of the major professor as chair, two additional graduate faculty members representing areas of the student's major, and others as deemed appropriate. The Thesis Committee Appointment form should be completed and submitted to the Registrar.

TIME-TO-DEGREE

The time allowed for completion of the master's degree is six (6) years from first enrollment in the program, exclusive of time spent in the armed forces of the United States. Graduate work completed ~~prior to~~ outside of the six-year time frame from the students' date of completion of the degree cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements. Transfer credit taken prior to admission at A-State will may be included in the six-year limit.