August 27, 2020

Dear Graduate Coordinators, Chairs, Directors and Graduate Faculty:

The Graduate School's Policies and Procedures Manual updated for 2020-21 is available on the Graduate School website at: https://gradschool.wsu.edu/policies-procedures/. A detailed summary of changes is also on the website. Many general changes were made to improve consistency of language, terminology, and formatting throughout the manual. We would like to highlight some specific changes that you should know about.

The term "faculty advisory committee" is used consistently for the committees that supervise individual master's (non-thesis and theses) and doctoral students as recorded on the Program of Study. We explicitly emphasize the expectation (suggested in previous manuals) that this advisory committee meets annually with the student (Chapter 6.B) to review the progress to date and discuss the focus for the next year, the path to the completing the degree, and career plans beyond graduate school. Situations which may constitute a real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest in the formation of faculty advisory committees are articulated in Chapter 1.D., 4.K.2 and related sections of Chapters 7 and 8.

The Program of Study is an agreement between the student and faculty advisory committee on course requirements for degree completion. Once the Program of Study has been approved by the Graduate School, courses that have been completed with a recorded grade cannot be removed from the Program of Study (Chapters 6.E.1, 6.E.2, 6.G.1, 6.G.2, 7.C, and 7.D). This policy includes transfer course work. This is not a new policy, but emphasis was added to make it clear that a student cannot remove a course from an approved Program of Study because of a low grade or to extend the deadline for time-to-degree completion.

As announced previously, the Responsible Conduct of Research training requirements (Chapters 9.C. and 11.A) have changed. New and continuing graduate students who have not completed the Collaborate Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) RCR training at myresearch.wsu.edu should do so immediately. In the future, enrollment holds may be placed on the student's account if the training is not completed, even if the student is not currently on an assistantship.

WSU policies on use of electronic signatures have evolved. Chapter 1.E.6 outlines Graduate School policy (consistent with BPPM 50.90 and 50.91) on electronic signatures. In particular, the policy change shifts the responsibility from the Graduate School to the graduation program to verify digitized signatures (by wsu.edu emails) on graduate forms and documents. These emails from faculty and students no longer need to be included when forms are uploaded to the GRM; however, the department is now responsible for maintaining an archive of the email records that demonstrate the authenticity of these digitized signatures. The policy (effective as of Spring 2020) to document faculty approval of the final theses and dissertations via the GRM, in lieu of wet ink on cotton pages, is described in Chapter 6.H.

Based on input from the Graduate Mentor Academy, the sections on protocols for prelim and final exams were revised to clarify the policy intent and how this aligned with acceptable procedures, recognizing that different disciplines and graduate programs have different (acceptable) norms for exam processes (Chapters 7.D, 8.D, 8.E, and 14.E).

Language specific to career-track, adjoint, and adjunct appointments was updated to reflect changes in the *Faculty Manual*. Sections on graduate program bylaws and faculty advisory committees were revised to reflect that all programs have bylaws (approved or in progress) (Chapters 1.D.3, 7.B, 8.B, and 14.B). A new bylaws template is available on the GSC website for use in review and updating of your program bylaws.

At the request of the Graduate Studies Committee, the definition of a plan, as options within a degree program, was specified (Chapter 3.D.3). Different plans may have different types of requirements, but still lead to the same degree. Please reach out to us if you have questions regarding updating existing plans or in designing new ones.

We hope you have a great semester. Please reach out to the staff and leadership team of the Graduate School whenever you have questions. We are here to help you support the graduate experience of your faculty and students.

Best regards from the Graduate School staff and leadership team.