

## **Graduate Academic & Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes for February 17, 2016**

Attending: Don Hampton, Daryl Farmer, Sean McGee, Mike Daku, Amanda Loibl, John Yarie, Donie Bret-Harte, Mike Castellinie, Laura Bender (by phone)

I. Minutes of our meeting on 1/27/16 were passed.

II. Updates from the graduate school. Mike Castellini expressed thanks for the opportunity to address the Faculty Senate. He noted that there were few questions, but one was “what was the action?” The action is that the graduate health insurance program will be kept for next year (unless there is a catastrophic budget scenario). The graduate school will keep us updated; negotiations for next year’s health insurance begin soon.

There was continued discussion on the possibility of electronic signatures for theses. The graduate school has offered a draft form, which is a fillable, secure pdf. Laura Bender indicated that this form alleviates issues of being unable to find advisors, pages getting lost or folded, etc. It will still be an option to have a physical page. The graduate school will probably have people sign this form, even if physical pages are desired, as then they are consistent in requiring the electronic from everyone. GAAC agreed that this is OK.

With respect to the comprehensive exam, it turns out that there is no consistent policy across the university with regard to how many tries a student can make before they have to stop. The graduate school has just polled many departments across campus (however, only a few have responded so far). The maximum number of times student can try are two (five programs), three (three programs), and unknown (one program). They haven’t heard back from many departments. It seems wise to put a ceiling on the number of times a student can try across the university; if individual departments want to have a stricter standard, they can. The graduate school is working on the wording with the Provost. The policy will have to be approved by GAAC, since it involves a catalog change. Some departments have both oral and written comprehensive exams, while others do not. GAAC advised that it would be good to cover what happens in both cases. Currently there are 48 Master’s programs and 17 Ph.D. programs. It is not clear yet whether all programs have comprehensive exams.

III. GAAC briefly discussed the Academic Appeals policy, which was forwarded to us by the SADA committee. GAAC members will look at it for next time, and Daryl agreed to lead the discussion. Mike Castellini had some experience with appeals when he was with SFOS, and Laura Bender has had experience with some through the graduate school. They both feel that the process works fine. Mike Daku commented that the main issue is that there be a process in place for the student to appeal decisions. Overall, the existing basic structure seems fine, though it may be desirable to tweak some details.

IV. GAAC discussed a variety of course and program proposals and changes, most of which still need work. GAAC passed:

**31-GNC:** New Course: [DVM F744 - Theriogenology](#)

V. Our next meeting will be Wednesday February 24, at 1:15 pm