Process for Graduate School Policy Changes

Consideration of new or revised Graduate School policy may be based on requests from the graduate community or based on a need identified by the Graduate School.

1. When a possible policy creation, revision, or clarification is identified, the Policy Committee Chair will triage the request with members of the Graduate School that may include the Dean and Associate Deans, the Graduate School's Policy, Practices & Procedures workgroup, and others. This triage will determine if the request will be considered, and/or if it constitutes a minor or major change.
    a. <u>Minor changes</u>: If the proposed change involves minor updates/edits or procedural/operational changes to an existing policy, the request will be handled by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in consultation with the Policy, Practices & Procedures workgroup and other relevant Graduate School staff.
    b. <u>Significant changes</u>: If the request involves a major change in policy, possible outcomes of the triage include: referral to the Graduate School Council Policy Committee; change of the policy based on decision by the Dean; decision not to pursue the request; or other. For policy change requests from the graduate community, the following information will help inform the triage assessment:
        i.   Graduate School policy requiring revision, or a description of a proposed new policy;
        ii. Reason for the change / need for new policy;
        iii. Units and individuals impacted by the proposed change;
        iv. Units and individuals with necessary information to assist with revision/addition;
        v.   Requested timeline for revision/addition.
    c. If the result of the triage step is that a policy request will not be considered, the requester will be informed of the decision and rationale.
2. If a policy request is referred to the Policy Committee, the committee will define a process that is appropriate to the request. The process should assure: clarity and transparency; sufficient stakeholder involvement; consultation on best practices at peer institutions, where appropriate; consideration of the relationship between policy and implementation; and an appropriate and efficient timeline.
3. For substantive policy issues, the Policy Committee Chair may identify a working group or other mechanism to consider the policy, depending on the nature of the change. Recommendations from the working group will be reported to the Policy Committee Chair for consideration and possible Policy Committee action.
4. The process for any substantive policy considerations will include items such as:
    a. Feedback from stakeholders, including identifying a list of stakeholders and how they will be involved in the process;
    b. Consideration of impact of the policy on academic programs, faculty, students, staff, and processes in central administrative units;
    c. Timeline and impact of implementation, including resource considerations;
    d. Consideration of national trends in graduate education.
5. For items referred to the Policy Committee, the committee will ultimately make a recommendation regarding next steps.

6. For all major policy changes and new policies, a final draft of the policy will be distributed broadly to the graduate community for stakeholder feedback (GPAs, GPCs, Deans, Directors, Chairs).
7. The Dean of the Graduate School gives final approval of any new policy or policy change.

The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is updated and the implementation plan is completed. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is responsible for assuring that all policy changes are posted on the Graduate School website, noting all revision dates and archiving the previous policy.