

From: Vice Provost and Dean Robin L. Garrell

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 4:49 PM

Subject: Important Changes to the Doctoral Committee Constitution Rules and the Filing Fee Policy



Graduate Council
Graduate Division

To: Deans and Department Chairs

Dear Colleagues:

In Spring 2015, the Graduate Council approved new policies and procedures for the **Constitution of Doctoral Committees** and the use of the **Filing Fee** by master's and doctoral students. The implementation of these new policies will be phased in over two years, with minor modifications effective Fall 2015 and larger changes effective Fall 2016. We have coupled the announcement of these two policy changes because you may need to revise your Program Requirements for 2016-2017 accordingly. The revisions would need to be approved by your faculty and the Graduate Division (through delegated authority of the Graduate Council) by Spring 2016.

Constitution of Doctoral Committees and mode of participation

In response to the report and recommendations of a faculty workgroup on doctoral committee constitution, the Graduate Council voted to update UCLA's regulations, including ending the concept of "inside" and "outside" members.

Effective Fall 2015

Doctoral committees may have one member participate remotely (a.k.a. "videoconference") in the University oral qualifying examination or final oral examination (defense of the dissertation). *It will no longer be necessary to request approval from the Graduate Division when the remote participation meets specific criteria.* See revised [Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA](#).

Effective Fall 2016

For doctoral committees constituted or reconstituted during or after Fall 2016, the membership regulations will allow for greater flexibility. UCLA will have a single set of [minimum standards](#) for all doctoral committees.

Each program should choose either to accept the UCLA minimum standards, or to propose additional requirements that will be specific to its doctoral students. Those additional requirements will be enforced by the department or interdepartmental program, but not by the Graduate Division. Program-specific standards must be included in approved 2016-17 Program Requirements.

Eligibility and Use of the Filing Fee

A number of graduate students pay a [Filing Fee](#) in lieu of tuition and fees during their final quarter when their degrees are awarded. To conform to the limited circumstances permitted by the Regental policy, the Graduate Council approved clarifications to the eligibility for, and use of, the Filing Fee.

Effective Fall 2015

Students will be allowed one academic-quarter use of the Filing Fee during graduate status, rather than one per degree. Graduate status includes all periods of registration and enrollment in any graduate-level degree program at UCLA. See revised [Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA](#).

Effective Fall 2016

Students will have new deadlines for applying to use the Filing Fee and for the completing their degree requirements while using the Filing Fee.

Currently, graduate students who meet eligibility requirements submit their application by the Friday of the second week of the quarter in which they plan to use the Filing Fee. Students who are approved to pay the Filing Fee complete their degree requirements at any time during that quarter and up until the end of the interim period that follows (i.e., the time between the end of that quarter and the start of the next).

Effective Fall 2016, a graduate student seeking to use the Filing Fee during or after Fall 2016 must apply by the last day of the quarter prior to usage, which aligns with the campus deadline for paying registration fees for the next quarter. Students who are approved to pay the Filing Fee will complete their limited remaining degree requirements between the start of the interim period through the end of the second week of instruction. A [calendar chart](#) illustrates how this process will change and work.

Also effective Fall 2016, students who are registered and enrolled (i.e., not paying a Filing Fee) will no longer have the interim period to complete their degree requirements. Instead, they must file by the deadline on the Friday of tenth week to be awarded their degrees in that quarter.

Time-to-Degree Information

To meet federal reporting requirements, in spring 2015 your graduate programs provided time-to-degree (TTD) information for each degree objective and major code. These benchmarks were published in your 2015-16 Program Requirements. Because departments had only a short timeframe to approve and submit these data, we encourage all graduate programs to consider whether they wish to make adjustments to their TTD benchmarks for the 2016-2017 Program Requirements.

Next Steps for your Program

1. Review the new policies.
2. Have your Department Chair and/or Graduate Studies Chair attend one of the Graduate Division Chairs' Meetings in October.
3. Discuss your doctoral committee composition requirements during Fall 2015. Determine whether you'll opt into the minimum University requirements or will impose additional constraints. You'll be asked in January for any revisions to your 2016-17 Program Requirements; the submission deadline will be early April.
4. Review and consider any revisions to your TTD information for inclusion in the 2016-17 Program Requirements.
5. If your graduate students currently take their comprehensive examinations at the end of a quarter while using a Filing Fee, consider making revisions to your exam schedules. These should be incorporated in your 2016-2017 Program Requirements.

With best regards,

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