

October 8, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

This e-mail is intended to serve as an update and summary of recent changes that have taken place at the Research and University Graduate School (RUGS).

We look forward to serving both you and your graduate students during the upcoming year. Please do not hesitate to contact us at ugs@fiu.edu if you have any questions or concerns.

CHANGES IN RUGS POLICIES OR PROCEDURES

- **Elimination of Two-Term Conditional Admission to Doctoral Programs**
Effective August 1, 2008, two-term conditional admissions of students to doctoral programs will no longer be permitted. The three options available for admitting doctoral students are: Full Admission; Conditional One-Term Admission; and Petition for Exception to Graduate Requirements. <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/announcements.html>
- **New Petition for Exception/Waiver of Admission Form**
Effective August 1, 2008, the University Graduate School is using a new standardized form that takes the place of both the Petition for Exception and Waiver of Admission Standards forms. The new Petition for Exception to Graduate Requirements form can be found <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/forms.html>
- **Enforcement of Continuous Enrollment Policy**
Master's level students must be continuously enrolled in a minimum of one credit; doctoral students must be continuously enrolled in a minimum of three credits. Active status entitles students to utilize the University's resources. Consequences for non-compliance with UGS continuous enrollment requirements include lack of access to the services of the University Graduate School and inability to graduate. Further, beginning Fall 08, at the mid-point of the semester, an audit will be conducted to identify graduate students who are active but not enrolled. Graduate students identified as non-enrolled, but with active program status during the Fall 2008 semester will be required to register for twice the minimum number of credits during the subsequent semester. Students who wish to avoid this penalty need to have a request for a leave of absence approved by the UGS in advance.
- **Dissertation Advisor Status is a University-wide Appointment**
In the interest of supporting this synergism and encouraging more flexible mentoring of graduate students at the University, the UGS is reemphasizing that Dissertation Advisor Status (DAS) is a University-wide appointment conferred upon faculty based on the applicant's mastery of the subject matter of the research and his or her ability to mentor a student. Thus, it will be acceptable for a doctoral student in one department to have as chair of his or her dissertation

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committee a faculty member from a different department. Academic program requirements for students in degree-granting programs are still determined by the department in which the student is enrolled.

- **Responsible Conduct of Research Certification for Thesis/Dissertation**

Starting July 15, 2008, FIU graduate students who file thesis or dissertation proposals (M-2 or D-3 form) must provide a training certificate documenting completion of an appropriate, discipline-specific Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training course and exam.

<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/announcements.html>

INCREASED SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

- **UGS Enhancement of McKnight Doctoral Fellowships**

As of August 1, 2008, the McKnight Doctoral Fellowship applications are available for the 2009-2010 admissions cycle. Please note that the University Graduate School will be supplying a \$10,000 match for successful McKnight awardees. For more information, please contact Allison McComb, Associate Director for Academic Support Services, at (305) 348 – 2455 or mccomba@fiu.edu.

- **New Doctoral Evidence Acquisition (DEA) Fellowship**

The DEA Fellowship has been created to support doctoral students in the evidence collection phase of their research. Successful applicants must demonstrate that DEA Fellowship funding is critical to the applicant securing the dedicated time necessary to collect his/her doctoral evidence.

- **Stipend Increase for Presidential Fellowships and Dissertation Year Fellowships**

Beginning Fall 2008, stipends have increased for Presidential Fellows and Dissertation Year Fellowships from \$20,000 to \$25,000 for 12-months.

- **Doctoral Student Assistantships: Annualization and Stipend Increase**

For the 2008-2009 academic year, the RUGS will provide resources that generally will result in increases of 12-month stipends. However, individual schools may have standardized stipend levels in a way that some students will have already reached that higher stipend level, and are therefore not eligible for the increase. In addition, RUGS has provided funds so that all Ph.D. students supported by teaching assistantships have annual contracts, i.e., are assured support in summer term.

INCREASED SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR UNITS

- **Enhancement of Research Colloquium/Seminars**

During the 2008-2009 academic year, funds are available to Ph.D.-granting units to enhance their research colloquium/seminar series. The intended purpose of this support is to build intellectual community within academic programs and/or across the University and to enhance opportunities for the scholarly development and training of graduate (particularly doctoral) students.

<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/announcements.html>

- **Enhancement of Doctoral Student Recruitment**

During the 2008-2009 academic year, funds are available to Ph.D.-granting units to assist doctoral programs in the recruitment of highly-qualified Ph.D. students.

<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/announcements.html>

NEW PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES

- **FIU/UM Ph.D. Exchange Program Announcement**

Beginning fall 2008, FIU Ph.D. students will have the opportunity to complete up to six credits at the University of Miami as members of a new exchange program between FIU and the University of Miami. <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/announcements.html>

- **Center for Excellence in Writing/UGS collaboration**

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the University Graduate School, Academic Affairs, The Undergraduate Writing Program in the Department of English, and FIU's Learning Center formed a partnership to promote writing excellence among both undergraduate and graduate students at FIU. The result was the creation of the Center for Excellence in Writing, which will hold workshops and provide direct mentorship for graduate student writing efforts. The Center for Excellence in Writing will include a center director, two graduate-level tutors and a faculty expert to act as a consultant for faculty seeking assistance with their writing.