



Message from the Dean

Doctoral dissertations are generally viewed as the most important indicators of program quality. Once archived in the library, they are readily accessible to our future faculty and students as well as to our peers who wish to judge the quality of our programs.

Our doctoral committees are generally doing an outstanding job of reviewing the dissertations prior to approving them. Although the scientific rigor and accuracy can only be judged by the faculty experts serving on the committee, there have been a few cases where it has been painfully obvious to an outsider that the dissertation has not gone through a rigorous review in terms of the language used, the graphs and pictures prepared, and how the conclusions have been presented. To preserve the credibility of an FIU-brand dissertation, UGS does not have a choice but to send back such dissertations to the programs even at the final stage of approvals. Very often with such cases, the candidate, in his or her rush to graduate, has not taken adequate care in compiling all of the work; the major professor has not taken time to conduct a thorough review, and the supervisory committee has restricted its role to only an oral criticism of the student's work during the defense.

There are disagreements in a few cases among the committee members and the deans on whether the scope of study is worthy of a doctoral dissertation. In such cases, I have decided to send the dissertations to external reviewers who are active experts in the specific fields of study. In the few cases where I have doubts on the make-up of the committee, I have appointed an additional member to the supervisory committee.

I view the doctoral dissertation review as an important process in our efforts to present FIU as a top-quality research institution, and I request your support in these efforts.

Thank you,



News

AGILE Scholars Selected

Congratulations to the first cohort of AGILE scholars. The cohort is comprised of ten scholars from a variety of academic fields and backgrounds. Information about the students and their programs of study can be found on our AGILE [webpage](#). The cohort met for the first time on Saturday, November 16.

Blog Your Comments

Please join the discussion on the UGS blog. The most recent post provides a more in-depth discussion on our recently created Academy of Graduates for Integrative Learning Experiences (AGILE). To access the blog, please click [here](#). Your comments, thoughts, reactions, and feedback are most welcome.

Student Spotlight

Please join us in celebrating our students' accomplishments by visiting the Student Spotlight section of the UGS website. This month we are featuring two of our graduate students: Ali Mazloomzadeh, doctoral candidate in the department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and this year's recipient of the SmartGridComm Best Student Paper Award, as well as Meng Xu, doctoral candidate in the department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and a recipient of the Environmental Mutagenesis and Genomics Society travel award. To learn more about Ali, Meng and other students who are featured online, please click [here](#).

Annual Student Evaluation and Mentoring Plan

The 2013-2014 Annual Student Evaluation form is now available. To access the form, please go to <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/student-forms.shtml> and click on Dissertation Forms. Please be reminded that the Major Professor and other members of the dissertation committee are required to meet with the student to review and complete this evaluation on an annual basis. Forms are due **May 30, 2014**.

Doctoral Readmissions Procedures

The Doctoral Readmissions Procedures have been added to the UGS website. These can be found at: <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/faculty-staff.shtml>, under the Faculty/Staff tab, below the Graduate Policies & Procedures section.

GA Contracts

The Spring 2014 GA contracts may now be entered. The deadline to enter contracts for Spring 2014 is **Friday, December 6, 2013**. All documents pertaining to GA contracts have been sent to the Graduate Program Directors in a previous message. Should you have any questions related to the contracts and documentation needed in order to process them (such as employment agreement forms and tuition-related information) please contact Beatriz Sigler at x7-0394 or bsigler@fiu.edu.

For all Faculty in the Sciences (all Sciences!)

You are invited to join Dr. Koptur and others in many departments as members of Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society. Your participation will recognize the importance of research and promote the opportunities of junior scientists (our graduate students) by increasing the visibility of the Society as well as making everyone aware of discoveries and progress in science that affect every avenue of life. Check out the website at <http://sigmaxi.org/>, and please consider becoming a member. We will be pleased to nominate you for membership. Please contact Dr. Suzanne Koptur, Professor of Biological Sciences at kopturs@fiu.edu for additional information. The nomination form can be accessed by clicking [here](#). All nomination forms must be submitted to the UGS, attention Ms. Irene Baquero (ibaquero@fiu.edu / PC 230) by **Monday, December 2, 2013**.

Graduate Events

Networking Skills Workshop
Thursday, November 21, 2013
4:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
MMC—GC 230

Stress Relief Techniques Workshop
Thursday, November 21, 2013
4:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
MMC—GC 166

UGS Open House
Saturday, November 23, 2013
9:30 a.m.—12:00 noon
MMC—Graham Center Ballrooms

How to Write a Discussion and Implications Section Workshop
Monday, November 25, 2013
4:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
MMC—ZEB 330

APA Guidelines for Reference List Construction Workshop
Monday, December 2, 2013
4:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
MMC—ZEB 330

Grad Skellar
Wednesday, December 4, 2013
6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.
MMC—Chili's Too Patio

How to Improve the Organization of a Paper Workshop
Monday, December 9, 2013
4:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
MMC—ZEB 330

For more Graduate Events, visit:
<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/cs-professional-development-2013-fall.shtml>

Important Deadlines

Last Day to Admit Transfer International Students
Monday, December 2, 2013

Final ETD Approval Form Deadline for Fall 2013 Graduation
Friday, December 6, 2013
For more Thesis and Dissertation Deadlines, visit:
<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/electronic-thesis-dissertation-deadlines.shtml>

Last Day to Enter Sp '14 GA Contracts
Friday, December 6, 2013

Last Day to Issue I-20 for Transfer International Students
Monday, December 9, 2013

For more Graduate Admissions deadlines, visit:
http://gradschool.fiu.edu/documents/Grad_Admissions_Deadlines.pdf



Be Worlds Ahead