October 28, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gregory Ball
    Dean, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences

FROM: Elizabeth Beise
    Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to Modify the PhD in Criminology and Criminal Justice

At its meeting on October 2, 2015, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula and Courses approved the proposal to modify the PhD in Criminology and Criminal Justice. A copy of the proposal is attached.

The change is effective Spring 2016. Please ensure that the change is fully described in the Graduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials.

MDC/
Enclosure

cc: Andrew Harris, Chair, Senate PCC Committee
    Barbara Gill, Office of Enrollment Management
    Reka Montfort, University Senate
    Erin Taylor, Division of Information Technology
    Pam Phillips, Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment
    Anne Turkos, University Archives
    Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar
    Alex Chen, Graduate School
    Wayne McIntosh, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
    James Lynch, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
We are proposing a revision of our doctoral program. This revision can be summarized as affecting two areas: course requirements and the assessment process whereby students advance to doctoral candidacy. With regard to the first issue, we are proposing to (1) increase the credit requirement for successful completion of the doctoral degree; (2) increase the number of required courses; (3) make two current elective classes required courses; and (4) add two new classes, which will also be required for successful completion of the Ph.D. (note that these two courses are currently under review in VPAC). With regard to the second issue, we are proposing to (1) end the current comprehensive exam process; and, (2) base the decision of whether a student should advance to candidacy on a clinical assessment by the full tenured and tenure-track faculty that accounts for a wide area of performance measures, including a qualifying exam, research products, course performance, and engagement in the profession.
OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED CHANGES

We are recommending two overarching changes to the current doctoral program (please note there are no proposed changes to the M.A. program):

1. We propose restructuring the Ph.D. curriculum. This involves:
   a. Increasing the credit requirement for successful completion of the doctoral degree.
   b. Increasing the number of required courses.
   c. Making two current elective classes required courses.
   d. Adding two new classes, which will also be required for successful completion of the Ph.D.

2. We propose changing the mechanism whereby students advance to candidacy. Specifically, this will involve:
   a. Ending the current comprehensive exam process
   b. Basing the decision of whether a student should advance to candidacy on a clinical assessment by the full tenured and tenure-track faculty that accounts for a wide area of performance measures, including a qualifying exam, research products, course performance, and engagement in the profession.

RATIONALE FOR PROPOSED CHANGES

The motivation for these changes largely stems from two inter-related issues. First, we do not believe that our current Ph.D. curriculum supports students having exposure to the breadth and depth of coursework that we believe is appropriate for doctoral study. Second, we do not believe the current process for determining whether students advance to candidacy (i.e., successfully pass two comprehensive exams) discerns students who have the necessary skills to be a successful researcher in our discipline from those who do not.

With regard to the first point of change, one of the primary goals of our graduate program is to produce true scholars – individuals who are intellectually curious and driven by a thirst for knowledge across a broad spectrum of issues in criminology and criminal justice. The manner by which many students navigate through the present curriculum is not consistent with these goals. The current comprehensive exam process plays a role in this disjoint. Students take classes according to their beliefs about what they need for the comprehensive exams, rather than a desire to have a broad and deep knowledge about criminology and the criminal justice system. This has resulted in students taking independent studies focused on preparing for one of the comprehensive exams rather than enrolling in substantive courses. This is particularly problematic with regard to classes that may aim to help prepare students for careers outside of academia, such as positions in government or think tanks. As a department, we have collectively
determined not to support the use of independent studies in lieu of courses unless there is a critical need to do so.

Part of the reason our doctoral students are able to obtain their Ph.D. with few substantive classes is because our program has only two required courses and it gives students a large amount of discretion over their coursework. Further, our doctoral students are only required to complete 24 credits, 18 of which must be dissertation credits, in order to obtain their Ph.D. Our only required courses are CCJS 710 and another statistics course of the student’s choosing (it may be taken within or outside our department). Although we understand that some flexibility and choice is important, the current curriculum is not sufficiently coherent, nor does it have enough required courses. If we are invested in students finishing our program having acquired the necessary substantive knowledge and methodological skill that will put them at the top of the discipline, our curriculum should be structured toward this aim. Therefore, we believe that we should require students to take more courses generally, but also take strides to make sure these requirements cover the essential areas of knowledge for a Ph.D. in criminology and criminal justice.

With regard to the second point of change, students currently must successfully pass two comprehensive exams (theory and general) in order to advance to candidacy. We believe that one’s performance on two six-hour exams is not sufficiently informative for making a decision about advancement to doctoral candidacy. Though the ability to synthesize material across content areas in a way that demonstrates critical thinking is important, it is not the only skill that should be considered. For example, demonstrated research proficiency and performance in coursework are critical indicators of a student’s ability to become a doctoral candidate, but are currently not considered in our current assessment process. Further, a single qualifying exam can assess the ability to synthesize content areas without dominating the doctoral students’ time in the program (as our comprehensive exams currently do). Accordingly, we propose a clinical assessment that will take into account a broad range of demonstrated student ability and proficiency.

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

**Curriculum Change**

Currently, our doctoral program only requires that students successfully pass two courses (CCJS 710 and an additional advanced statistics course either from within or outside our department) and complete 18 dissertation credits. This curriculum assumes that a student starts the program with an M.A. We currently do not have any requirements specified for students who enter our doctoral program with a B.A./B.S. Instead, such students are expected to meet the standards for our M.A. degree (30 credits) and then our doctoral degree (24 credits). We believe it is important to provide requirements for both paths through the program, as there has been a notable increase in students who enter our program with a B.A./B.S. Therefore, after discussing the proposed
changes to the curriculum, we provide a recommended curriculum pathway for both doctoral tracks.

*Course Changes*

1. We propose that CCJS 654, our Advanced Theory Class, be required of doctoral students. We believe that any graduate of our doctoral program should have in-depth knowledge of theory. Currently this is an elective course, though nearly all of our doctoral students take it. We believe students should be required to take this course prior to taking the comprehensive exam.

2. We propose that a Criminal Justice Policy course be required for doctoral students. Just as we believe that doctoral students should have an in-depth understanding of theory, they should also understand how research does (or does not) translate into policy and practice. We currently have a course – CCJS720 – entitled “Policy Analysis”, which is an elective. We propose this course as become required.

3. We propose a new course that will be required for students who enter the program with an M.A. (students who enter with a B.A./B.S. will not be required to take this course, but may take it if they want to). This will be a “Research Practicum” course (CCJS650), which is discussed later in this document as part of the assessment for advancement to candidacy. This course will serve as a structured environment in which students can develop and complete an independent research project under the supervision of a faculty member. Students’ performance in this course will offer evidence on their research proficiency. [Please note that a new course proposal has been submitted to VPAC for this class].

4. We propose a new required doctoral level methods course (CCJS700). This course will build on CCJS 610 (a required methods course for our M.A. students), which covers the fundamentals of research. The doctoral-level advanced methods course will involve in-depth consideration of a wide range of methodological approaches to the study of crime and criminal justice. [Please note that a new course proposal has been submitted to VPAC for this class].

5. We propose that doctoral students take 5 elective courses, one of which must be taken outside our department. We believe this will expose our students to a broader perspective of issues related to crime and justice, sharpening their interdisciplinary skills. Currently, students are allowed to take their second required statistics/methods course outside our department. If they do so, this will not fulfill the present requirement (i.e., one course can only fulfill one program requirement).

*Proposed Curriculum Path*

To review, for students who enter our program with an M.A., we propose they complete the following courses:

1. CCJS 710 – Advanced Statistical Methods
2. One additional advanced statistics course
3. CCJS 654 – Advanced Theory
4. CCJS 720 – Policy Analysis
5. An Advanced Methods Course (proposed as CCJS 700; currently under review by VPAC)
6. A Research Practicum Course (proposed as CCJS 650; currently under review by VPAC)
7. 5 elective courses, one of which must be taken outside of CCJS
8. At least 12 dissertation credits

We believe that, collectively, this will provide a more coherent and complete exposure to fundamental criminology and criminal justice content. We also propose that we reduce the dissertation credit requirement from 18 credits to 12, though we acknowledge that many students may take more than one year to complete their dissertation. In total, this results in a 45-credit requirement for the doctoral program. As the table below demonstrates, even though this increases our overall credit requirements, students can complete their Ph.D. within 3-4 years.

**Table 1.** Recommended curriculum for students who begin our doctoral program with an M.A. Note that credits are in parentheses and that we recommend students only take 6 credits (two courses) during the semester prior to the qualifying exam. We anticipate that students will be studying and reviewing materials for the exam during this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits: 18</td>
<td>CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) <strong>OR</strong> CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3)</td>
<td>CCJS 710 Advanced Statistics (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Research Practicum” (3) <strong>OR</strong> Elective (3)</td>
<td>Advanced Methods course (3) <strong>OR</strong> Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) <strong>OR</strong> CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3)</td>
<td>Advanced Methods course (3) <strong>OR</strong> Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits: 15</td>
<td>Second required statistics course (3) <strong>OR</strong> “Research Practicum” (3)</td>
<td>Second required statistics course (3) <strong>OR</strong> Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualifying exam in January</td>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Dissertation credits (6)</td>
<td>Dissertation Credits (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits: 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4 (if needed)</td>
<td>Dissertation Credits (6)</td>
<td>Dissertation credits (6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4
For students who enter our doctoral program with a B.A./B.S., we propose that they complete all of the same required doctoral courses, along with the courses that are required for our M.A. degree (CCJS 600, CCJS 610, CCJS 620, CCJS 621, and CCJS 651). [Please note the one exception to this rule is the proposed new research practicum course. As a later section will discuss, the clinical assessment for advancement to doctoral candidacy will rely on these students’ MA thesis as the indicator of research proficiency.] Further, we also require 6 credits of M.A. thesis research. This results in a 63-credit requirement to complete the Ph.D. (upon entry with a B.A./B.S.) Table 2 provides the proposed curriculum for this pathway.

Table 2. Recommended curriculum for students who begin our doctoral program with a B.A./B.S. Note that credits are in parentheses and that, during the second year, we recommend students take 6 credits per semester rather than 9 (one course along with thesis credit) because we are committed to students completing their theses during this academic year. We also recommend that students take 6 credits (two courses) during the semester prior to the qualifying exam. We anticipate that students will be studying and reviewing materials for the exam during this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Year</td>
<td>CCJS 600 Intro to CJ (3)</td>
<td>CCJS 651 Theory (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits: 18</td>
<td>CCJS 620 Fundamentals of CJ Research (3)</td>
<td>CCJS621 GLM (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
<td>CCJS 610 Research Methods (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Year</td>
<td>CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) OR CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3)</td>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits: 12</td>
<td>Thesis Credit (3)</td>
<td>Thesis Credit (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master’s thesis proposal completed by end of semester</td>
<td>Master’s thesis completed by end of semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Year</td>
<td>CCJS 720 Policy Analysis (3) OR CCJS 654 Advanced Theory (3)</td>
<td>CCJS 710 Advanced Statistics (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits: 15</td>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
<td>Advanced Methods course (3) OR Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualifying exam in January</td>
<td>Second required statistics course OR Elective (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctoral Assessment in March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Change to the Process for Determining Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy

Currently, students must successfully pass two comprehensive exams to advance to candidacy. We propose that, instead, that the full tenured and tenure-track faculty complete a clinical assessment of each doctoral student to determine if s/he should advance to candidacy. For students who enter the program with an M.A., this assessment will be during the spring semester of their second year; for students who enter with a B.A./B.S., this assessment will be during the spring semester of their third year.

This clinical assessment will include review and evaluation of:

- Research competency (based on thesis or practicum research products);
- Content knowledge (based on course performance and performance on a qualifying exam); and
- Professional development (based on supervisor evaluation)

Please note that students will receive interim feedback by way of completing a self-assessment each year. This self-assessment will include information pertaining to the three areas on which students will be assessed. The advisor will meet with the student to discuss the assessments each year, providing feedback to help the student prepare for the major assessment discussed in this document. [Note that this assessment will be developed so that it corresponds closely to the areas on which students will later be assessed. A good starting point for developing these self-assessments will be student activities report and educational plan forms currently in use.]

### Area 1: Research Competency

Department expectation:

- Student has demonstrated skill at conducting a semi-independent research project. Skills to be demonstrated include embedding a research question within the relevant literature, making a case for the contribution of the research, selecting appropriate data and measures, demonstrating competence with the appropriate analytic strategy, and drawing appropriate conclusions from results.

A faculty committee rates each student project on the dimensions included in the rubric below. This committee consists of the thesis committee for students who enter with a B.S./B.A. or the
research practicum advisor and the student’s academic advisor for students who enter with an M.A. Note that students may submit as supplemental material one or more published works. These works will be considered along with the ratings of UMD faculty who have worked directly with the student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Does not meet expectation (1)</th>
<th>Meets expectation (2)</th>
<th>Exceeds expectation (3)</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The written product shows evidence of student’s skill at:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing the importance/relevance of the research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedding the research question in the relevant literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulating testable hypotheses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting or locating appropriate data to address the research question</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing the data using appropriate techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreting results correctly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting results appropriately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing limitations in the applicability of the results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stating implications of the research for future research, theory, practice, or policy

Work on the project was completed semi-independently*

Overall Assessment

*Semi-independent work is work with the following characteristics: The student developed the idea for the project, located the data, conducted the analysis, and wrote the document. The advisor is expected to provide guidance and feedback at all stages, but should not have written substantial parts of the report.

Please note that raters will be asked to provide a detailed written explanation for any rating that does not meet expectation.

**Area 2: Content knowledge**

Department expectation:

- Grade Point average in all course work to date is 3.5 or higher. Instructor ratings on aspects of course performance not captured in grades show acceptable performance; and
- at least 75% of all grades on the qualifying exam are passing grades.

Instructors will be expected to complete the rubric below for students enrolled in any of their courses prior to their clinical assessment.

**Course Performance Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Does not meet expectation (1)</th>
<th>Meets expectation (2)</th>
<th>Exceeds expectation (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actively participates (e.g., is engaged, prepared, asks good questions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exerts effort/perseveres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates diligence and care in written assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performs consistently well across course assignments/obligations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The qualifying exam will also assess students' knowledge across core issues related to theory, the justice system, and research methods, demonstrating an ability to tie these areas together in a cohesive manner. Faculty members will rate each question using the following rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifying Exam Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 1:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates an understanding of core theories/concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates ability to think critically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expresses complex ideas in clear and well organized written arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[repeats above for each question]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of responses that “meet” or “exceed” expectation will be recorded for each rater. The percentage passing grades will then be averaged across all raters. Exams receiving an average grade of 75% or higher will receive a “pass” on the exam.

For both rubrics, raters will be asked to provide a detailed written explanation for any rating that does not meet expectation.

**Area 3: Professional Development**

Department expectation:

- All students will participate in professional activities, both in the department and in the discipline.
- Students will carry out assigned duties in a responsible and professional fashion.
All faculty advisors (formal and informal) will rate each student’s professional development activities using the following rubric. The advisor should reference completed student self-assessments and should interview the student to ensure accurate ratings.

### Professional Development Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Does not meet expectation (1)</th>
<th>Meets expectation (2)</th>
<th>Exceeds expectation (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student performs assigned RA/TA duties in a responsible and professional manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student is engaged in departmental activities such as brown-bags, graduate student meetings, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student has provided meaningful service to the department, college, campus, or discipline that is reasonable given his/her year in the program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student has participated in disciplinary activities such as professional conferences</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Faculty advisors will provide a written explanation for any rating that does not meet expectation.

**Process for reviewing student assessments**

A dossier including the student’s transcript, the completed rubrics, and any supplemental materials will be reviewed and discussed by the entire graduate faculty. After discussion, each faculty will vote “yes” or “no” as to whether the student should be invited to continue in the doctoral program. Students receiving at least 75% affirmative faculty votes will be invited to
continue in the program. Students will be provided with a detailed account specifying each area in which the student did not meet departmental expectation.

**Appeal process**

Students may appeal a negative decision by writing a letter presenting an argument as to why he or she thinks that the assessment process did not reflect the student’s suitability for the doctoral program. The entire graduate faculty will consider the appeal and decide how to proceed. For the appeal to be accepted, the majority of faculty must vote in favor.

**Impact of Proposed Changes on Resources and Related Programs**

Adopting these proposed changes will require the creation of two new courses, as well as the transition of some courses from “elective” to “required”. As an attached letter from the Department Chair confirms, we have the resources to ensure that these classes can be offered at the frequency necessary for students to make timely progress through the program.

If this proposal is approved, we plan to implement these changes starting in Fall 2016. We propose that students admitted under the current doctoral program requirements be held to these standards and that only the students admitted under the approved new program be held to the requirements described in this proposal (i.e., the students starting the doctoral program in Fall 2016). From our view, this is the fairest process, will ensure equity and will reduce student confusion. This will therefore require that, for some period of time, the department supports students under the old and new program requirements to ensure that both finish their degrees on time. For several years then, the faculty will be responsible for (1) writing and grading the current comprehensive exams for the students under the old program and (2) offering the courses, writing and grading the qualifying exam, and completing clinical assessment described in this proposal. The precise number of years for which we will have to carry all of these obligations is unclear – it depends on how quickly the students who were admitted under the old (current) curriculum progress through the program.

Please note that the changes proposed in this document have no impact on our Master of Arts program/on students who only wish to obtain an M.A. degree.
To: Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs  

From: James P. Lynch, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice  

Re: Proposed Curriculum Change for Doctoral Program  

Date: May 11, 2015  

Over the past year, the faculty in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice (CCJS) has worked to develop a proposal for revising our doctoral program. As the attached document details, this revision involves changing the required coursework, as well as the method whereby the department determines whether students successfully advance to candidacy. This proposal reflects the work and input of the entire tenured and tenure-track faculty and I fully support it.

To the extent that those who review this proposal require such assurances, I wanted to state that our department has the resources to enact the proposed changes. We have faculty to teach the required courses and the faculty understand that there will be a time of program “overlap”, when they will conduct assessments for who advances to candidacy under both the new and old standards (i.e., for several years, we will have students operated under both standards, based on what was in place at the time of their enrollment). Please take this memo as my commitment both to the proposed changes and the transition to this new standard for our doctoral program.

Sincerely,

James P. Lynch  
Chair, CCJS
Hi All,

Please see the note from Jean regarding her proposal (15004). If you have any objections to changing provisional approval to full approval, please let Ron Yaros know by Tuesday, September 22.

Hi Ronald,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some information about the research competency domain of our clinical assessment for the advancement to doctoral candidacy. First, allow me to clarify our proposed procedure. Second, I will offer the reasoning the department has for this part of the proposal.

Clarification: In our current model, advancement to doctoral candidacy is determined by whether or not students successfully pass two comprehensive exams (one on theory, and one on general criminal justice issues). Thus, our current model does not take demonstrated research proficiency into account when determining advancement to candidacy. In our proposed model, we change that.

We propose that research proficiency for this part of the clinical assessment should consider a student's demonstrated ability to: embed a research question within the relevant literature; make a persuasive case that this study makes an important contribution; select appropriate data; engage in competent and appropriate analyses; and, draw reasonable conclusions. From our view, these are the key research skills one should consider when considering advancement to doctoral candidacy in our department.

For all students, a committee will rate each student on these skills according to the rubric provided in the proposal (see page 7) - this rubric will then be considered by all tenured and tenure-track faculty who collectively decide on the student's advancement to candidacy. For students who who enter our Ph.D. program with a B.A/B.S., this committee will be comprised of their M.A. thesis committee. For students who enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A., the committee will be comprised of the professor of the research practicum course (which is required for these students and, as a course, requires the completion of an empirical research project) and the student's academic advisor. Please note that all students, regardless of whether they entered with a B.A./B.S. or an M.A., are welcome to submit additional, supplemental research products for the faculty to consider, if they want to.

Reasoning: In developing this proposal, our faculty's primary goals were ensuring a top-quality graduate education while (1) not burdening students with an unreasonable time-to-degree or (2) setting up students to be enrolled in the program for many years, only to be dismissed when they do not meet the standards for official advancement for doctoral candidacy. The sentiment was rooted in what we believed to be educationally "right", based on our own opinions and those of our graduate students. For that reason, we strongly believed that the clinical assessment for advancement to doctoral candidacy should occur no later than the second year for those individuals who enter with an M.A. and no later than the third year for those who enter with a B.A./B.S.

In our department, a successful M.A. thesis (which must be empirical) is typically defined as a student demonstrating an ability to identify an important theoretical/policy/methodological question, select appropriate data, engage in competent and appropriate analyses, and demonstrate an ability to draw reasonable conclusions. Indeed, our standards are high
enough that it is very common for our students to go on to publish their theses in peer-reviewed journals. The new research practicum course is also oriented around assessing the extent to which students demonstrate these same skills (in this course, as with an M.A. thesis, students must produce an empirical research product). Our departmental faculty believe that these are appropriate measures of research proficiency when deciding whether a graduate student should advance to official candidacy (along with the other domains of interest discussed in the proposal).

Because we believed these experiences/research products would provide necessary information, the faculty did not believe that adding in additional required metrics or products to assess research proficiency would provide sufficient added value to balance out the fact that doing so would increase the burden on students (note that with our new curriculum, students already have full course loads and high expectations each semester) and almost certainly increase time-to-degree.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide this information.

Best,
Jean

Angela Ambrosi
Graduate Program Coordinator
The Graduate School, University of Maryland
2123 Lee Building,
7809 Regents Drive, College Park, MD 20742
(301) 405-4183 I aambrosi@umd.edu I gradschool.umd.edu I @UMDGradSchool
Advancing graduate education. Enhancing the graduate student experience.

From: Angela Rose Ambrosi
Sent: Friday, September 18, 2015 9:23 AM
To: Ronald A. Yaros; Kathryn R. Wentzel; Sarah C. Eno; David Lawrence Andrews; Ryan Long; Thomas W. Castonguay; Ashlee Noelle Wilkins
Cc: Elizabeth Jane Beise; Michael D Colson; Alexander Chen
Subject: Graduate PCC - Doodle poll

Dear All,

Please submit your availability for future Graduate PCC meetings by completing the Doodle poll. I will do my best to accommodate everyone’s schedule. If you have any questions, please let me know. Have a wonderful weekend!

Best,
Angela

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