Newhouse, Melissa A.

From: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette  
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2014 5:29 PM  
To: Newhouse, Melissa A.  
Cc: Fink, Steven; Krissek, Lawrence; Hadad, Christopher  
Subject: Proposed change to Earth Sciences graded coursework requirements  
Attachments: Earth Sciences Ph.D._revised graded credit hour requirement.doc; E-mail Proposed change to Earth Sciences graded coursework requirements.pdf

Dear Melissa,

The School of Earth Sciences has approved a reduction in the number of graded credits required for the PhD from 30 to 20. As indicated in the attached e-mail, Scott Herness has provided positive feedback on the revision while at the same time noting that no formal approval by the Graduate School is necessary. The proposal has also been shared with our own ASC Graduate Curriculum Committee as an informational item and no objections have been raised. We are now advancing the proposal to CAA to be shared as an fyi or (if necessary) to be formally reviewed and approved.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

My best,

Bernadette

Bernadette Vankeerbergen, Ph.D.  
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Hi Steve,

The faculty in Earth Sciences have approved a revision to the requirements for the Ph.D. in Earth Sciences; specifically, a reduction in the number of graded credits required from 30 to 20. The attached document describes the proposed revision, provides an explanation for why the revision is needed, and outlines the process by which this revision was approved in SES.

As indicated by the e-mail thread below, this proposal has already been reviewed positively by the Graduate School. This proposal is submitted here for your information, or -- if necessary -- for review and/or approval by the ASC Graduate Curriculum Committee.

Please let me know if any questions arise about this proposal, or if additional information is needed.

Best,

Larry

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: Herness, M S. (Scott) <harness.1@osu.edu>
Date: Thu, May 1, 2014 at 3:44 PM
Subject: RE: Proposed change to Earth Sciences graded coursework requirements
To: "Saltzman, Matthew" <saltzman.11@osu.edu>
Cc: "Herness, M S. (Scott)" <harness.1@osu.edu>

Matt,

Thanks for sharing this information with me. I was happy to receive it and to look it over. There is nothing in changes you outline below which requires Graduate School approval. I think everything you’ve outlined sounds reasonable and that a good process was used to reach this change.

I appreciate your letting me take a look. I’ll be happy to review other changes or answer questions as they arise.

Best,
Dear Scott,

The Graduate Studies Committee for the Earth Sciences Graduate Program has re-evaluated the graded coursework requirements for the PhD degree. The current requirement in the Earth Sciences Graduate Handbook is 30 graded credit hours out of the total 80 credit hour minimum set by the Graduate School. However, 30 graded credit hours is significantly higher than our peer institutions who typically require 20 graded credit hours or less for the PhD. We had justified a higher graded credit hour requirement because, unlike many of our peers, most of our students came in with MS degrees and were allowed to transfer 20 graded credit hours from their MS program (thus only needing 10 graded credits) out of the total of 30 credit hours allowed for in transfer by the Graduate School.

In recent years, the Earth Sciences Graduate Program has accepted an increasing number of students going straight from an undergraduate program into our PhD program. The Graduate Studies Committee received feedback from the faculty that these students who were going straight to the PhD (from undergrad) were having difficulty completing their candidacy exams and thesis proposals in 2 years (as set out in our handbook) while at the same time meeting the requirement for 30 graded credit hours.

In recognition of this problem, the Graduate Studies Committee for the Earth Sciences Graduate Program proposed that the number of graded courses be
reduced for PhD students from 30 to 20 (this also required us to reduce the number of graded credits MS students can transfer from 20 to 10). This proposal was discussed at a December 5 faculty meeting and voted on. The results of the faculty vote were 17 in favor, 3 not in favor, and 2 abstentions.

As we discussed this afternoon in your office, I would now like to seek the approval of the Graduate School for this proposal.

Please let me know if any further information or clarification is needed, and thanks for speaking with me today about this matter.

Best,
Matt

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Matthew R. Saltzman
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Associate Director of Graduate Studies
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phone: 614-292-0481
www.geology.ohio-state.edu/~saltzman
General Information and Rationale: The Graduate Studies Committee for the Earth Sciences Graduate Program has re-evaluated the graded coursework requirements for the PhD degree. The current requirement in the Earth Sciences Graduade Handbook is 30 graded credit hours out of the total 80 credit hour minimum set by the Graduate School. However, 30 graded credit hours is significantly higher than our peer institutions who typically require 20 graded credit hours or less for the PhD. We had justified a higher graded credit hour requirement because, unlike many of our peers, most of our students came in with MS degrees and were allowed to transfer 20 graded credit hours from their MS program (thus only needing 10 graded credits) out of the total of 30 credit hours allowed for in transfer by the Graduate School.

In recent years, the Earth Sciences Graduate Program has accepted an increasing number of students going straight from an undergraduate program into our PhD program. The Graduate Studies Committee received feedback from the faculty that these students who were going straight to the PhD (from undergrad) were having difficulty completing their candidacy exams and thesis proposals in 2 years (as set out in our handbook) while at the same time meeting the requirement for 30 graded credit hours.

Proposal and Vote: In recognition of this problem, the Graduate Studies Committee for the Earth Sciences Graduate Program proposed that the number of graded courses be reduced for PhD students from 30 to 20 (this also required us to reduce the number of graded credits MS students can transfer from 20 to 10). This proposal was discussed at a December 5 faculty meeting and voted on. The results of the faculty vote were 17 in favor, 3 not in favor, and 2 abstentions.

Curricular Requirements for the revised program:
The new text in the School of Earth Sciences Graduate Handbook would read as follows under the proposed rule change (numbers in bold reflect the new rule):

Graduate Program in Earth Sciences Degree Requirements (revised Dec 2013)
A minimum of 80 graduate semester credits beyond the baccalaureate degree is required for the Ph.D. degree. Students who have earned a M.S. degree at another institution may apply 30 semester credits (10 hours of graded coursework plus 20 research hours) earned as part of a Master’s degree toward the 80 hours (GSH VII.2). As approved by the GSC and the student’s advisor, a student who earned a M.S. degree at Ohio State University may transfer a maximum of 50 credit hours toward his/her Ph.D. program (GSC VII.2) The School of Earth Sciences requires that 80 credits must include at least 20 credits of graded graduate coursework in the Sciences or appropriate related fields. The 20 credits of graded coursework must include at least 4 credits of 8000-level seminars. A summary of all University degree requirements is summarized in the Graduate School Handbook (GSH VII.14). Under exceptional circumstances (for example, a student with an M.S. degree in the School of Earth Sciences), the Graduate Studies Committee will consider petitions requesting modifications to the required number of graded credit hours.