Guidelines for Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs (IDP)
University of Nevada, Reno

Interdisciplinary graduate programs are an integral part of graduate education at both the master’s and doctoral levels at the University of Nevada, Reno. Interdisciplinary graduate programs provide an opportunity to enhance and maximize scholarly and scientific endeavors through the combined efforts of faculty and students in a variety of disciplines. Such efforts broaden and strengthen the overall research and graduate education potential of the institution.

I. Guidelines for the Establishment of Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs (IDP):

To establish an Interdisciplinary Graduate Program, a proposal must be prepared by the interested faculty. The process follows the current new program procedures:

- The proposal would be presented to the department chairs, deans and other relevant administrators of the colleges represented by the participating faculty.
- Upon receipt of a positive recommendation from the departments and colleges, the proposal would be forwarded to the Executive Vice President & Provost for routing to the New Program Pre-proposal Committee.
- With a positive recommendation from the New Program Pre-proposal Committee, the proposal would be revised as needed and forwarded to the University Courses and Curriculum Committee. At this step in the process, the proposal would be forwarded to the Graduate Council for its review and recommendation.
- Upon a positive recommendation, the proposal would be forwarded back to the University Courses and Curriculum Committee for final recommendation.
- Positive recommendations at the University Courses and Curriculum Committee would, if necessary, be forwarded to the Board of Regents for final approval. If Board of Regents’ approval is not necessary, a positive recommendation from the University Courses and Curriculum Committee will constitute final approval of the program.

A proposal for an Interdisciplinary Graduate Program must address the following:

- **Significance and interdisciplinary nature** of the proposed program, including the interdisciplinary approaches and expertise of the faculty from the participating units and a strong rationale for an interdisciplinary approach to graduate education
- **Availability of resources**, including faculty and space. There must be a critical number of highly qualified research and teaching faculty members representing at least two or more academic units/disciplines that are committed to the interdisciplinary approach. Generally, a critical mass of faculty would be five or more.
• Support letters from department chairs, deans and other relevant parties. These would be appended as part of the proposal. (See also procedures described above).

• Academic Potential. The likelihood of developing a successful program that attracts academically qualified students and would be able to successfully place those students upon graduation from the program.

II. Interdisciplinary Graduate Program Structure and Function

The structure of Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs is such that they may report directly to the Dean of the Graduate School or the director of an Institute/Academy rather than an academic college. To facilitate the administration of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program, they must develop program bylaws or guidelines that will address policies and procedures for:

- resource acquisition decisions, including first-year graduate student stipends and new program resources
- resource allocation decisions, including graduate teaching assistantship assignments
- broad policy and program management issues
- completion of and program approval of the annual report for the program – accomplishments, challenges, and annual goals for the coming year
- election of and evaluation (including criteria for evaluation) of the Program Director - how often and how it will be conducted
- annual evaluation input on participating faculty that would be provided to the appropriate department chairs/college deans, including the Dean of the Graduate School. These evaluations should be based upon the negotiated role statement and subsequent faculty time allocation to the interdisciplinary program/department.
- coordinating the external program review required every seven years by the University of Nevada, Reno
- establishing any ad hoc committees
- graduate faculty membership in the IDP and periodic review of such faculty for continued participation
- for graduate student recruitment, admissions, curriculum, student supervision, and completion of degree program requirements (also refer to section IV below)
- meetings that will be convened; at a minimum, one meeting per the Fall and Spring term should be held with the total IDP faculty

III. Shared Department, College and Interdisciplinary Program responsibilities regarding faculty participating in the interdisciplinary programs.

The following are shared issues/responsibilities that will periodically need to be discussed and negotiated between departments, colleges, and interdisciplinary graduate programs:
Curricular changes
Faculty replacements
New faculty hires that might participate in the program
Space for faculty participating in the program
Fund raising opportunities

IV. Graduate Students: Admissions, Evaluations and Monitoring Admissions Policies

Student Admissions

1. Each IDP will make provision for a committee of the participating graduate faculty whose function will be to review applicants and recommend students for admission to the program. These committees will be charged with maintaining the highest standards of academic quality and adherence to the Graduate School admission policies.

2. Upon admission the IDP will provide an orientation to the program (this is in addition to the Graduate School New Student Orientation that focuses specifically on the program – its requirements, expectations, curricula, etc.) Each IDP must hold at least one orientation session per semester.

Student Evaluations

1. To ensure timely progression through the graduate program, an annual progress report for each student should be completed and shared with the student. A sample evaluation form is provided in Appendix A.

Student Progression

1. Before any doctoral student in an IDP can schedule their preliminary examination, a Program of Study must be filed with the Graduate School. (Appendix B)

2. To maintain regular academic status within the Graduate School, each student is required to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 and no candidate will be awarded a degree unless a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 is attained for all coursework completed in graduate studies.

3. In addition, before a doctoral student can continue progression to completion of degree, the student must file the Advancement to Candidacy form (Appendix C), followed by Application for Graduation and finally submission of the Notice of Completion (Appendix D). These forms
should be filed in accordance with the guidelines and timelines established by the Graduate School.

4. The IDP Director will sign requests to schedule examinations, approve recommendations for appointment to examination committees, and recommend awards of any scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships for academically qualified graduate students enrolled in the program.

V. Academic Program

The IDP academic program will provide sufficient course offerings in a timely sequence to meet the general degree requirements established for the master’s degree and doctoral degree by the Graduate School.

The Dean of the Graduate School or the Director of an Institute will serve as the academic dean for the IDP. All IDP course recommendations, modifications and deletions, after review by the IDP faculty, will be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School or appropriate Institute Director for signature and forwarding to the University Courses and Curriculum Committee.

VI. Budget

The support for an IDP program is shared between the Graduate School and the colleges and departments that are participating in the IDP. As such,

- **Graduate School Support**

  The Graduate School provides formula funding for a) the director stipend, b) a minimum number of first year fellowships and c) operating. These formulae are:

  - Awarded in accordance with the recommendation from the University Placement Committee.
  - For each cohort of 15 students (master’s and/or doctoral combined; averaged over three years) two assistantships will be awarded. However, the maximum number of assistantships to any IDP will be three per program. The minimum base stipend level will be awarded for these assistantships.
  - Operating dollars will be proportional to the doctoral students at $200 per doctoral student (averaged over three years) currently enrolled in the Fall term of each academic year. This amount is matched by the participating colleges proportional to the faculty from their college that participate in the IDP.

These amounts are provided as a lump sum to the IDP who may then determine how to budget the monies to best meet the needs of their particular program.
College and Department Support

In addition to the operating budget support noted in the above section, Colleges and Departments will provide adequate office space for IDP faculty and IDP students.

Colleges and Departments will provide adequate research space for IDP faculty and IDP students.

Shared Graduate School and College/Department Support

The secretarial and related administrative support for an IDP will primarily be provided by the participating College/Departments. The Graduate School support outlined in the previous section can be used at the discretion of the IDP to contribute to administrative support costs.

VII. Faculty Affiliation

A. Graduate faculty status in an IDP will adhere to the Graduate School criteria (Appendix E). Application for graduate faculty status with an IDP will be reviewed by the IDP Executive Committee and positive recommendations will be forwarded to the Graduate School. If a faculty who is petitioning for graduate faculty memberships in a particular IDP is denied appeal processes may be initiated (these appeal processes should be outlined in the program bylaws).

B. Renewal guidelines for maintaining graduate faculty status must be addressed in the IDP Bylaws.

VIII. Disestablishment of Graduate Interdisciplinary Programs

An IDP may be temporarily placed on hold or permanently closed.

A. An IDP may be temporarily placed on hold by the Dean of the Graduate School while assessing the viability of the program.

B. An IDP that is placed on hold may be closed permanently after a three year period of dormancy.

C. Generally, IDPs will be closed when:

1. The student census cannot justify the continuation of the program.
2. The productivity of the program is below acceptable levels.
3. The majority of the faculty membership wish to close the program or radically change its direction (in which case, a new IDP proposal must be generated).
D. To permanently close an IDP, the Dean of the Graduate School will follow the University policies and procedures relevant to permanent closure.
APPENDIX A: Sample Annual Graduate Student Progress Report

Student: __________________________________________

Last Name       First Name       MI

Graduate Program: ________________________________

Course work completed (include current semester’s enrollment):

Research/Scholarly Activity:

The signatures below indicate that the course work and research/scholarly activities described above reflect satisfactory progress. Any disagreement can be noted in the notation section on the back of this form.

_________________________________    __________________________
Chair, Advisory Committee                  Member, Advisory Committee

_________________________________
Member, Advisory Committee

_________________________________
Member, Advisory Committee

_________________________________
Member, Advisory Committee

_________________________________
Member, Advisory Committee

Student

Notations/Comments:
PROGRAM OF STUDY REQUIREMENTS 1 (Instructions)

APPENDIX B

Master’s Programs

Thesis
- Minimum of 30 graduate credits
- Minimum of 21 of these credits earned at UNR
- Minimum of 18 credits (including thesis credits) taken at 700-level
- 6 thesis credits required
- Maximum of 3 credits may be taken with S/U grading
- Maximum of 9 credits completed prior to admission (including transfer credits)*
- All requirements (credits) for degree (including transfer credits)* must be completed within the period of six years immediately preceding the granting of the degree. *
- Continuous enrollment
  - Minimum enrollment of 3 graduate credits each fall and spring semester

Non-Thesis
- Minimum of 32 graduate credits
- Minimum of 23 of these 32 graduate credits earned at UNR
- Minimum of 15 credits taken at 700-level
- Maximum of 3 credits may be taken with S/U grading (including transfer credits) *
- Maximum of 9 credits completed prior to admission (including transfer credits) *
- All requirements for degree must be completed within the period of 6 years immediately preceding the granting of the degree.
- Continuous enrollment
  - Minimum enrollment of 3 graduate credits each fall and spring semester

Doctoral Programs
- Minimum of 72 graduate credits
- Minimum of 48 graduate credits of course work
- Maximum of 24 graduate credits from a master’s degree program or previous post-baccalaureate work may be applied to program
- Maximum of 9 graduate credits of S/U grading (including transfer credits) *
- At least 30 credits of 700-level graduate credits exclusive of dissertation credits are required: as many as 18 of these credits may be used from a masters degree program
- Fulfill residency requirement; two consecutive semesters (fall or spring) of at least nine (9) graduate credits each; (students on 20hr/week assistantships require six (6) credits each semester
- All requirements for the doctoral program, excluding prerequisite graduate course work or masters degrees, must be completed within a period of 8 years immediately preceding the granting of the degree.
- Continuous enrollment
  - Minimum enrollment of 3 graduate credits each fall and spring semester

1 Some graduate programs have additional requirements

- No undergraduate credits can be applied to any advanced degree program
- Every graduate course must be completed with a grade of “C “or better

* Identify Course Number and Institutions for all credits transferred*
ADVISORY-EXAMINING COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS

*(ALL GRADUATE DEGREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS MUST BE MEMBERS OF THE UNR GRADUATE FACULTY)*

For candidates for the **Master’s** degree, the advisory-examining committee consists of at least three members of the graduate faculty, two representing the area of specialization and one who is the Graduate School Representative. If a major/minor program is elected, there must be one committee member representing the major, one representing the minor, and one who is the Graduate School Representative.

For **Interdisciplinary/Interdepartmental Master’s** degree programs, the committee may consist entirely of faculty from that interdisciplinary/interdepartmental program provided that the role of the Graduate School Representative is filled by a graduate faculty member who holds an academic appointment in a department of program different from that of the chair of the committee.

For **Doctoral** candidates, the advisory committee consists of at least five graduate faculty members. In addition to the permanent advisor as chair, this committee is composed of two or more members from the major department, one or more from departments in related fields, and at least one member of the graduate faculty from outside the student’s major department or program who is the Graduate School Representative.
# UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO
## GRADUATE SCHOOL
### ADVISORY-EXAMINING COMMITTEE/PROGRAM OF STUDY

Please fill out on-line or type (no handwritten forms will be accepted)

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Does your Thesis/Dissertation research involve the following: *(this Section must be completed before form submission)*

- Human Subjects: [ ] Yes [ ] No
- Vertebrate Animals: [ ] Yes [ ] No
- Biohazardous Materials: [ ] Yes [ ] No
- Radioisotopes: [ ] Yes [ ] No

Student Signature:

Student Email Address: ________________

Student Phone #: ( )

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**ADVISORY-EXAMINING COMMITTEE:** *(Please see instruction page for committee requirements)*

*(Type each name under signature)*

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Graduate School Representative: ________________ Date __________

Graduate Director: ________________ Date __________

Graduate Dean: ________________ Date __________
Return Completed Form to:
Graduate School/326
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV 89557-0035
(775) 784-6869
Fax: (775) 784-6064
E-mail: gradschool@unr.edu
www.grad.unr.edu

DOCTORAL DEGREE ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY/COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION REPORT
Please fill out on-line or type (no handwritten forms will be accepted)

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APPROVED:

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**MASTER’S DEGREE – NOTICE OF COMPLETION**

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Name: R#:

Graduate Program: Degree:

Foreign Language or Alternative: ☐ Fulfilled ☐ Not Required

**Comprehensive Examination:**

Written: Date: Date: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed ☐ Not Required

Oral: Date: Date: ☐ Passed ☐ Failed ☐ Not Required

Oral Defense: (for Thesis) Date: ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Unsatisfactory

**Title of Thesis or Professional Paper:**

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**APPROVED:**

| Graduate Dean | Date _________________________ |
Return Completed Form to:
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Fax: (775) 784-6064
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DOCTORAL DEGREE – NOTICE OF COMPLETION
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Dissertation:  [ ] Satisfactory  [ ] Unsatisfactory

Title of Dissertation:
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Date _________________________

Chair, Advisory Committee
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Committee Member
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Graduate Program Director
___________________________________________________________________________________
Date _________________________

APPROVED:
___________________________________________________________________________________
Date _________________________

Graduate Dean
___________________________________________________________________________________
Date _________________________
BYLAWS
OF THE GRADUATE FACULTY
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA-RENO
(Revised 1/01)

1. Authorization
These Bylaws are authorized by Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 5 of the UNR Bylaws (adopted by the Board of Regents November 30, 1984).

2. The Bylaws provide for the organizational and administrative structure and personnel policies for the Graduate Faculty of the University of Nevada-Reno. The Bylaws shall be consistent with the UNR Bylaws, the UCCSN Code and the Laws of the State of Nevada and the United States.

3. Adoption of the Graduate Faculty Bylaws
These Bylaws shall be considered as adopted and in full force and effect upon; 1) the approval of the Graduate Faculty, which shall be by at least a two-thirds majority of those voting in a written, secret mail ballot, and 2) approval by the President after consultation with the Graduate Dean.

4. Amendment of the Bylaws
Any member of the Graduate Faculty may propose amendments to these Bylaws. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Graduate Council for its review and recommendation. If approved by a majority of the Graduate Council, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Graduate Faculty for a vote by a written secret mail ballot. A proposed amendment which, after consideration by the Graduate Council, has not been approved by a majority of that body, shall be submitted to the Graduate Faculty for a vote by a written secret mail ballot if at least ten percent of the faculty sign a petition requesting this action. The amendment shall be in full force and effect upon; 1) approval by the Graduate Faculty, which shall be at least a two-thirds majority of those voting in a written secret mail ballot and 2) approval by the President after consultation with the Graduate Dean.

5. Interpretation of the Bylaws
Questions of interpretation of these Bylaws shall be directed to the Graduate Council, which shall review the question and forward its recommendations to the President, whose ruling shall be final.

6. Graduate Faculty
The Graduate Faculty shall consist of those members of the faculty (as faculty are defined in Section 15 of the UNR Bylaws) or adjunct faculty and clinical faculty (as defined in Section 22 of the UNR Bylaws) appointed to it by an instructional department or program. Each instructional department or program shall develop criteria for appointment to the Graduate Faculty and shall place the criteria on file with the program and with the Graduate School. Any subsequent changes in those criteria also should be placed on file with the program and with the Graduate School before they are put into use. Notices of appointment shall be forwarded to the Graduate School. Appointments to the Graduate Faculty shall be based on a capability to contribute to graduate education demonstrated through:
a. receipt of a terminal degree considered appropriate by the department or program,  
b. research competence, and  
c. ability to teach graduate students.  

Research competence may be demonstrated by scientific, creative, or other scholarly activities consistent with the department or program. These should include, but are not limited to, refereed national or regional publications, presentations, or other refereed creative accomplishments. Ability to teach graduate students individually or in groups may be demonstrated by peer and/or student evaluation of classroom, laboratory, or clinical instruction, or supervision of research or creative activity.

Members of the faculty who have not been appointed to the Graduate Faculty may, upon approval by the Graduate Dean, be permitted to teach specified graduate courses and serve on graduate advisory-examining committees. However, such persons shall not be permitted to chair graduate advisory-examining committees.

Regular faculty members at UNLV and DRI can be appointed to Graduate Faculty status in the same manner as UNR faculty. UNLV faculty who are accorded Graduate Faculty status are subject to the same rules and have the same rights and privileges as UNR Graduate faculty except that they have no voting privileges on university-wide matters, though they may have such privileges on specific graduate program matters as outlined in program bylaws, shall not chair student advisory committees, and are not eligible to serve as university-at-large members of advisory committees.

7. Denial of Graduate Faculty Membership
The Chair of the department or program shall provide, in writing, specified reasons as to why a person applying for membership in the Graduate Faculty was denied. This shall include a statement as to what action may be taken for reconsideration and inclusion in the Graduate Faculty.

8. Appeal of Graduate Faculty Membership
A person who wishes to appeal denial of Graduate Faculty membership may do so in writing to the Chair of the department or program. The application will be reviewed by the department or program in a meeting with the applicant. Should the department or program receive sufficient new information supporting the appointment of the applicant to the Graduate Faculty, it shall reconsider the application for membership in the Graduate Faculty. Further appeal, using the same procedure, may take place at the Graduate Council.

9. Meetings of the Graduate Faculty
The Graduate Faculty may hold meetings for the discussion of, or action on, any matter concerning graduate education. Meetings of the Graduate Faculty may be called by: 1) the President or a designee; 2) the Graduate Dean; 3) the Chair of the Graduate Council if directed by a majority vote of that body; or 4) a petition signed by ten percent of the Graduate Faculty which has been submitted to the President, or a designee. The meeting must be held within ten working days of receipt of the petition. Members of the Graduate Faculty shall receive written notification...
APPENDIX E

of faculty meetings which shall include the date, time, place and agenda of the meeting.

A.  **Presiding Officer**  
The President, or a designee, shall preside over meetings of the Graduate Faculty.

B.  **Secretary**  
The Graduate Faculty shall elect a secretary for each meeting from among its members in attendance, who shall be responsible for the maintenance of accurate records of its deliberations, the transmission of recommendations and the distribution of minutes to members of the Graduate Faculty.

C.  **Order of Business**  
The presiding officer shall determine the order of business and shall provide opportunity for introduction of new business from the floor.

10. **Membership of the Graduate Council**  
The Graduate Council shall be elected by and from the Graduate Faculty. Each school or college shall have at least one representative on the Graduate Council; schools or colleges with large Graduate Faculties may have two or more representatives as deemed appropriate by the Graduate Council and the Dean of the Graduate School. No member of the Faculty Senate will be eligible to serve on the Graduate Council except the representative appointed to the Council by the Faculty Senate. Terms of office shall be for three years, and so arranged that approximately one-third of the membership is elected annually. The President or a designee shall be a non-voting member. The Graduate Dean is a voting member with full rights and privileges except he/she shall not be eligible for the chairmanship. The Associate Graduate Dean shall be a non-voting member. A voting student representative shall be appointed by the Graduate Student Association. A quorum of the Graduate Council shall exist when two-thirds (2/3) of the council membership, other than the Graduate Dean, the graduate student representative and the President or his designee, are present.

11. **Rules of Order by the Graduate Council**  
The Graduate Council shall conduct its meetings according to the latest edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order*. The Chair of the Graduate Council shall appoint a member of the Graduate Council to act as parliamentarian.

12. **Election to the Graduate Council**  
Approximately one-third of the representatives on the Graduate Council shall be elected annually in the spring semester with terms of office to begin immediately following the meeting at which the officers are elected. In years in which there is a reapportionment of representatives, elections shall take place following the reapportionment and representatives shall be elected in accordance with the new apportionment.

Representatives who have resigned or have been removed from office shall be replaced for the remainder of their terms of office by another representative from their college or school elected in
a special election held not later than two months following the resignation or removal.

Each college or school shall elect its representatives to the Graduate Council in accordance with its own Bylaws, provided the nominations and elections are by written secret ballot. Each college or school shall forward the names of newly elected Graduate Council representatives to the Graduate School before the end of the spring semester or in a timely manner after any special election is held.

Representatives may be recalled by a two-thirds vote of the Graduate Faculty in the unit they represent. A recall reelection shall be called by the administrative head of the unit when a petition signed by ten percent of the Graduate Faculty in that unit is presented. The Chair shall be exempt from recall by its unit.

Members of the Graduate Council who are unable to attend a regular or special meeting of the Council may be represented by a proxy of their choice who is a member of the Graduate Faculty. The proxy must be chosen from the absentee’s college or school, and in no case shall be another member of the Graduate Council. Agendas and minutes of the Graduate Council meeting shall be distributed to the Graduate Faculty.

13. **Organization of the Graduate Council**
   A chair and vice-chair shall be elected annually from the membership of the Graduate Council in the spring semester. The chair shall preside at the Graduate Council meetings and shall work with the Graduate Dean to promote graduate education and research. The chair shall appoint members to the standing and ad hoc committees authorized by the Graduate Council. Standing committees are the Bylaws Committee and the Program Review Committee. Ad-hoc committees shall be established by a majority vote of the membership of the Graduate Council, and the chair of the Graduate Council will appoint members to such committees. The vice-chair shall assume responsibilities in the absence of the chair. Upon a two-thirds vote of the entire membership of the Graduate Council, a chair or vice-chair may be removed from office.

14. **Duties and Responsibilities of the Graduate Council**
   The Graduate Council shall review and recommend to the President, through the Academic Vice-President, subject to the approval of the Graduate Dean, policy matters pertaining to graduate education. Recommendations not approved by the Graduate Dean shall be forwarded to the President if, after reconsideration, they are approved by at least a two-thirds majority of the full Council.

   Matters which the Graduate Council shall review and make recommendations on shall include, but not be limited to, graduate teaching, graduate program needs, and graduate student and faculty research. The Graduate Council shall: 1) review and evaluate proposed and existing programs; 2) recommend priorities to be adopted in graduate education, scholarship, and research; and 3) establish standing and ad hoc committees to ensure the orderly discharge of the duties and responsibilities of the Graduate Council. Review and evaluation of existing graduate programs shall be conducted as deemed necessary by a majority vote of the Graduate Council and the Dean.
APPENDIX E

of the Graduate School.