1. Dr. Juan Silva asked for a motion to accept the minutes (September 24, 2010).

Motion to accept the minutes was made by Dr. Meghan Millea and seconded by Dr. David Monts. Dr. Silva pointed out that Ms. Betsy Mordecai will serve on the Conditional Language Admission Subcommittee instead of Ms. Doretta Martin.

Minutes were approved with the correction above.

2. University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC)

No Report.

3. Report from the Office of the Graduate School (OGS)

Dr. D’Abramo was unable to attend the meeting and asked to disseminate the following written report in his absence:

- **Graduate Faculty Reappointment**
The graduate faculty reappointment process for 2011 has begun. Each dean has received a list of those individuals within each department whose terms of appointments have expired June 30, 2011. The reappointment is for all Level 1 and 2 graduate faculty and for all participants. This is the first time OGS has monitored reappointment of Level 2 members.

- **Applications/Admissions to Graduate School**
For spring 2011, there is an 18.6 % increase in applications relative to spring 2010: for AOCE, the increase in applications is 50.0 %. Fall applications and admissions show 9.3 % and 12.3% increases, respectively, over fall 2010 at the same time last year.

- **Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grants (GRAGs)**
Next Friday, October 29, 2010, is the deadline for submission of proposals for the Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grants Program. A maximum of $2,000 is awarded and some
complementary contribution of funds from the department in which the proposal originates is preferred.

- **Fulbright Fellowship Program**
  Five graduate students have submitted applications for the Fulbright Fellowship Program. All applicants have completed the initial process of meeting with the application review team that was followed by completion of Campus Committee Evaluations. The students represent the disciplines of ecology, psychology, engineering, and teaching English. Faculty and staff who were former Fulbright recipients assisted in the evaluation process.

- **Alliance of Graduate Education in Mississippi (AGEM)**
  The Alliance of Graduate Education in Mississippi and the Office of the Graduate School will be hosting the “First Friday Networking Meeting” on Friday, November 5, 2010, from 11:45-1:00 in the John Grisham Room of the Mitchell memorial Library. Ms. Shawanda Stanford, AGEM Doctoral Scholar in Biological Sciences, will make a 15-20 minute presentation about her current research.

- **Workflow/Extender**
  The goal of achieving full implementation of our WorkFlow/Xtender Procedures for graduate admissions is in its final stages. The final two workshops will be held this month (October) and full implementation of paperless document management procedures is scheduled for January 2011.

- **Curriculum Advising and Program Planning**
  Sharon Nobles of the MSU Registrar's office will speak on the introduction of the new Curriculum Advising and Program Planning (CAPPs) system to graduate students at Monday's meeting. This newly designed system will provide graduate faculty and graduate students electronic access to information about course requirements and programs of study. The entire process will help students plan their course of study and ensure that all courses required for graduation have been taken. The system will also provide the Office of the Graduate School with an effective and efficient way to conduct an audit to determine whether all requirements have been fulfilled for conferral of a graduate degree. Input/feedback from graduate students who attend Monday's meeting is sought for improvement to better serve graduate student needs before it is implemented.

- **Changes in range of GRE scores**
  Graduate coordinators will soon have an opportunity to learn about the upcoming (fall 2011) GRE Revised General Test. The scale of GRE scores (quantitative and verbal reasoning) will change from 200 to 800 to 130-170. Analytical writing scores will continue to have the 0-6 scale. In the near future, Associate Dean Bill Person will be providing a presentation about the changes, including justification and interpretation, to interested graduate coordinators.

- **Applications for Graduation**
  A total of 277 applications (master’s, educational specialist, Ph.D.) for fall graduation have been received with 51 being Ph.D. students. The number of Ph.D. students is lower than the number (68) that applied at the same time last year.

Dr. Stephen Cottrell informed Graduate Council about a Fulbright Ambassador information session for faculty and staff interested in participating in a Fulbright program. The event will be held on November 15, between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., in the Colvard Student Union and will be publicized on the MSU Homepage under Events.

5. Report from Graduate Student Association (GSA)
GSA President Luke Fowler presented the following report:

GSA held a meeting on September 29 which had the highest attendance in recent history with about 45 graduate students attending. The new GSA Facebook and Twitter pages were introduced and representatives from the Mitchell Memorial Library presented an overview of the new SCOPUS database and the new library website.

The next GSA meeting is scheduled for October 25 and will feature Associate Registrar Ms. Sharon Nobles. She will introduce the CAPPS (Curriculum, Advising, and Program Planning) system which will be implemented for graduate students in the near future and solicit feedback from graduate students.

6. Old Business

a) Graduate Student Grievance Process (Subcommittee Report Dr. Dooley - Handout)

Grievance Subcommittee Chair Dr. Kathy Dooley explained that another draft of the grievance policy was disseminated electronically for review. She stated that no vote from Graduate Council on the document is expected at this time but urged the Graduate Council members to review the document and submit comments to her so the document can be voted on during the next meeting.

Discussion followed. Dr. Millea requested that Dean of Students Dr. Thomas Bourgeois be included in the next subcommittee meeting.

Dr. Silva referred to the Graduate Council Minutes of May 7, 2010 which included a suggestion by Dr. D’Abramo regarding the proper process to deal with graduate student grievances. He suggested that the process start with the student’s department, followed by a review by the Dean of Students. If deemed necessary, the Dean of Students will forward the grievance to the Dean of the Graduate School who would submit the grievance for review by the Grievance Panel.

Dr. Dooley explained why the subcommittee was formed and what the grievance policy is supposed to address that is not already addressed by another policy already in place.

It was determined that the 45 day time line is far too long to assure due process. What about students on assistantship or on a federal grant?

Dr. Rafael Hernandez stated his concerns concerning this sentence in the grievance policy draft: “It is not expected that every person be cognizant of those cultural traditions or customs, but once known a faculty member should respect them to insure a graduate student’s ability to make satisfactory progress toward graduation.” He questioned how cultural traditions would affect progress toward graduation.

Dr. Russell Carr countered that this sentence also has implications for research. He gave the example of graduate students being admitted to do animal research in the Vet School
and later the department discovered that their cultural tradition prevents them from handling certain animals. This type of information is not disclosed.

Dr. Millea pointed out that graduate students are often times employees (on assistantship) and students at the same time. She suggested that Human Resources be involved in the discussion.

Dr. Dooley pointed out that Step 3 should be revised to read “If the behavior of the faculty or administrator continues after intervention by the department head or other administrator, or the graduate student is not satisfied with the response from the department head, the student will contact the Dean of Student’s office.” Currently, the sentence just says “Dean’s office” but does not specify which dean. Dr. Dooley stated that she will make the change in the document to say Dean of Student’s office.

Dr. Silva urged Graduate Council members to send their comments to Dr. Dooley via email as soon as possible. The issue will be on the agenda again at the next meeting.

b) Automatic Dismissal of Graduate Students (Subcommittee Report Dr. Wise - Handout)

Dr. Wise stated that the subcommittee consisting of Drs. Allen, Monts and Ryan as well as Ms. Karin Lee came to the conclusion that a uniform policy for automatic dismissal based on some set of criteria is not possible since every department has a different policy and the degree programs are so varied. However, the subcommittee determined that the clarification in wording is needed in the Graduate Bulletin and made a recommendation to the Provost to require the establishment of a Graduate Studies Committee in every graduate program.

Dr. Wise pointed out that the cumulative GPA currently reported on a student’s transcript incorporates all classes a student has taken in graduate status. However, CAPP will be useful to separate the GPA on a student’s program and NOT include any coursework that is not part of the student’s current program of study.

Dr. Wise inquired whether it would be possible in CAPP to send an automatic email to the student and advisor (or other designated person) that will alert them when the degree program GPA has fallen below a 3.0 and automatically place the student on hold which would prevent further registration. Associate Registrar Ms. Sharon Nobles agreed to investigate the possibility of such an automated email from CAPPS.

Dr. Allen made a motion to add to the wording in the Graduate Bulletin on Page 56 (in bold), last sentence in the last paragraph under Academic Performance to read: “Individual programs have the right to establish their own criteria that defines satisfactory academic performance and progress toward completion of a degree, so long as these are at least as stringent as those of the University.” Dr. Wise seconded the motion.
Graduate Council members voted and approved the modification to include the additional wording.

Dr. Wise made a motion that the Graduate Council formally recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School and the Provost to require that all graduate programs develop a formal process for identifying and adjudicating graduate academic probation cases. This process should be detailed in the Graduate Bulletin and in the departmental Graduate Student Handbook. Dr. Millea seconded the motion.

Graduate Council members voted to approve the motion.

Dr. Wise made a motion that the Graduate Council makes a formal recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School and to the Provost to require the establishment of a Graduate Faculty Committee in every graduate program with the Graduate Coordinator as chair or ex-officio chair. This committee would handle all probation/dismissal actions within the program. Dr. Allen seconded the motion.

Graduate Council members voted and the motion was approved.

c) Revision of Wording/Signatures on Graduate Student Diplomas (Subcommittee Report Millea - Handout)

Dr. Meghan Millea stated that the Graduate Council had previously unanimously supported a recommendation that the Dean of the Graduate School’s signature replace the signature of the Academic Dean on all graduate diplomas. Since Graduate Council has already expressed strong support and no formal request has been made to change the previous recommendation, Graduate Council will stand by its previous recommendation to replace the signature of the Academic Dean with the signature of the Dean of the Graduate School.

d) Conditional Language Admission (Subcommittee Report Monts)

Subcommittee Chair Dr. David Monts stated that the subcommittee has not met yet and deferred his report to the next meeting.

e) Aiken Village Letter (Silva - Handout)

Graduate Council discussed the letter. Recommendation was made to address the letter to Vice President for Student Affairs in addition to the President and the Provost. Dr. David Lewis suggested that this bullet be included in the letter: “Many of these international students are/will become ambassadors in their countries, passing the word to others about MSU and what it has to offer, referring others to MSU, and working with MSU.

Dr. Wise made a motion to send the letter with the aforementioned changes. Dr. Tim Barnett seconded the motion.
Graduate Council members unanimously approved to send the Aiken Village letter to the President, Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs.

7. New Business

No new business submitted.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

The date for the next Graduate Council meeting has been set for Friday, November 19, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. in 611 Allen Hall (third Friday due to Thanksgiving Holidays).
Report from the subcommittee on Graduate Diplomas:

MSU degrees are conferred by the President of the Board of Trustees, the President of the University and a dean. Prior to 1999, the Dean of the Graduate School conferred graduate degrees. After the Graduate School was abolished in 1999, the signatory authority of conferring graduate degrees was distributed to the deans of the individual academic college.

There are several ways to consider the diploma:

1: Review what peer institutions do.

The MSU Office of the Graduate School surveyed several peer institutions. For Very High Research Activity universities, over half the signature of the Graduate Dean, 2 of 19 have the Academic Dean’s signature and the Graduate Dean’s signature, 1 has both Deans’ signature. Of the schools with the “High Research Activity” designation, 80% had the Graduate Dean’s signature on the diploma, but none had the Academic Dean’s signature.

2: Review what MSU has historically done (From the Office of the Registrar)

Prior to there being a Graduate School and Dean, the College Deans signed the diplomas. Upon the creation of the Graduate School the college name was replaced by "The Graduate School" and the Graduate Dean's signature replaced the College Dean. In 1999, the diplomas reverted back to College Deans replacing Graduate Dean.

3: Review what the signature represents:

The diploma confers the degree. Is the degree a “Master of Education” conferred by the Graduate School, thus a university award? Or is the degree a “Master of Education” conferred by the College of Education? Conferred means that the student has completed a prescribe course of studies. Which unit is responsible for overseeing the completion of the course of studies?

From our Grad bulletin:

Degree Completion
To fulfill degree completion requirements, the student must have completed all University and degree program requirements as listed in the Graduate Bulletin under which he/she was admitted to the program.

Options:

a) Leave the diploma as it is with the College Dean’s signature.
b) Change the diploma to reflect the reinstated Graduate School
c) Put both College Dean’s and Graduate Dean’s signature on the diploma

Considerations:

Changing the wording on the degrees requires input from the Registrar and ITS.
Department of Food Science, Nutrition and Health Promotion

October 22, 2010

Dr. Mark Keenum, President
Dr. Jerry Gilbert, Provost and Executive Vice President
Dr. William Kibler, Vice President for Student Affairs
Mississippi State University

Re: Closing of Aiken Village

Dear Drs. Keenum, Gilbert and Kibler:

This letter is a reflection of the sentiment of the MSU Graduate Council with respect to the closing of on-campus married student housing, otherwise known as Aiken Village.

Continuing to provide housing for married students is critical for MSU's ability to retain and recruit graduate students. University housing is particularly important for international students who have tremendous need for the convenience and economics available through university housing. They need flexibility in terms of deposits and durations of lease contracts that are not available in the private sector. These students benefit from the proximity of Aiken Village to campus, shuttle transportation, and an informal network of shared resources and the sense of community. Graduate Council members stated a few of the reasons for the continued need of Aiken Village:

- It is a multicultural community with constant international interactions.
- For many international students it is their first American experience, providing strong support groups that they desperately need in the first semester they are here; helping them navigate a new culture.
- Initially most international students don't have vehicles, a driver's license, or don't know how to drive. Aiken Village is within walking/biking distance to campus and they can catch the shuttle.
- Many international students do not have lines of credit, bank accounts established, parents to co-sign, etc. Until these are established, it is difficult/impossible to sign contracts/paying deposits, etc.
- It also provides a safe-family oriented community for our older students with families.
- Many of these international students are/will become ambassadors in their countries, passing the word to others about MSU and what it has to offer, referring others to MSU, and working with MSU.

With this letter, the Graduate Council unanimously requests the university to continue its commitment to married students housing not only because it serves critical needs for graduate students and their families, but also because providing affordable, accessible housing supports the critical role that graduate students have in supporting the university's mission of teaching, research, and service.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Juan L. Silva, Chair
MSU Graduate Council

cc: MSU Graduate Council
MSU Faculty Senate
REPORT OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE
Consideration of a Uniform Dismissal Policy

1. The Subcommittee, after much discussion and after a partial survey of graduate programs, concludes that a comprehensive, uniform policy for dismissal of graduate students is not possible and would not be wise.

2. The Subcommittee observed that some departments have criteria and a formal process for identifying and adjudicating academic probation cases for graduate students. We recommend that all departments with graduate programs develop their own formal process for identifying and adjudicating academic probation cases for graduate students. This process should be detailed in the department's Graduate Student Handbook.

3. The Subcommittee urges the Provost to require the establishment of a Graduate Studies Committee in every academic department with a graduate program, with the Graduate Coordinator as chair or ex-officio chair. This committee would handle all probation/ dismissal actions within the department/ program.

4. The Subcommittee is convinced that computer technology will soon be available that will greatly facilitate the uniform handling of probation/ dismissal decisions, with the capability of monitoring by the OGS.

5. The Subcommittee suggests the following change to the Graduate Bulletin on p. 56: (add the language in bold, underline to the sentence indicated below).

Graduate Bulletin, p. 56: Academic Performance
Continuous enrollment in the University or in a specific graduate program is dependent upon satisfactory academic performance and progress toward the completion of a specific degree program. A student’s progress is considered satisfactory unless determined to be unsatisfactory by the department and/or the dean of the college offering the program. Unsatisfactory performance may be defined as the failure to maintain a B average in graduate courses attempted after admission to the program; a grade of U, D, or F in any course; more than two grades below a B; failure of the comprehensive/preliminary examination; unsatisfactory evaluation of a thesis or dissertation; failure of the research defense; or any other failure of a required component of one’s program of study. Any one of these or any combination of these may constitute the basis for the termination of a student’s graduate study in a degree program. Individual programs have the right to establish their own criteria that define academic performance and progress toward completion of a degree, so long as these are at least as stringent as those of the University.

6. The Subcommittee notes that "B average" in the Graduate Bulletin (p. 56, italics above) is not the same as the “Cumulative GPA” on the transcript for some students. The Registrar's cumulative graduate GPA is calculated from first admission to the University, not admission to a specific graduate program.

Respectfully submitted:

Dwayne Wise, Arts and Sciences, Chair
Edward Allen, Engineering
Karin Lee, Office of the Graduate School
David Monts, Arts and Sciences
Draft of Graduate Student Grievance Policy

Submitted by Dr. Kathy Dooley (Chair), Ms. Beth Rauhaus, Dr. Radha Srinivasan and Dr. David Lewis

Introduction

Mississippi State University recognizes the importance of ensuring the welfare of its graduate students. When a situation arises in which a graduate student or group of graduate students believe that unfair, unprofessional, or inappropriate treatment/behavior has occurred relative to a faculty member or administrator, the person or persons who have committed the alleged grievance will be made to respond to the allegation(s) expeditiously and justly.

Mississippi State University is a diverse academic environment dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, the development of future professionals, professors, and researchers. In accord with these concerns, this policy defines: 1) recommended good practices to prevent abuse of authority and responsibility that constitute harassment or discrimination and that prevent a graduate student's satisfactory academic progress; and, 2) provide for all parties guidelines, practices, and grievance procedures to resolve issues using a recommended procedure... The purpose of this policy is to address those issues and regulations not governed by existing academic operating and/or employment policies applicable to graduate students.

As a public research university, Mississippi State University has graduate students who come from diverse backgrounds and over 75 countries. The University and its faculty are dedicated to the development of future professionals, educators and researchers in many fields. The purpose of this policy is to address those issues and regulations not governed by other existing academic operating procedures and/or employment policies applicable to graduate students. This policy provides: 1) recommended good practices to prevent abuse of authority and, 2) guidelines, practices, and grievance procedures to resolve issues.

Faculty members are obligated to: 1) “evaluate fairly and impartially [a] student's work. Such evaluation should be consistent with recognized standards and must not be influenced by issues such as religion, race, sex, political views, or be based on the student's agreement with the teacher's opinion on controversial issues in the discipline; 2) protect the student's freedom to learn, especially when that freedom is threatened by repressive or disruptive action; 3) serve as an intellectual guide and counselor to students, be available for private conferences, provide accurate information and assist students in achieving their academic goals; 4) demonstrate respect for the student and treat the faculty-student relationship with confidence; and, 5) avoid any exploitation of students for personal advantage.... especially those vulnerable to the faculty member's authority (emphasis added).” (MSU Faculty Handbook)

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1 This policy does not apply to graduate student grievances such as disputes over joint authorship of research, grade appeals, scientific misconduct, dismissal from graduate standing, placement on probationary status, denial of readmission, and other administrative or academic decisions that terminate or otherwise impede progress toward academic or professional degree goals.
The reasons for harassment/discrimination of graduate students may emerge from the behaviors and personality issues of a faculty member or administrator and/or the perceived and actual power differential between faculty and graduate students. To mitigate the sources of abuse, it is essential that each department provide an academic environment that is supportive and accommodating to the needs of graduate students. The department should take immediate action to correct problems when instances of abuse of graduate students are identified. Faculty should minimize non-academic relationships that may constitute dual relationships with graduate students.

Problems between faculty, professional staff, or administrators and graduate students may emerge from behaviors and personality and/or the perceived and actual power differentials between faculty and graduate students. To mitigate the sources of conflict, it is essential that each department provide an academic environment that is supportive and accommodating to the needs of graduate students. The department should take immediate action to correct problems when instances of faculty and graduate student(s) problems are identified. Faculty should minimize non-academic relationships that may constitute dual relationships with graduate students.

A significant cause of grievances derives from both what is intended and how it is perceived. A single instance of minor misbehavior may not constitute abuse, but deliberate misbehavior (a behavior that persists after a verifiable request to stop) constitutes harassment. To ensure that there is no gap between intention and perception, the recipient of inappropriate behavior should inform the faculty or administrator about their discomfort or distress.

The actual as well as the perceived power differential between faculty and graduate students may be perceived as more crucial for international students than for domestic students. Insomuch as, the policy requires all parties to treat every graduate student equally, it should be noted that international students have a pronounced sensitivity to the power differential with faculty and administrators. This may be due to their lack of familiarity with the customs of the United States and/or specific customs of their country. International students who choose to study at Mississippi State University do not leave their cultural traditions or customs at home. It is not expected that every person be cognizant of those cultural traditions or customs, but once known a faculty member should respect them to insure a graduate student’s ability to make satisfactory progress toward graduation. Due to the additional burden of maintaining a student visa immigration compliance to remain at Mississippi State University, international students are more susceptible to the behaviors of faculty. The Office of the Graduate School and the University are aware of these circumstances for international graduate students and make efforts to address problems between international graduate students and faculty in such situations by coordinating with the international students’ office with the Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) and/or Responsible Officer (RO) and other units of the University.

**Good Practices.** To increase positive interactions between graduate students and faculty:

1. The Graduate School will develop workshops for faculty and administrators that sensitize them to the specific needs and issues of graduate students.
2. Academic units will either develop their own or encourage attendance at workshops and conferences that encourage positive faculty-student relationships.
3. The Graduate School and graduate departments should distribute this grievance policy to faculty, administrators and graduate students during initial orientation and included in the Graduate Student Handbook.
4. Disciplinary action against erring faculty to deter future abuses.
5. Graduate school, other administrative officials and the graduate grievance panel should meet with the department head where the violation took place about how to eliminate future abuses and improve the academic environment in the department.

Grievance Procedures

Two principles must be followed during the grievance procedure. The first is Preponderance of Evidence. If a graduate student believes that a faculty member or other person has acted inappropriately, then that graduate student must gather evidence that illustrates both the Deliberate Misbehavior of the faculty member and the graduate student's reaction and response. This evidence may be in the form of an emails, letters, or other forms of written documentation. The second principle is Without Retaliation. At no time during the process, should a faculty member or other person take any form of action that could be considered retaliation against the graduate student who has put forth submitted the grievance.

Procedure

Procedure is defined as the process of resolution in which the graduate student contacts the faculty or administrator who has committed the violation grievance, and if needed additional personnel up to the level of the graduate student’s college dean to resolve the situation. The graduate student could also start this procedure with the Graduate School and/or with any other appropriate administrative unit of the university such as Human Resources, the Office of Diversity and Equity Programs, or any member of the graduate grievance panel.

Step 1. Contact the faculty member or administrator with whom the graduate student has the grievance. It is strongly recommended that the student to send an email or make contact in writing. In an informal meeting, the student should explain his or her position and ask the faculty member or administrator to stop cease engaging in the behavior(s) in question.

Step 2. If the behavior of the faculty or administrator who has committed the violation persists, then the graduate student should notify the department head of the faculty member or the immediate supervisor of the administrator. The graduate student will provide him/her the administrator with a copy of the email or written correspondence noting the date of the request to desist and ask them to question the faculty member or administrator arbitrate the matter. Ask The department head to will notify you the graduate student after he/she speaks with the faculty member or administrator who has committed the violation. Once you have heard from the department head, send a response to thank them for their action and to note the date of the conversation.

Step 3. If the behavior of the faculty or administrator who has committed the violation continues after the conversation intervention by with the department head or other administrator, or you the graduate student is not satisfied with the response from the department head, the student will contact the Dean’s office and speak with the appropriate person in that office. Once you have met with the Dean about the grievance; send him/her a response to thank them for their action and to
note the date of the conversation. If the student is not satisfied with these procedures he/she may ask for intervention by the Graduate School.

Written Complaint and Formal Investigation

Formal investigation is defined as the process of investigation wherein the Dean of the Graduate School convenes a review committee to investigate and recommend a resolution to the Provost, who will pronounce the final decision.

A formal investigation is convened when the graduate student submits a written complaint. The Graduate School will promptly designate a committee to investigate the complaint.

Responsibilities of the Investigating Committee

The person designated to investigate the allegation will inform the graduate student that:

1. The manner and frequency with which the graduate student will be updated about the status of the investigation.
2. The need for a high level of discretion during the investigatory process.
3. Ensure that there is no retaliation against the graduate student.

Normally within 5 working days of receipt of the assignment, the Investigating Committee will advise of and provide the faculty or administrator who is alleged to have committed the violation with:

1. The specific allegations and a copy of the written complaint.
2. The manner and frequency in which the faculty member or administrator will be updated about the status of the investigation.
3. The need for all parties to exercise a high level of discretion during the investigatory process and the University’s policy with respect to retaliation.
4. An opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint within 10 working days of notification of the complaint.

Investigation

1. The purpose of the investigation is to gather facts.
2. Depending upon the facts of the case, an investigation may range from a one-on-one conversation between the investigating committee and the two parties to an inquiry with multiple witness interviews. The investigating committee will produce a written finding of facts at the conclusion of the investigation.
3. The investigation committee decision shall be made on the "preponderance of evidence" standard. Any finding against an individual or department on the subject of grievance must be supported by a preponderance of the evidence.
4. Investigations should normally be completed within 45 calendar days from the date the complaint was first asserted. If this is not reasonably possible, the investigation committee
should make the grievant and the faculty or administrator who is alleged to have committed the violation aware of the status of the review and provide an estimated conclusion date.

**Submission of Investigative Report**

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigation official shall submit the report to the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon receipt of the investigative report, the Dean of the Graduate School shall review the report and submit an initial determination to the Provost that states that a violation of the policy either did or did not occur. If an initial determination is that a violation did occur, then the Dean shall also submit an initial proposal to the Provost stating what "prompt remedial action" the Dean considers appropriate, including potential disciplinary action. The Provost will make the final determination as to what actions, if any, be taken.

**Notification of Decision and Appeal Process**

Upon conclusion of the determination process, the complainant and respondent will receive a written copy of the Provost's decision. The faculty/administrator who is alleged to have committed the violation may appeal the decision in writing, within 10 working days, to the Provost. The appeal must be based on (a) new facts not previously available, (b) the sanction is arbitrarily harsh or capricious, and/or (c) procedures were not followed that substantially affected the result. The Provost will render a final decision within 15 working days. This decision completes the university process.

**General Advice to Graduate Students in Pursuing Grievance Procedure – Students are recommended to use their discretion in following these suggestions**

1. The University provides counseling services which are a resource for all Mississippi State students when they have experienced stressful or difficult situations. Graduate students may wish to avail themselves of counseling services which are provided by the Student Counseling Services at 115C Hathorn Hall on Magruder Street. Student Counseling Services can be reached at 325-2091. Counseling services are provided without charge to registered Mississippi State students and communication with counselors is strictly confidential.

2. In the case of International Graduate Students, they are strongly advised to keep the International Student Office – Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) and/or Responsible Officer (RO) updated about the grievance.

3. Maintain a daily diary of events to ensure a chronological record is readily available and so that the student does not forget the sequence of events surrounding the grievance.

4. Change the major adviser if the current major adviser is the person against whom the grievance was lodged.

5. Keep copies of written communications that are involved in the grievance and any further communication from the faculty member or administrator against whom the grievance was lodged.
Appendix: Pertinent Contacts and Links

HRM Policy on Employee Conduct: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/60401.html

Faculty Grievance Procedures: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/1305.html

Code of Student Conduct: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/91100.html


Dissent, Disruption, and Academic Freedom: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/91109.html

Ethics in Research and Other Scholarly Activities: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/8002.html

Extended Orientation for International Students: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/91177.html

Academic Freedom: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/1311.html

Grade Appeal and Academic Review Board: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/1314.html

Harassment Training for Supervisors: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/0304.html

Graduate Student Association: http://www.grad.msstate.edu/current/orgs/gsa/

International Admissions & Services: http://www.admissions.msstate.edu/international/

Ethics in Research and Other Scholarly Activities at MS: http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/8002.html

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