2013-2014 Student Handbook changes/updates to be approved by MES Faculty

Proposal #1 regarding thesis wording

**Current Wording:**

Students must finish all four core classes as well as 12 credits of electives before beginning their thesis project. A major requirement for satisfactory work on the thesis is timely completion. Students are required to finish their thesis in the Winter and Spring quarters of their final year, and thesis presentations are scheduled for the end of Spring quarter. In certain cases, with permission from the student’s reader, a student may extend thesis work through the following Summer quarter or Fall quarter. Failure to complete on time may result in a report of No Credit, and will require the student to re-enroll in thesis credits the following Winter and Spring quarters to work on a new thesis. Students who are allowed by their reader to continue work on their thesis project after registering for their total number of thesis credits are required to take an additional two credits each quarter that involves faculty effort until completion; this includes the quarter in which the thesis is submitted and the final public presentation is made. The extra thesis credits taken do not count toward the student’s degree.

**Proposed Wording (changes/questions highlighted):**

Students must finish all four core classes as well as 12 credits of electives before beginning their thesis project. A major requirement for satisfactory work on the thesis is timely completion. Students are required to finish their thesis in the Winter and Spring quarters of their final year, and thesis presentations are scheduled for the end of Spring quarter. In certain cases, with permission from the student’s reader, a student may extend thesis work through the following Summer quarter or Fall quarter (is this how we want to word this?). Failure to complete on time will result in a report of No Credit, and will require the student to re-enroll in thesis credits the following Winter and Spring quarters to work on a new thesis. If a reader gives a report of No Credit based on the student’s quality of work, the student will be withdrawn from the program. Students who are allowed by their reader to continue work on their thesis project after registering for their total number of thesis credits are required to take an additional two credits each quarter that involves faculty effort until completion; this includes the quarter in which the thesis is submitted and the final public presentation is made. The extra thesis credits taken do not count toward the student’s degree.

**DECIDED WORDING**

Students must finish all four core classes as well as 12 credits of electives before enrolling in thesis credits. A major requirement for satisfactory work on the thesis is timely completion. Failure to complete on time will result in a filing of No Credit by the reader, and the student will be withdrawn from the program. Readers may also file No Credit based on the student’s quality and/or quantity of work, leading to the student being withdrawn from the program.

Students are required to work on their thesis in the Winter and Spring quarters of their final year with completion in the Spring quarter; thesis presentations are scheduled for the end of Spring quarter. In rare cases, with permission from the student’s reader and the Director, a student may extend thesis work through the following Summer quarter. Students who are allowed by their reader to continue work on their thesis project after registering for their total number of thesis credits are required to take an additional four credits each quarter that involves faculty effort until completion; this includes the quarter in which the thesis is submitted and the final public presentation is made. The extra thesis credits taken do not count toward the student’s degree.

Students who receive a No Credit for their thesis, and are thus withdrawn from the program, may petition the Director if they wish to re-enroll in thesis credits the following Winter and Spring quarters to work on a new thesis (if they have not already exceeded the four year degree completion time limit).

Proposal #2 regarding grievance procedures

**Current Wording:**

The following grievance procedures are to be used by MES students, faculty, and staff when disagreements arise outside of disputes about the evaluation of work or award of credit:

 1. An individual with a significant, uncomfortable, interpersonal conflict with a classmate, faculty instructor, or staff member is encouraged to resolve the concern directly with the other person. In instances when an individual experiences excessive discomfort or the potential of threat, perhaps due to the other party’s power differential, the issue may first be taken up with the Director or Assistant Director.

2. At any point during the resolution process, a student involved in the process may seek a third party to assist in achieving resolution. Contact Evergreen's CARE Network at 360-867-5291 for mediation help. The Director or Assistant Director may also be contacted for assistance.

3. If resolution cannot be achieved as a result of the above, the grievance may be filed in accordance with the formal campus grievance procedures. For grievances against students, Andrea Seabert-Olsen (ext. 6891) serves as the College Grievance Officer. Grievances against faculty or staff should be referred to the Director. Grievances based on perceived or suspected discrimination should be directed to the Evergreen Civil Rights Officer, Nicole Ack (ext. 5371).

**Questions to determine new wording:**

* We don’t have any wording about grievances with the director – who should those grievances go to – the curriculum dean? The Provost?
* We don’t mention anything about a grievance committee (made up of faculty) – how do we include them?

## Here is what MPA says – should we use some or all of this wording? This is taken from [(WAC 174-120-015)](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?dispo=true&cite=174-120):

*The following grievance procedures in accordance with* [*Evergreen’s Social Contract and Student Conduct code*](http://www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/rightsandresponsibilities.htm) *are to be used by MPA students, faculty, and staff when disagreements arise outside of disputes about the evaluation of work:*

1. *An individual with a concern about another is encouraged to resolve the concern directly with the other person.*
2. *At any point during the resolution process, a student involved in the process may seek a third party to assist in achieving resolution. Evergreen’s Center for Mediation Services (360-867-6656), the MPA Director or the Assistant Director for your cohort may be contacted for assistance.*
3. *If resolution cannot be achieved as a result of the above, the grievance may be filed in accordance with the formal campus grievance procedures. For grievances against students, contact the Campus Grievance Officer,* [*Andrea Seabert Olsen*](http://www.evergreen.edu/scripts/contact.php?sm=seabert2&sub=Email%20from%20the%20MPA%20Site&title=Contact%20Andrea%20Seabert%20Olsen) *at 867-5113. For grievances against faculty or staff, contact Academic Dean* [*Bill Ransom*](http://www.evergreen.edu/scripts/contact.php?sm=ransomb&sub=Email%20from%20the%20MPA%20Site&title=Contact%20Bill%20Ransom) *at 360-867-6880.*

**DECIDED WORDING**

The following grievance procedures are to be used by MES students, faculty, and staff when disagreements arise outside of disputes about the evaluation of work or award of credit:

 1. An individual with a significant, uncomfortable, interpersonal conflict with a classmate, faculty instructor, or staff member is encouraged to resolve the concern directly with the other person. In instances when an individual experiences excessive discomfort or the potential of threat, perhaps due to the other party’s power differential, the issue may first be taken up with the Director or Assistant Director.

2. At any point during the resolution process, a student involved in the process may seek a third party to assist in achieving resolution. Contact Evergreen's CARE Network at 360-867-5291 for mediation help. The Director or Assistant Director may also be contacted for assistance.

3. If resolution cannot be achieved as a result of the above, the grievance may be filed in accordance with the formal campus grievance procedures. For grievances against students, Andrea Seabert-Olsen (ext. 6891) serves as the College Grievance Officer. Grievances against faculty or staff should be referred to the Director. If the grievance is against the Director, the Director will forward the grievance to the MES Grievance Committee. Grievances based on perceived or suspected discrimination should be directed to the Evergreen Civil Rights Officer, Nicole Ack (ext. 5371).

Proposal #3 regarding Academic Appeals

**Current Wording**

All appeals of evaluation wording and credit are governed by the college's policy on Amending Student Records, which in turn is governed by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This policy can be viewed in the online Faculty Handbook at [www.evergreen.edu/policies/policy/amendingstudentrecords](http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/policy/amendingstudentrecords). Specifically, review by an academic dean is restricted to items of fact, and a student does not have a right to a hearing with an academic dean regarding a disagreement with the faculty member's judgment about the quality of work or award of credit.

**Questions to determine new wording:**

* Should this section be called “Amending Faculty Evaluations” vs. “Academic Appeals?” This is in line with the college.
* The college’s policy on amending student records is written for undergrads – should we incorporate the Director? Here is the college’s wording:

*Every quarter faculty write evaluations of students. The evaluation is a statement of the quality and quantity of student work as perceived by the faculty member based on her/his professional judgment.* ***A student does not have a right to a hearing with an academic dean (should this say Director? And, if the faculty in question is also the director, should it then say ‘dean?’) regarding a disagreement with the faculty member's professional academic judgment about the quality of work or award of credit.***

***In matters related to faculty evaluations of students, students are expected to first talk with, or write to, the faculty member who signed the evaluation within 30 calendar days from the date the final evaluation was received by the student. (The exception to this time limit is when an evaluation is received at the end of spring quarter and either the student or faculty member will be absent from the institution during the summer, in which case the student needs to contact the faculty member within 30 calendar days from the date classes begin the subsequent fall quarter.)*** *The* only *exception to the requirement to contact the faculty member directly is when the case may involve issues of discrimination. In such cases, while students are still strongly encouraged to talk directly with the faculty member involved, they are not required to do so. Students should consult the Special Assistant to the President for Civil Rights in any case which may involve illegal discrimination, including sexual harassment, as defined by state and federal statutes.*

*If resolution cannot be reached with the faculty member responsible for the evaluation, then, in cases of a team-taught program, the student is expected to talk with, or write to, the faculty team for the program. The faculty team must respond to the student within 20 calendar days. If the faculty team decides not amend the evaluation as requested by the student, the team shall inform the student in writing of their decision and the student has 30 calendar days to request a hearing from an academic dean (director?). The team or the academic deans (director’s?)office shall provide the student with a form to be used to request a hearing.( What if the student is not in a team-taught program? Does it go straight to the dean? Or director?)*

*When an academic dean (again, should this be the director?) receives a request for hearing, s/he will then determine if the case is appropriate for a hearing. This will require the dean to determine: 1) that the student's request is not based merely on a disagreement with a faculty member's professional judgment; 2) that the student's basis for requesting an amendment addresses factual errors, misleading statements of a factual nature, or statements which violate individual privacy or other rights as related to FERPA; and, 3) that the request is being made on a timely basis (within 30 calendar days from the date the faculty member or the faculty team sent the student notice of their decision).*

*If the dean (director?) determines that the case is not appropriate for review, s/he will notify the involved parties in writing, stating the specific reasons for the determination, within 20 calendar days. Since the record would remain unchanged and no hearing would occur in this case, the student would retain the right to place a statement in his/her self-evaluation commenting on the contested information and/or stating why the student disagrees with the final decision.*

*If the dean (director?) determines that the case is appropriate for review, a hearing will be scheduled within a reasonable time, not to exceed 45 calendar days. The dean will serve as the hearings officer. The dean will give the student and faculty member notice of the date, time, and place, reasonably in advance of the hearing. Minimally, the hearing will include: 1) an opportunity for the student to present her/his case, including the submittal of any supporting evidence; and, 2) an opportunity for the faculty member to submit evidence to support his/her decision. The student may, at his/her own expense, be assisted or represented by one or more individuals of his/her own choice, including an attorney, at the hearing. Either party to the contested record must give advance notice if it is their intent to be represented by counsel at the hearing. In cases where the student exercises this option, the college will also have an attorney present.*

*The dean (director?) will make a timely decision based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. This decision will include appropriate action to be taken with the evaluation, which may include amending the evaluation. The dean must write a summary of the evidence and the reasons (based solely on evidence presented at the hearing), for the final decision to the involved parties. If the faculty member responsible for the evaluation still disagrees to amending the evaluation, the dean will write and sign the amended evaluation of the student.*

*If the dean (director?)does not find the information in the faculty evaluation of the student to be factually inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student as related to FERPA, and the record of the student remains unchanged, the student has the right to place a statement in his/her self-evaluation commenting on the contested information and/or stating why the student disagrees with the final decisions*