



The University of Georgia

University Council
Athens, Georgia 30602

October 2, 2009

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal to offer a non-thesis option under the major in Foods and Nutrition (M.S.) will be an agenda item for the October 9, 2009, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley, Chair
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Dr. Arnett C. Mace, Jr.
Professor Jere W. Morehead

Proposal to Add a Non-thesis Option to the MS in Foods and Nutrition
Department of Foods and Nutrition (9/16/09)

To be Submitted to:

Dr. Maureen Grasso
Dean, Graduate School
320 E. Clayton St., Suite 400
University of Georgia

Prepared by:

Dr. Mary Ann Johnson, Graduate Coordinator, and FDN Graduate Committee
Department of Foods and Nutrition
University of Georgia

Basic Information:

Proposed Change: Non-thesis option for students pursuing a non-research, professionally-oriented program of study.

Starting Date: Fall 2010 or as soon as it is approved

Program Description:

A non-thesis option is requested for the MS degree with a major in foods and nutrition. This option would be elected by students who do not plan to complete a Ph.D. and who are pursuing careers in allied health, business and/or government that require understanding of published research, but do not require extensive experience conducting research. Examples of such careers are in community nutrition, extension service, clinical nutrition, dietetics, other allied health fields, school nutrition, food industry, and/or regulatory affairs. Professionals in these career paths are typically consumers of research that is used for program planning, policy development, or counseling. The non-thesis path is particularly well-suited for developing skills that will enable these professionals to be lifelong learners and consumers of new and emerging information. This initiative is consistent with the department's goal to enhance and broaden its graduate program and increase graduate enrollment.

General and department requirements for the MS with thesis option will not change and are shown in the table on the next page. The table also shows the similarities and differences between the thesis and proposed non-thesis options which are:

1. The thesis option requires 30 credits, while the non-thesis option requires 36 credits.
2. Both programs require the same core of 15 credits in FDNS and 12 credits of coursework open only to graduate students, not counting research credits. A course name change will be requested to change the name of FDNS 8560 from "FDNS 8560 Dissertation/Thesis Proposal Writing" to "FDNS 8560 Proposal Writing."

| Current MS with Thesis | Proposed MS Non-Thesis |
|---|---|
| Core: 15 credits in FDNS | Core: 15 credits in FDNS |
| (4) FDNS 4100/6100 Micronutrient Nutrition or FDNS elective | (4) FDNS 4100/6100 Micronutrient Nutrition or FDNS elective |
| (4) FDNS 6400 Advanced Macronutrients | (4) FDNS 6400 Advanced Macronutrients |
| (2) FDNS 8560 Proposal Writing | (2) FDNS 8560 Proposal Writing |
| (1) FDNS 8580 Special Topics in Foods and Nutrition (concurrent with FDNS 8560) | (1) FDNS 8580 Special Topics in Foods and Nutrition (concurrent with FDNS 8560) |
| (2) FDNS 8900 Seminar in Foods and Nutrition | (2) FDNS 8900 Seminar in Foods and Nutrition |
| (2-3) FDNS 6000 graduate only level, FDNS(EPID) 5040/7040, FDNS 8530, or FDNS 8550 | (2-3) FDNS 6000 graduate only level, FDNS(EPID) 5040/7040, FDNS 8530, or FDNS 8550 |
| Statistics: 3 credits | Statistics: 3 credits |
| (3) Statistics in BIOS, ERSR, STAT or related area | (3) Statistics in BIOS, ERSR, STAT or related area |
| Electives: 6 credits | Electives: 15 credits |
| FDNS courses or related courses outside the department at the 6000, 7000, or 8000 level | (6) FDNS courses at the 6000 level (maximum 6 credits) |
| | (9) FDNS courses at the 7000 or 8000 level and/or related courses outside the department at the 6000, 7000, or 8000 level |
| Thesis: 6 credits | Project: 3 credits |
| (3) FDNS 7000 | (3) FDNS 7210 |
| (3) FDNS 7300 | |
| Thesis Presentation and Oral Defense of MS Thesis | Project Presentation and Oral Defense Based on Coursework and Project |
| Minimum Total Credit Hours: 30 | Minimum Total Credit Hours: 36 |

3. Statistics is the same for both programs (3 credits).
4. The thesis option includes electives of 6 credits, while the proposed non-thesis option requires electives of 15 credits. As shown in the table, elective courses are to be selected at the 6000, 7000, and/or 8000 levels from FDNS courses and/or courses in related areas outside the department that support the student's career goals.
5. The thesis option requires a thesis and 6 credits of research (FDNS 7000, 7300), while the non-thesis option requires a project that is smaller in scope than a typical thesis in our department (3 credits, FDNS 7210). Thesis and non-thesis projects require IRB approval, IACUC approval and any other required approvals in compliance with applicable federal, state, and university regulations. Examples of research-based non-thesis projects include studies with genes, cells, animals, or people (e.g., surveys of food- and health-related behaviors, or interventions with foods, nutrients, dietary supplements, educational programs); food (e.g., product development, chemical, physical and sensory analyses); communities (e.g., food availability, accessibility and quality in stores, restaurants, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other venues); secondary analyses of previously collected data (e.g., from

US-DHHS, CDC, other federal, state, and/or local sources); computer simulations of nutrient metabolism; and systematic reviews of the scientific literature.

6. The thesis option requires a thesis presentation and an oral defense of the MS thesis, while the non-thesis option requires a project presentation and an oral defense based on the coursework and project.
7. Each student's advisory committee is made up of three faculty members. They will administer the presentation and oral defense for the MS thesis or non-thesis option during the final semester of their program. Committee composition will follow graduate school guidelines regarding graduate faculty status. For both options, the student will be considered to have passed the presentation and oral defense when they have a positive vote from at least two of the three committee members. Should a student fail the presentation and/or oral defense, then he or she will have one more opportunity to pass, but they may have to enroll and redo the presentation and defense the following semester. Any student failing twice will not be permitted to obtain either the MS thesis or non-thesis degree.

Justification and Need for the Non-Thesis MS Option:

There are several reasons why a non-thesis MS option is justified and needed.

1. Not all master's students in foods and nutrition desire or benefit sufficiently from completing a master's thesis to justify the requirement. There are students who do not go on to complete a Ph.D. and who pursue careers in allied health, business and/or government that require understanding of published research, but do not require extensive experience conducting research. Examples of such careers are in community nutrition, extension service, clinical nutrition, dietetics, other allied health fields, school nutrition, food industry, and/or regulatory affairs. Professionals in these career paths are typically consumers of research that is used for program planning, policy development, or counseling. The non-thesis path is particularly well-suited for developing skills that will enable these professionals to be lifelong learners and consumers of new and emerging information. For these students, the experience of completing a research study for a thesis is not as valuable as additional coursework and a project that better prepares them for their chosen careers. The additional coursework required will allow the student to broaden his/her subject matter expertise without sacrificing depth. This is particularly beneficial to those students who have changed their fields of study to foods and nutrition upon entering graduate school. Thus, a non-thesis option is needed.
2. We currently have a non-thesis option that is called Masters of Family and Consumer Sciences (MFCS). However, this option is rarely selected by students because they desire an MS. Also, the name MFCS does not reflect our students' career goals or coursework in that they do not typically pursue careers in the broad discipline of Family and Consumer Sciences; rather they pursue careers closely identified with foods, nutrition, dietetics, and other allied health professions.

3. Offering an MS with thesis and non-thesis options will help us more effectively compete for students with other foods and nutrition programs, especially those we consider our peers. Many of the best food and nutrition programs in the country, including those with whom we directly compete for students, offer an MS in foods and/or nutrition with thesis and non-thesis options, such as University of Illinois, University of Tennessee, University of Florida, Florida State University, Texas Tech, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, University of New Hampshire, East Carolina State University, and University of Maine. For us to be competitive, it is important that we offer comparable options.
4. There is established precedent on campus for non-thesis masters degrees, such as the MFCS we have in place, MA in mathematics, MS in statistics, MS in kinesiology, and MS in physics (pending).

Impact on Current Students and Degree Programs:

There would be no adverse impact on current master's degree students in the Department. Students currently enrolled in the MS thesis option or MFCS may change to the MS non-thesis option by completing a degree objective change form and a new program of study. If the MS non-thesis option is approved, then the MFCS will be terminated.

A sample program of study for our BS/MS masters program is shown in the Appendix (last 2 pages of this document). Currently one student is enrolled. We do not anticipate any negative impact on our BS/MS masters program by introducing the non-thesis MS option.

Changing from Thesis Option to Non-thesis or Non-thesis to Thesis Option:

At any time during enrollment, students enrolled in the MS thesis option may change to the MS non-thesis option by completing a degree objective change form and a new program of study. At any time during enrollment, students enrolled in the MS non-thesis option may change to the MS thesis option by way of a written recommendation from their major professor and advisory committee (sent to the graduate coordinator) and then by completing a degree objective change form and a new program of study; this recommendation by the major professor and advisory committee is needed to ensure that the student has the support of our faculty and that the student has been informed of the expectations for the MS thesis.

Estimated Impact on Enrollment:

In fall 2009, there are 31 graduate students enrolled in our MS thesis option.

After the proposed non-thesis MS is approved and marketed for about two to three years it is projected that the enrollment in the MS with thesis option will decrease by about 10 students and enrollment in the MS non-thesis option will be about 15 students.

Admission Procedures for Domestic and International Applicants:

Admission standards are the same for both the thesis or non-thesis options. Admissions are open to all qualified graduates of accredited institutions. Admission materials are available through the Graduate Admissions Office. All prospective students should send to the Graduate School and/or department: (1) a completed application; (2) two official transcripts from each institution of higher education attended; (3) Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general scores; (4) a brief statement of purpose describing the applicant's background, interests, career goals, aspirations, etc., (5) a departmental application, and (6) three letters of recommendation. In addition, (7) international applicants must submit official TOEFL scores that meet the guidelines established by the Graduate School.

During the application process, students will have the choice of electing either a thesis or non-thesis MS degree option.

Financial Impact:

No new courses, faculty, facilities or services will be required to implement a non-thesis option for the MS. Thus, no new funds are required.

Faculty Vote:

The graduate faculty of the Department of foods and nutrition voted 14 yes and 0 no votes in favor of establishing the non-thesis option for the MS with a major in foods and nutrition. The vote was held on February 16, 2009.

Appendix

Impact on BS/MS

The department of foods and nutrition has an approved BS/MS program (thesis) and BS/MFCS (non-thesis). If the MS non-thesis option is approved, then we expect to drop our MFCS and replace it with a BS/MS non-thesis option. The suggested programs of study in place for the undergraduate part of our three undergraduate majors will remain the same (Consumer Foods, Dietetics, and Nutrition Science).

As is currently approved for our BS/MS programs:

Six semester credit hours of course work used to fulfill graduate degree requirements may be used jointly to fulfill undergraduate degree requirements. For Honors Students, 12 semester credit hours of course work used to fulfill graduate degree requirements may be used jointly to fulfill undergraduate degree requirements. Because 121 semester credit hours are required to complete the undergraduate majors, 30 hours are required for the MS, and 36 hours are required for the proposed MS non-thesis, the following number of hours are required:

- Undergraduate student admitted to MS: 145 semester credit hours
- Undergraduate student admitted to MS non-thesis: 151 semester credit hours
- Honors student admitted to MS: 139 semester credit hours
- Honors student admitted to MS non-thesis: 145 semester credit hours

It is proposed that these courses be taken at the graduate level and count for dual credit in the undergraduate and graduate programs:

- Consumer Foods majors: FDNS 4100/6100 Micronutrient Nutrition, FDNS 7010 Directed Research in Foods and Nutrition (2 credits)
- Honors Consumer Foods majors add 6 credit hours from the following: FDNS 4650/6650 Experimental Study of Food (4 credits), FDNS 4510/6510 Nutrition Related to the Human Life Cycle, FDNS 4630/6630 Cultural Aspects of Foods and Nutrition, FDNS 4640/6640 Food Sanitation and Safety, FDNS 4600/6600 Food and the Consumer.
- Dietetics majors: FDNS 4100/6100 Micronutrient Nutrition, FDNS 4520/6520 Dietetic Practice and Nutrition Support
- Honors Dietetics majors add 6 credits of FDNS 4530/6530 Medical Nutrition Therapy, FDNS 4500/6500 Nutrition Assessment and Intervention
- Nutrition Science majors: FDNS 4100/6100 Micronutrient Nutrition, FDNS 7010 Directed Research in Foods and Nutrition (2 credits)
- Honors Nutrition Science majors: add 6 credits hours from FDNS 4530/6530 Medical Nutrition Therapy (4 credits), FDNS 4510/6510 Nutrition Related to the Human Life Cycle (3 credits), FDNS 4550/6550 Nutritional Biodynamics (3 credits)

Below is a sample course plan for a 3/2 BS/MS non-thesis with Honors (145 credits required) for students enrolled in our undergraduate dietetics major, which is our most popular undergraduate major. The graduate course requirements are shown in bold italics, and the undergraduate program of study is based on the undergraduate dietetics sample course plan (<http://www.fcs.uga.edu/fdn/undergraduate/dietetics.html>). Admission procedures for our 3/2 BS/MS program will remain the same.

| Fall Semester | | Spring Semester | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| ENGL 1101 | (I)3 | ENGL 1102 | (I)3 |
| MATH 1113 | (I)3 | Social Science | (V)3 |
| CHEM 1211, CHEM 1211L | (II)4 | CHEM 1212, CHEM 1212L | (VI)4 |
| PSYC 1101 | (V)3 | BIOL 1103, BIOL 1103L | (II)4 |
| FDNS 2000 | 1 | World Lang. & Culture | (IV)3 |
| | 14 | | 17 |
| STAT 2000 | (III)3 | MIBO 2500-2500L | 4 |
| CHEM 2211, CHEM 2211L | (VI)4 | CHFD 2100 or HACE 2100 | (VI)3 |
| SPCM 1100 | (IV)3 | Social Science | (V)3 |
| World Lang & Culture | (IV)3 | World Lang. & Culture | (IV)3 |
| PE | 1 | FDNS 2100 | (VI)3 |
| | 14 | | 16 |
| BCMB(BIOL)(CHEM) 3100 | 4 | CBIO 2210 / 2210L | 4 |
| CBIO 2200-2200L | (VI)4 | FDNS 3100 | 3 |
| Major Elective | 3 | FDNS 3610/3610L | 4 |
| FDNS 3600, FDNS 3600L | 4 | FDNS 4600 | 3 |
| | 15 | | 14 |
| FDNS 4100/6100 | 4 | <i>FDNS 4530/6530</i> | <i>4</i> |
| FDNS 4610/6610 | 2 | FDNS 4620/6620 | 3 |
| FDNS 4510/6500 | 3 | FDNS 4540/6540 | 3 |
| FDNS 4500/6500 | 2 | <i>FDNS 4520/6520</i> | <i>2</i> |
| Major Electives | 4 | <i>FDNS 8560</i> | <i>2</i> |
| | | <i>FDNS 8580</i> | <i>1</i> |
| | 15 | | 15 |
| <i>FDNS 6400</i> | <i>4</i> | FDNS 4660 | 3 |
| <i>FDNS 8900</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>Graduate Elective #2</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Graduate Statistics</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>Graduate Elective #3</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Graduate Elective. #1</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>FDNS 7210</i> | <i>3</i> |
| | 12 | | 12 |