



March 12, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Given the current circumstances, the Graduate School will provide increased flexibility to meet its charge of ensuring consistency and fairness in graduate education, as well as to further promote student success. To alleviate any concerns or clarify any confusion, we offer the following information:

- Campus remains open and students, faculty, and programs are strongly encouraged to keep abreast of the latest information provided by the University. This includes [President Drake's March 9, 2020, message](#) to the university community.
- Programs should continue to follow all existing university policies related to graduate education, including those outlined in the [Graduate School Handbook](https://gradsch.osu.edu/handbook) (<https://gradsch.osu.edu/handbook>).
- Access to campus remains unchanged, and master's or doctoral examinations can occur in person with appropriate social distancing and preventative public health and hygiene measures. However, if circumstances prevent the student and/or committee members from attending the examination, the Graduate School will offer flexibility and assistance in the preparation for and administration of examinations.
  - All parties (e.g., students, faculty, and programs) should still adhere to all examination-related guidelines referenced in the *Graduate School Handbook* (e.g., [Section 6](#), [Section 7](#), and [Appendix B](#)).
  - The university's [Keep Teaching website](http://keep Teaching website) (<http://keep Teaching website>) offers a wealth of information regarding temporary teaching resources, including virtual instruction and examinations. We encourage students and programs to review information regarding Zoom and its ability to videoconference examinations.
  - Should an issue prevent a student from coming to campus, the student may participate remotely in a way that both verifies their identity and maintains the integrity of the examination process.
  - Videoconferencing (e.g., Zoom) is a relatively easy way for an examination to be held and allows all parties to see and hear each other. An added benefit is that the committee is able to visually verify that the student is alone and not in possession of any prohibited materials by asking the student to pan their camera around the room, can confirm the student's identity by asking that they show their Buck ID, and can record the examination utilizing the Zoom cloud.
  - Committee members may participate via videoconference. If more than one committee member intends to participate via videoconference, the student should submit a request via the Committee and Examination petition in GRADFORMS.
  - Students requesting flexibility in the administration of an examination are welcome to work with their program and the Graduate School to develop a plan to hold their examination remotely, including mechanisms to ensure examination fairness, integrity (e.g., student identification, appropriate materials, etc.), and management (e.g., mode of communication, connectivity strength, etc.).
- Maintaining clear, open lines of communication between students and advisors is always a best practice. However, it is especially important now, given the circumstances.
- Graduate students with active appointments (e.g., GTA, GRA, or GAA) should continue to operate as usual. Further information is forthcoming from the University.
- Should additional issues arise regarding the COVID-19 virus's impact on a student, the student or the program are encouraged to contact the Graduate School for assistance.

The above is effective today, March 12, 2020, and will remain in effect at least through March 30, 2020. You are welcome to share this information with your students, faculty, and staff. The Graduate School will also provide this information to any students or faculty who may contact us with any specific questions or concerns.

I know that we are all doing our best to support our students, as well as each other, during these uncertain times. Should any of the above guidance change, the Graduate School will be sure to contact you again. Thank you, and best wishes for a good (and healthy) conclusion to the spring semester.

Sincerely,



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