



OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM

To: General Council, Graduate Representative Organization
Graduate Student Body At-large

From: GRO Chairs

Date: 16 October 2019

Subject: New University Policies Regarding Ph.D. Education

The GRO has representation on a university-wide committee on Ph.D. education (**The Ph.D. Advisory Committee**) regarding policies that will improve the life and educational experience for Ph.D. students. We wanted to send a brief summary of the three main policies that the GRO helped work on that were passed by the Doctor of Philosophy Board and put into effect this academic year (2019-2020):

- **Mentorship Policy**: This policy replaces the Rights and Responsibilities of Ph.D. students policy, and places equal responsibility on the advisor/mentor in the professional and personal relationship between student and mentor. It also outlines what departments should be doing to support good mentoring, etc.
- **Professional Development Annual Discussion Policy**: This policy mandates (at least one) annual discussion to take place (and offers templates for discussion) regarding the professional development of the Ph.D. student and promotes ways that advisors can support and encourage such development within their groups.
- **Maximum Time-to-Degree Policy**: Only affects the incoming first year class this year. Shortens the max time to degree from 12 to 9 years, not counting leave of absences and other granted exceptions.

