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## Academic Policy Committee Report - January 26, 2012

Graduate Council

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ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2012, 2:15 PM – 3:30 PM  
111 STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING

REPORT

Present: Stefanie Ohnesorg (Chair), Ralph Brockett, Carolyn R. Hodges, Leann Luna, Jennifer Morrow, Kay Reed, Todd Skelton. Also present were: Kris Bronstad, Yvonne Kilpatrick.

The meeting was called to order by Stefanie Ohnesorg, Chair, at 2:15 p.m.

The committee discussed the following items:

1. Thesis-Dissertation Embargo Option

This discussion concerned a policy statement allowing an option to embargo a thesis or dissertation to delay the release of a thesis or dissertation from electronic publication in TRACE, the UTK scholarly electronic publication repository. Comments from committee members, such as suggestions requiring the committee be involved in requesting the embargo, were discussed. The option calls for the Graduate School to allow students to request a one-year delay (embargo) before their ETDs (Electronic Theses and Dissertations) are disseminated.

**Effective Fall 2012:**

**Proposed *UT Graduate Catalog* language:**

The following paragraph will be added to the Graduate Catalog, under **Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students > THESES AND DISSERTATIONS> DISSEMINATION OF FINAL COPIES:**

**THESIS AND DISSERTATION EMBARGO OPTION**

“Students with significant concerns related to sensitive or classified information, patents, and potential publishers’ restrictions may request a 12-month embargo after the conferral of their degree to delay public release of the thesis or dissertation. The request must be approved by the student’s major advisor and submitted to the thesis/dissertation coordinator in the Graduate School no later than the thesis/dissertation submission deadline, using the Embargo Request form. On the form the student must indicate the reason for the embargo, and all requests must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon special request, this embargo may be extended for one additional 12-month period. The

maximum embargo period is 24 months following the conferral of the graduate degree. Those students wishing to embargo their ETDs for longer than 12 months must submit an additional request at least two weeks before the end of the original embargo period.”

**Justification:**

Some students find that the electronic dissemination of their thesis or dissertation puts their projects and publications at risk. Allowing a one-year embargo will give students the opportunity to resolve issues with publishers, patents, and/or sensitive information. Such a policy will make UT Graduate School policy consistent with top 25 universities that offer electronic dissemination of theses and dissertations.

The committee voted unanimously to recommend that Graduate Council approve this policy.

2. 5-Yr BA-MA Programs – French and German

R.J. Hinde, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, presented an overview of the proposed 5-yr BA-MA programs in French and German to be effective Fall 2012. These programs have requested that 9 hours be allowed to be counted to meet degree requirements toward both the BA and the MA degrees, as an exception to the Graduate Council policy on allowing double counting of coursework across undergraduate and graduate levels. Questions were raised about numbers of students who might seek these programs. It was confirmed that the degree programs contained the same content as individual, single degree programs. No requirements have been reduced in the degree programs.

The committee voted to recommend that Graduate Council approve the programs as exceptions, as other, similar programs have been. These proposals have been approved previously by the Graduate and Undergraduate Curriculum Committees and the Undergraduate Council Academic Policy Committee.

3. Proposal to Change Graduate Catalog Policy: Admission Requirement

The committee returned to its review of the proposal from Yvonne Kilpatrick, Director of Graduate Admissions, regarding a change to Graduate Council policy on admission requirements, specifically for accepting unofficial transcripts. Questions were raised, such as about how students would be notified if they have not submitted the official transcript.

The committee voted to recommend to Graduate Council that the proposed policy be approved.

**Effective Fall 2012:**

- (1) The Graduate School will *require* the submission of unofficial transcripts, degree certificates, and English translations to the Graduate Admissions on-line application portal for the purpose of evaluation and offer of admission.
- (2) The Graduate School will require submission of official transcripts, degree certificates, and English translations to the Graduate Admissions Office following the offer of admission.
- (3) The Graduate School will reserve the right to revoke admission to any student whose documents noted in (1) are found to be fraudulent following review and comparison with the official documents noted in (2).
- (4) The Graduate School will prohibit registration after the first semester of enrollment until students have submitted the official copy of transcripts from all institutions previously attended.

An unofficial transcript or university record is defined as follows:

*An unofficial transcript or university record is defined as a scanned version of the transcript or university record that would be sent by mail as an official transcript. The document must contain the institution name, course names, grade information, terms of attendance and any academic notations. Transcripts or academic records uploaded from the institution's student information system portal often do not contain the information required to evaluate the academic record and will not be accepted.* Transcripts or university records that are not in the English language must be submitted in both the original language and a certified English translation.

**Current UT Graduate Catalog language (2011-2012)**

Application Procedures Section, Bullet #3:

To apply for admission, the following materials must be sent to Graduate Admissions.

- One official transcript from all colleges and universities attended.

Admission of International Students Section, Bullet #3:

The following items must be received before admission will be considered.

- Official or attested university records, with certified translations if the records are not in English (notarized copies are not accepted).

**Proposed UT Graduate Catalog language (2012-2013)**

(Replace Application Procedures Section, Bullet #3)

To apply for admission, the following materials must be sent to Graduate Admissions *through the on-line application submission process*:

- One unofficial transcript from all colleges and universities attended submitted on-line at the time of application to the Graduate School. *An unofficial transcript or university record is defined as a scanned version of the transcript or university record that would be sent by mail as an official transcript. The document must contain the institution name, course names, grade information, terms of attendance and any academic notations. Transcripts or academic records uploaded from the institution's student information system portal often do not contain the information required to evaluate the academic record and will not be accepted. Transcripts or university records that are not in the English language must be submitted in both the original language and a certified English translation.*

(Insert below Application Procedures Section, Bullet #4)

The submission of official transcripts, degree certificates, and English translations must be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office *only* following the offer of admission. *In order for transcripts to be considered official, they must be sent directly from the institution.* The Graduate School will reserve the right to revoke admission to a student if any unofficial or official documents are found to be fraudulent following review and comparison. Registration is prohibited after the first semester of enrollment until students have submitted the official copy of transcripts from all institutions previously attended.

(Replace Admission of International Students Section, Bullet #3 and #4)

- One unofficial transcript or academic record and degree certificate from all colleges and universities attended submitted on-line at the time of application to the Graduate School. *An unofficial transcript or university record is defined as a scanned version of the transcript or university record that would be sent by mail as an official transcript. The document must contain the institution name, course names, grade information, terms of attendance and any academic notations. Transcripts or academic records uploaded from the institution's student information system portal often do not contain the information required to evaluate the academic record and will not be accepted. Transcripts or university records that are not in the English language must be submitted in both the original language and a certified English translation.*

The submission of official transcripts, degree certificates, and English translations must be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office *only* following the offer of admission. *In order for transcripts to be considered official, they must be sent directly from the institution.* The Graduate School will reserve the right to

revoke admission to a student if any unofficial or official documents are found to be fraudulent following review and comparison. Registration is prohibited after the first semester of enrollment until students have submitted the official copy of transcripts from all institutions previously attended.

**Justification:**

Recent trends in Graduate Admissions indicate that institutions are identifying and implementing processes that will expedite the admission decision notification to applicants. In a competitive market, timely response to applicants is critical. One of the identified processes, as presented by several institutions at the 2011 Annual Conference of the National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP), is electronic submission of unofficial transcripts for the purpose of evaluation and offer of admission.

Only applicants that are offered admission must submit final official transcripts or university records to the institution. This reduces the total number of transcripts or university records that must be verified and reviewed for authenticity. The final official transcript or university record is compared to the unofficial documents previously submitted. If there are discrepancies in the documents, the Graduate Admissions office will investigate. If the documents are found to be fraudulent, the admission offer will be revoked. Presenters at the NAGAP conference reported no incidences of fraud. Some have been utilizing this model of submission for several years.