

REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, September 12, 2024

3:30 – 5:00 p.m., Zoom Meeting

Committee members present: Jenny Crowley, Maria Castillo Rodriguez, Aly Fathy, Melissa Hines, Adam Love, David Maslar, Jennifer Patrick

Other attendees: Michael Higdon (College of Law), Greg Kaplan (Graduate Council Chair Elect), Jeremy Mills (College of Veterinary Medicine), Phyllis Thompson (Graduate Council Past Chair), Dixie Thompson, Catherine Cox, and Grace Favier (Graduate School).

Dixie Thompson called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

I welcome members and all new members to our first APC meeting for this academic year. One item of business today is to select someone to serve as the chair of APC this year. Please be thinking about this service opportunity during our meeting and at the end of our meeting today, we hope someone will raise their hand and volunteer.

We have one item for discussion at today's meeting.

Agenda Item: Doctoral Degree Requirements

D. Thompson:

Currently, there is no provision for students who begin a doctoral program at another institution and choose to leave that institution and enroll at UT to complete the PhD. The most common scenario we encounter is when a faculty member moves to UT and wants to bring along PhD students to complete their degrees at UT. The proposed language would provide transparency to students and to faculty about what expectations would be in those cases.

The language below in black font is current language in the Graduate Catalog. The paragraphs below in red font is the proposed update language to the policy.

The Graduate Catalog policy: Doctoral Degree Requirements

Regardless of the type of doctoral program, the following are the minimum requirements expected of all doctorates. Departments and programs may impose stricter requirements.

- A candidate must earn a cumulative graduate grade point average of 3.00 on all graduate coursework taken at UT to receive the doctoral degree.
- A candidate for a doctoral degree who earned a graduate (typically a master's) degree prior to beginning the doctoral degree must complete a minimum of 24 credit hours of graduate courses at UT (exclusive of course 600 Dissertation). *For students who already hold a master's degree and who have begun a doctoral program at another institution before enrolling at UT, up to 12 hours of graduate level credits from the other institution may be counted toward the 24 hours needed for PhD, if approved by the student's doctoral committee.*
 - Additional credit hours will be determined by the nature of the doctoral degree to meet the required minimum of 30 credit hours master's and doctoral degrees set by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The SACSCOC minimum 30 credit hours may include dissertation, capstone, practicum or similar credit hours, as determined by the nature of the doctoral degree
- If the doctoral program does not require a master's degree, the candidate must complete a minimum of 48 credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the baccalaureate degree (exclusive of course 600 Dissertation). *For students without a master's degree and who have begun a doctoral program at another institution before enrolling at UT, up to 24 hours of graduate level credits from the other*

institution may be counted toward the 48 hours needed for PhD, if approved by the student's doctoral committee.

- For students earning a concurrent master's, a minimum of 18 additional credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the master's degree must be earned at UT plus completion of at least 24 credit hours of course 600 Dissertation. (Note: for programs requiring 36 rather than 48 credit hours of graduate coursework for the doctoral degree, students must earn at least an additional 6 graduate credit hours beyond the concurrent master's, plus 36 credit hours of dissertation.) Credit hours earned in 500 Thesis may not be counted toward the doctoral degree.
- A minimum of 50% of required graduate credit hours taken at UT (excluding dissertation hours), must be graded A-F.
- A minimum of 6 credit hours must be taken in UT courses at the 600-level, exclusive of course 600 Dissertation.

In addition to the above, the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) requires

- 24 credit hours of course 600 Doctoral Dissertation (see [Continuous Enrollment](#) under Enrollment and Registration).

In a separate section of the Graduate Catalog:

Credits Earned through Transfer, Correspondence, and Audits

Courses taken at another institution may be considered for transfer into a master's or EdS program as determined by the student's graduate committee and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. At the doctoral level, courses are not officially transferred although they may be used to meet degree requirements. Where a requirement has been met through coursework in another program, the student may petition the academic unit for a waiver of the requirement at the doctoral level. Official transcripts must be sent directly to the Graduate School from all institutions previously attended before any credit will be considered.

To be transferred into a master's or EdS program at the UT a course must

- Be taken for graduate credit.
- Be a course transcribed for graduate credit and in which the student earned at least a grade of B.
- Not have been used for a previous degree.
- Be approved by the student's graduate committee and the Dean of the Graduate School on the Admission to Candidacy form.

Courses transferred to any graduate program will not affect the minimum residence requirements for the program, nor will they be included in calculating the student's UT grade point average.

Graduate course credit hours that **may not be applied** towards meeting degree requirements include:

- Graduate credits transferred from universities outside the University of Tennessee system cannot be used to meet the thesis or dissertation requirements or 600-level coursework requirements.
- Graduate credit for extension courses taken from other institutions is not transferable, nor is credit for any course taken at an unaccredited institution.
- Graduate credit previously earned as audits at any university.
- Graduate credit earned for work done by correspondence study at any university.

Additionally, there are restrictions on the application of course credit hours depending upon the degree program level:

- Master's Degree: A majority of the total credit hours required for a master's degree must be taken at UT. Transferred courses must have been completed within the six-year period prior to receipt of the degree. The courses must be listed on the Admission to Candidacy form and will be placed on the student's UT transcript only after admission to candidacy.
- Specialist in Education Degree: A maximum of 6 semester credit (9 quarter) hours of coursework beyond the master's degree may be transferred to an EdS program. Transferred courses in the most recent 30 credit hours taken for the degree must have been completed within the six-year period prior to the

receipt of the degree. The courses must be listed on the Admission to Candidacy form and will be placed on the student's UT transcript only after admission to candidacy.

- Doctoral Degree: Coursework taken prior to admission to a doctoral program may be used toward the degree, as determined by the student's doctoral committee. Although the courses are used as part of the requirements toward the degree and are listed on the admission to candidacy, they are not officially transfer courses and are not placed on the student's UT transcript. As indicated in the Doctoral Degree Requirements: A candidate for a doctoral degree who earned a graduate (typically a master's) degree prior to beginning the doctoral degree must complete a minimum of 24 credit hours of graduate courses at UT (exclusive of course 600 Dissertation). **For students who already hold a master's degree and who have begun a doctoral program at another institution before enrolling at UT, up to 12 hours of doctoral level credits from the other institution may be counted toward the 24 credit hours needed for PhD, if approved by the student's doctoral committee. For students without a master's degree and who have begun a doctoral program at another institution before enrolling at UT, up to 24 hours of graduate level credits from the other institution may be counted toward the 48 credit hours needed for the PhD, if approved by the student's doctoral committee.**

This proposal is open for discussion. The proposal is coming forward today only as a discussion item with no voting action.

From the discussion of the members in attendance, there was no opposition to the proposal. A question was asked if this was for all doctoral programs or just the PhD. Dr. Thompson communicated this proposal is just for the PhD and that she would look at the language and clean it up to make sure that is clear.

D. Thompson: Thank you for your input on this proposal. I ask that you continue to think about this proposal and that you share this *Draft Proposal* with your colleges and ask for their feedback. We will also discuss this proposal at the next Graduate Council meeting and ask that they take this back for discussion in their areas. We do not want to change policy if it will cause difficulties.

APC Chair: who would like to come forward today and volunteer to chair APC for this year?

Adam Love from the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences volunteered to be chair.

Thank you, Adam. We appreciate your volunteer spirit.

Are there any other items to bring forward for discussion. With none coming forward the meeting was adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Cox
Graduate Council Liaison