



University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
**TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative  
Exchange**

---

Academic Policy Committee Reports

Graduate Council

---

10-19-2017

## Academic Policy Committee Report - October 19, 2017

Graduate Council

Follow this and additional works at: [https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_gcacadpol](https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gcacadpol)

---

### Recommended Citation

Graduate Council, "Academic Policy Committee Report - October 19, 2017" (2017). *Academic Policy Committee Reports*.

[https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_gcacadpol/69](https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gcacadpol/69)

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Council at TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Academic Policy Committee Reports by an authorized administrator of TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact [trace@utk.edu](mailto:trace@utk.edu).

**MINUTES OF ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Thursday, October 19, 2017, 2:00 P.M.**  
**111 Student Services Building**

Attendees: Maria Stehle (Chair), Mary Albrecht, Mehmet Aydeniz, Eric Boder, Julie Bonom, Lars Dzikus, Jens Gregor, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Dixie Thompson, Catherine Cox

Maria Stehle called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

1. Yvonne Kilpatrick, from the summer working group charged with investigating our catalog policy and language for English Certification, submitted a proposal to revise the English Certification language.

**Proposal to APC: Revise English Certification language as indicated below.**

**English Certification**

An applicant requesting admission to the Graduate School may be required to submit results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

Minimum score requirements for admission to the Graduate School are:

- a total score of 80 on the internet-based TOEFL (iBT),
- a total score of 550 or equivalent on the paper-based TOEFL (PBT), or
- a 6.5 overall band score on the IELTS.

The scores will be considered valid if submitted within two (2) years of the test date. An applicant may be exempted from the English Certification requirement if:

1. English is an official language in the applicant's country of citizenship, according to standards published by the Graduate School.
- Or
2. English is the primary language of instruction at the institution in which the applicant received an undergraduate, graduate, or professional degree.

Some graduate programs may have more rigorous requirements. Applicants are responsible for meeting the requirements of the graduate programs when the standards exceed those of the Graduate School.

Current language in the Graduate Catalog:

**English Certification**

Any person whose native language is not English must submit results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). A minimum score of 550 on the paper test or 80 on the Internet-based test typically with a score of 20 on each of the sections of the test (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) is required for admission consideration. For the IELTS, a minimum score of 6.5 is required. Some programs require higher scores. The score must be no more than two years old from the requested date of entry. Applicants who have received a degree from an accredited U.S. institution within the past two years are exempt from the TOEFL requirement.

All students whose native language is not English must take an English proficiency examination after arrival at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Refer to section on English Proficiency.

After discussion and editing, the committee agreed to the proposal revision for English Certification.

**VOTE: APC voted and unanimously approved the revised wording for English Certification. The proposal is moving forward with recommendation for approval to the Graduate Council.**

The summer working group will continue to review the policy and wording for English Proficiency and Requirements for GTA's (Competency in English).

2. Mary Albrecht, from the summer working group charged with reviewing the academic policies and procedures in the Graduate Catalog, submitted a proposal to revise the "options" names for the master's program:

**Proposal to APC: revise option names for the master's program.**

FROM: Thesis, ~~Problem-in-lieu-of-Thesis~~, and ~~Non-thesis~~

TO: Thesis and Non-Thesis

After discussion, the committee members agreed with the proposal to revise the option names for the master's program. No vote at this time. Instead, APC is recommending that Mary Albrecht's catalog working group review where the language is currently used in the catalog and incorporate the revised wording into the catalog revisions that will be brought forward to APC for review.

3. Dr. Jens Gregor, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. Proposing a change to the final exam policy for the Master of Science, non-thesis, *courses only option*.

UT offers MS students different options. In Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS), they can thus choose between thesis (24 course credit hours + 6 hours of thesis) and two types of non-thesis, namely, project (27 course credit hours + 3 hours of project-in-lieu-of-thesis) and courses-only (30 course credit hours). Other departments may have different options and requirements. Regardless, UT requires that all MS non-thesis students must pass a final written comprehensive examination

On behalf of the EECS Department, I would like to propose that departments be allowed to decide whether MS non-thesis students who choose a courses-only option must take a final comprehensive written examination or not. The policies for other MS students will not be affected. Likewise, departments may continue to require all their MS non-thesis students to take a final comprehensive written exam should they choose to do so. Catalog wording changes are suggested below.

Sincerely,  
Jens Gregor  
Professor and Associate Department Head  
Director of Graduate Studies  
Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

**Proposal to APC: revise catalog text for Final Examination for Non-Thesis Student**

Final Examination for Non-Thesis Students

Non-thesis students whose degree is based on a courses-only option need not take a final exam unless required to do so by their department. All other non-thesis student must pass a final comprehensive written examination. A department may require an additional oral examination. The examination is not merely a test over course work, but a measure of the student's ability to integrate material in the major and related fields. Except with prior approval from the Dean of the Graduate School, the examination must be given in university-approved facilities. It should be scheduled through the academic department at least two weeks prior to the examination. The results of the comprehensive exam (Pass/Fail form with original signatures) must be submitted to the Graduate School by the deadline date indicated on the graduate Student Deadlines Dates. In case of failure, the candidate may not apply for reexamination until the following semester. The result of the second examination is final.

Current catalog language for: Final Examination for Non-Thesis students:

*Final Examination for Non-Thesis Students*

Each non-thesis student must pass a final comprehensive written examination. A department may require an additional oral examination. The examination is not merely a test over course work, but a measure of the student's ability to integrate material in the major and related fields. Except with prior approval from the Dean of the Graduate School, the examination must be given in university-approved facilities. It should be scheduled through the academic department at least two weeks prior to the examination. The results of the comprehensive exam (Pass/Fail form with original signatures) must be submitted to the Graduate School by the deadline date indicated on the Graduate Student Deadline Dates. In case of failure, the candidate may not apply for reexamination until the following semester. The result of the second examination is final.

After questions and discussion, ***APC is moving this proposal forward to Graduate Council as a discussion item*** to receive feedback. After discussion and feedback from Graduate Council, APC will review the proposal again for the possibility of approving the proposal change.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Cox  
Graduate Council Liaison