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Academic Policy Committee Report - January 18, 2018

Graduate Council

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MINUTES OF ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, January 18, 2018, 2:00 P.M.
111 Student Services Building

Committee members: Maria Stehle (Chair), Reza Seddighi, and Sergio Bedford.

Other attendees: Mary Albrecht, Dixie Thompson, Sara Bradberry, and Catherine Cox from the Graduate School. Monique Anderson and Kathy Abbott from the Registrar's Office.

Maria Stehle called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Stehle noted, we do not have a quorum as only three committee members are present.

The proposal to replace the repeat policy was discussed at the last Graduate Council meeting with no negative feedback. We will discuss the policy today for final revisions and edits. Any questions?

- A question was asked concerning "C" grades. Grades of C may be used to meet degree requirements and therefore, would not be considered as a course to repeat to raise the grade.
- Sara Bradberry will discuss with Celena Tulloss in the Financial Aid Office if/how repeats will effect federal financial aid.
- Initially, for the process, we will have graduate students submit a petition to the Graduate School for approval and to enter the override registration in Banner. This will also allow the Graduate School to keep track of the policy that only two courses may be repeated to raise a grade.

1. Proposal: Revise policy to allow graduate students to repeat a course for the purpose of raising a grade.

Current policy catalog language (text from under heading: Grades, Credit Hours, and Grade Point Average)

- No graduate student may repeat a course for the purpose of raising a grade already received.

Revise current catalog text: to remove current policy and replace with the following:

Repeating Courses

A graduate student may repeat up to two courses in which they earned a grade of D or F.

- The decision to repeat a course is made between the student and the advisor / major professor.
- Each course may only be repeated once.
- The original and repeat grades will be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average (GPA).
- Credit hours will only be counted once towards meeting degree/program requirements.
- To re-enroll in a class in order to improve an earned grade, the student must submit a petition to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Students in the Colleges of Law and Veterinary Medicine follow standards established by those colleges that adhere to professional standards associated with their programmatic accreditation. Other programs may be more restrictive than these rules established by the Graduate School.

Rationale: Practices at many peer institutions allow graduate student to repeat a course with various restrictions at these institutions (see handout). By allowing a student to have the option to repeat a course, allows the student to master the material and have their academic transcript reflect the original grade and the repeated course grade.

An email will be sent to the APC members to vote electronically on this policy.

2. Maria Stehle attended a special meeting of the Undergraduate APC on November 29, 2017. The item of discussion was the Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Programs. This proposal came about because of SACSCOC and state requirements. This will provide pedagogical rationale for our accelerated programs. The proposal was approved by the Undergraduate APC in December. As this proposal involves both undergraduate and graduate students, then the Graduate Academic Policy Committee must also discuss this item and vote for approval.

Graduate APC Proposal

In order to have a uniform policy regarding the requirements for accelerated combined bachelor's/master's programs (sometimes called Five-Year programs) across both the undergraduate and graduate programs of the University of Tennessee, we propose the following policy:

Accelerated Combined Bachelor's/Master's Programs

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, offers accelerated combined bachelor's/master's programs in some areas of study. These programs are designed for, and limited to, students with exceptional undergraduate academic performance in their major field of study.

Participation in one of these programs must be approved both by the faculty members of the department offering the program and by the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School. A student pursuing an accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program may take a limited number of 400- or 500-level graduate courses for graduate credit during her/his final undergraduate year and use these courses to satisfy disciplinary elective requirements in the student's bachelor's degree program. The number of graduate credit hours that may be applied to a student's bachelor's degree requirements is determined by the faculty members offering the program, but may in no case exceed nine credit hours. Students participating in an accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program must adhere to the policies for "Seniors Eligible for Graduate Credit." A student pursuing an accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program must have an overall cumulative GPA of at least 3.30 in the term prior to the student's enrollment in coursework that will apply to the master's degree; however, individual departments may require more rigorous standards.

In addition, the following instructions would be available in an operations guide. (For the undergraduate program, this would be in the Curricular Submission Guide and on any forms used for submitting proposals for new programs of this type.)

Departments and colleges may propose to offer accelerated combined bachelor's/master's programs. These proposals must be approved by the Curriculum Committees of both the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils. Students must apply to, and be admitted to, the Graduate School before receiving a master's degree.

Students participating in an accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program must demonstrate exceptional undergraduate academic performance in their major field of study, and must follow the policies listed in the Undergraduate Catalog for "Seniors Eligible for Graduate Credit." Limiting participation in an accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program to exceptional undergraduate students helps ensure that participating students will be adequately prepared for the expectations they will encounter in graduate-level course work. Students pursuing an accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program must have an overall cumulative GPA of at least 3.30 in the term prior to enrollment in coursework that will apply to the master's degree. Individual departments and schools may impose higher GPA requirements for their accelerated combined bachelor's/master's programs, and may also impose additional requirements (completion of specific courses, submission of a personal statement, an interview with an admission committee, and so forth).

An accelerated combined bachelor's/master's program may allow a participating student to apply a maximum of nine graduate-level credit hours, in 400- or 500-level courses, to satisfy senior-level disciplinary elective requirements in the student's bachelor's degree program. Proposals to offer these accelerated combined programs should include a cover letter, with endorsements from the appropriate department head and college dean (or dean's designee), that:

- (1) describes how the proposed accelerated combined program preserves, and meets, the program-level learning objectives of the bachelor's degree while allowing some of a student's bachelor's degree requirements to be met through graduate-level course work; and
- (2) describes the mechanisms in place to ensure that the undergraduate students enrolled in a graduate-level course through the policies listed in "Seniors Eligible for Graduate Credit" are held to the academic standards appropriate for graduate students in the course.

Stehle: Catherine will send an email to the APC members for an electronic vote on our two proposals.

❖ On 1-18-18 an email was sent to the APC members to submit their votes for proposals 1 and 2.

All members voted "Yes" to approve both proposals. The proposals are moving forward with recommendation for approval to the Graduate Council.

- 3.** New credentialing process: on January 10, 2018, there was a joint meeting with the Credentials Committee and the Academic Policy Committee to review and discuss the proposed new credentialing process. Both committees unanimously approved the new policy.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Cox
Graduate Council Liaison