



July 29, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Graduate Faculty

FROM: Ronald Rogers

SUBJECT: Report of Graduate Council and Graduate School Activities for 2005-2006

Policy Changes

1. Health Insurance Benefits for Graduate Assistants: Health insurance benefits for UA graduate assistants will begin in fall 2006. The Graduate Council's support over several academic years was a key factor in making this benefit available to graduate assistants.

2. Time Limits Extension Request for Doctoral Students: The Council reviewed the College of Education's policy regarding time limits extension requests for doctoral students. Finding that the policy had been successful for more than 10 years in the College, the University-wide policy was revised similarly. The Council unanimously passed the following policy for all UA doctoral students:

Time Limits Extension Request

*“Under compelling circumstances beyond the student's control, a student may petition for a one-semester extension to the seven-year time limit (or eight-year time limit for the selected programs *noted above). If the one-semester extension is recommended by the department head and college dean (if required by the college dean), and subsequently approved by the graduate dean, the extension will not require the student to validate any out-of-date UA or transfer courses previously approved for the plan of study.*”

If a student fails to complete all degree requirements within the time limit for the student's doctoral program or within a one-semester extension approved as noted above, the student will be dropped from the doctoral program. To complete a doctoral degree, the student must reapply for admission. Graduate Catalog policies do not provide the option to revalidate either UA or transfer courses completed more than six years prior to the date of admission. A readmitted student therefore would be able to apply to the new admission only those courses approved by the department and Graduate School and completed within the prior 6 years (18 fall, spring, and summer semesters)."

*The phrase "noted above" in the first paragraph of the policy refers to the several doctoral programs shown in the Catalog as allowing 8 years for completion because their students are admitted directly from a baccalaureate to a doctoral program.

3. Waiver of the graduate admissions test policy for the Higher Education EdD Program:

The Council approved a proposal to allow Higher Education EdD applicants to request a graduate admissions test (GRE or MAT) waiver if they fall into one of the following categories:

- The candidate is or has been employed in a position with significant administrative responsibilities related to the field of higher education administration (most often this would be mid-upper level administration, but could also include academic administration, such as division/department chair)
- The candidate has five or more years of appropriate full-time post-baccalaureate work experience.

Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Meeting one of the criteria will not result in waiver of the graduate admissions test unless the admissions committee is satisfied that the candidate has otherwise evidenced the academic and professional qualifications necessary for success in the program.

The Graduate School's minimum standards will continue to be used for all applicants to determine eligibility for regular admission, including GPA requirements and GRE/MAT requirements (if standardized testing is not waived for the applicant).

Resolution of the Graduate Council

The Graduate Council adopted unanimously the resolution below commending Dean Ronald Rogers for his outstanding leadership as Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School.

WHEREAS, Dr. Ronald Rogers has faithfully served The University of Alabama as Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School since August 16, 1991; and

WHEREAS, as Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Rogers provided outstanding leadership and exemplified the highest ideals of graduate education; and

WHEREAS, Dean Rogers showed a strong and steadfast commitment to the highest quality of teaching, research, scholarship, and service to the benefit of graduate students and graduate faculty; and

WHEREAS, Dean Rogers provided continual guidance and support to the Graduate Student Association and African-American Graduate Student Association; and

WHEREAS, Dean Rogers provided exemplary leadership of the Graduate Council and its committees;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the 2005-2006 Graduate Council recognizes Dean Ronald Rogers for his outstanding service to the University, expresses its sincere and heartfelt thanks to Dean Rogers, and wishes Dean Rogers all the best for his retirement.

Activities of the Committees of the Graduate Council

Committee on Admissions and Recruitment: (Dr. Edward Schnee, Chair; Dr. Silas Blackstock; Dr. Marsha Houston; Dr. Janis O. O'Donnell; Dr. Robert P. Taylor; Khiela Holmes; Dr. Pat Harrison—Graduate School Representative).

The Committee on Admissions and Recruitment proposed the policy change described in the preceding section: waiver of the admissions test score for the Higher Education EdD program.

The Council has a policy that allows graduate programs to develop “bridge” programs for international graduate applicants who hold three-year bachelor’s degrees from countries where that credential is not deemed equivalent to the four-year U.S. bachelor’s degree. By completing a fourth “bridge” year of undergraduate study at the University, international students from recognized foreign institutions with three-year bachelor’s degree will have the opportunity to enter graduate study without completing a separate four-year bachelor’s degree. Each graduate program wishing to participate in the bridge year program submits a proposal to the Graduate Council Committee on Admissions and Recruitment. In May 2006, the committee approved a proposal for all master’s programs in the College of Commerce and Business Administration to offer an international bridge option for international applicants.

Committee on Financial Aid: (Dr. Diane Johnson, Chair; Dr. Sheila Black; Dr. Kari Frederickson; Dr. Loy A. Singleton; Dr. John Wiest; Dr. Vivian Wright; Dr. Pat Harrison—Graduate School Representative)

Two types of Graduate Council Fellowships, Regular Graduate Council Fellowships and Graduate Council Research and Creative Activity Fellowships, were awarded for the 2006-2007 academic year. All fellowships will carry full tuition scholarships, as well as stipends of \$15,000 (compared to \$14,000 during the last few years).

During 2005-2006, the Financial Aid Committee considered 193 nominations for Graduate Council Fellowships for 2006-2007. A total of 66 students received fellowship awards from the available pool. Students who are beginning graduate study at The University of Alabama in 2006-2007 received 35 of the 48 Regular Fellowships.

In addition to the \$15,000 stipend, some fellows were selected to receive \$5,000 supplements. The supplements were awarded to three students, including two new fellows for 2006-2007 and one fellow for 2005-2006, who will continue with a second year of the supplement in 2006-2007.

Committee on Research and New Programs: (Dr. Nancy Rubin, Chair; Dr. Kagendo Mutua; Dr. Jerry Rosiek; Dr. Roy Ann Sherrod; Dr. John Schmitt—Graduate School Representative).

The Committee had no new graduate degree program proposals or research issues presented to it this year.

Committee on Program and Degree Requirements: (Dr. Natalie Adams, Chair; Dr. Elizabeth Aversa; Dr. Martyn Dixon; Dr. Mark Klinger; Dr. Carol Pierman; Dr. Charles Sox; Mr. Dennis Bubrig (student representative); Dr. John Schmitt—Graduate School Representative)

The Committee reviewed the UA policy and College of Education’s policy regarding time limits extension requests for doctoral students and proposed the policy described in the “Policy Changes” section of this report.

Committee on Teaching and Research Awards: (Dr. Bruce Barrett, Chair; Dr. John Baker; Prof. Robin Behn; Dr. Allan Kaufman; Dr. Olivia Kendrick; Dr. Elaine Martin; Dr. John Schmitt—Graduate School Representative).

The Committee selected the following winners of Graduate School Awards:

Award	Level	Winner	Department
Teaching	Masters	Tara Tyson	English (Creative Writing)
Teaching	Doctoral	Courtney Carpenter	Comm. & Info. Sciences
Research	Masters	Laura Minnich	Anthropology
Research	Doctoral	Kalyan Srinivasan	Mechanical Engr.

New Award. The Council approved the Committee’s recommendation that the Graduate School establish a seventh award for graduate students, “Outstanding Service by a Graduate Student.” The Graduate School will solicit nominations from the various Colleges and Schools, with the winner’s being selected by the Teaching and Research Awards Committee. The University-wide winner will receive Honors Week recognition in the form of a \$500 award plus a framed certificate from the Graduate School. The Graduate School will present an Award of Merit to each divisional winner who does not win the UA-wide service award. The Council suggested that, if possible, each College and School during Honors Week ceremonies in the division should provide a \$100 award to its service award winner. Additional information on the procedures and timeline for the service award is available at the awards section of the Graduate School’s website: <http://graduate.ua.edu/awards/index.html>

Applications, Enrollment, and Degrees Conferred

1. Applications Submitted: There were 6,219 initial graduate applications (5,260, initial *degree* applications) in 2005, compared to 6,181 initial graduate applications (5,237 initial *degree* applications) submitted in 2004. Thus, there was a slight increase in applications, despite continuing widespread issues related to immigration and applications from international applicants to U.S. institutions.

2. Applications Completed: After initial graduate applications are submitted, applicants submit additional required materials (e.g., transcripts and admission tests scores) to complete their applications for review by departmental faculty. About 80% of applications were completed in 2005, which is comparable to the percentage completed in 2004. A total of 4,987 graduate applications (4,050 degree applications) were completed by applicants and reviewed by departments in 2005, which was virtually the same as 2004. A total of 937 nondegree applications were completed in 2005.

3. Acceptance Rate: The quality of degree applications in 2005 was similar to the previous year. There was an acceptance rate of 60.9% in 2005, compared to 58.9% in 2004. The degree applications completed in 2005 resulted in 2,466 acceptances, 1,078 rejections, and 506 acceptances for international applicants awaiting financial documents or waitlisted by departments.

4. Enrollment: Total graduate enrollment at The University of Alabama for fall 2005 was 3,693, which is comparable to enrollment of 3,756 in fall 2004 and continues the trend of high enrollment levels over the last few years. UA graduate enrollment has increased almost 10.6% since fall 2001. Overall, the number of *new* students enrolling in graduate programs continues to increase, with a total of 1,420 students enrolling as new or as former students in new programs in fall 2005. The figure for fall 2004 was 1,141, which reflects an increase of over 24%.

5. Degrees Conferred: The total of 1,538 graduate degrees conferred during the 2004-2005 academic year included 154 doctoral, 107 Ed.S., and 1,277 master's. The total is higher than the 1,329 graduate degrees awarded in 2003-2004.

Financial Support for Graduate Students During 2005-2006

1. Department Assistantships: Funds are assigned to each department to provide assistantships plus tuition awards. In fall 2005, the total number of 0.50 full time equivalent assistantship awards funded by the University and external agencies was 1,181. An assistantship requires a number of service hours each week, either as a teaching assistant or for research projects, and the number of hours determines the amount of stipend and tuition received. The minimum level of stipend for assistantships of 20 hours per week for the 2005-2006 academic year was \$9,800. The average level of stipend for assistantships of 20 hours per week for the 2005-2006 academic year was \$10,255. These assistantships are a crucial element within the recruitment process and, along with the fellowships described above, provide a valuable enticement for students applying to UA for graduate study.

2. Presidential Graduate Fellowship Supplement Fund: The fund augments graduate fellowships for new fellows. In the 2005-2006 academic year, 66 students benefited from the fund by receiving supplements of \$1,500. An additional four fellows received second- and third-year awards of \$5,000.

3. Graduate Council Fellowships: During the 2005-2006 academic year, 66 graduate students held Graduate Council Fellowships. The level of stipend for each fellow was \$14,000 for the academic year, with an additional full tuition scholarship.

4. National Alumni Association Collegiate License Tag Endowed Graduate Education Fund: The NAA license tag fund provides annual fellowships of \$14,000 plus full tuition awards for residents of the State of Alabama. The fund supported fellowship awards for 31 graduate students in 2005-2006. In addition, \$63,050 was provided for fellowships for Law School students.

5. National Alumni Graduate Scholarship Program: The program awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to one graduate student in each college or school offering a post-baccalaureate degree.

6. Alabama Heritage Graduate Scholarship Program: The program provides a one-year graduate tuition scholarship for Alabama residents who are children or grandchildren of UA graduates. In 2005-2006, 17 graduate students received the Alabama Heritage Scholarship.

7. Graduate Student Research and Travel Grants Fund: In 2005-2006, \$38,709 was awarded to 166 graduate students for research and presentations at professional research conferences.

Minority Affairs

1. Enrollment: Enrollment of African-American graduate students at UA is high and increases every year. African-American students comprised 11.2% of total graduate enrollment in the fall of 2005, with a record high of 414 students enrolled (of a total of 3,693 graduate students). The percentage of African-American graduate students was 10.4% in fall of 2004 (390 students) and 9.6% in fall 2003 (362 students).

2. Degrees Awarded: The number of minority students receiving graduate degrees at the University also remains high. We awarded graduate degrees to 175 minority students in 2004-2005 (summer, fall, and spring terms), which is 11.4% of our total of 1,538 graduate degree recipients. We awarded graduate degrees to 143 minority students in 2003-2004 and 145 minority students in 2002-2003, which were 10.8 % and 11.1%, respectively, of our total graduate degree recipients.

3. National Recognition: The UA Graduate School has received national recognition for its graduation rates for African-American students. The Graduate School was recognized in the July 14, 2005 issue of the journal *Black Issues in Higher Education*, which contained the annual report of the "Top 100 Degree Producers." The data reflected numbers of graduate degrees awarded in 2003-2004. The University of Alabama Graduate School tied for the rank of 29 for "All Disciplines Combined-African-American Doctorate" among 626 institutions.

4. Fellowship Funding: We continue to have valuable fellowship programs for recruitment and retention of minority students. Our fellowship programs are aimed specifically at increasing the enrollment and retention of minority graduate students and providing them with preparation for careers as college professors. Since 1988, the Graduate School has provided almost \$3.5 million in minority fellowship stipends and tuition scholarships. Due to expanded Graduate School recruitment and fellowship activities, there were more participants in the minority graduate fellowship programs during 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 than in any previous years. Programs that are aimed specifically at increasing the enrollment of minority students include the following:

- ***SREB/ACHE Minority Faculty Fellows:*** The SREB Doctoral Scholars Program encourages ethnic minority students to pursue doctoral degrees and become college professors. The UA Graduate School holds the #1 ranking for number of SREB doctoral scholars. Since 1993, the Graduate School has enrolled 50 SREB Minority Doctoral Scholars. A total of 19 SREB scholars in 2004-05 and 21 in 2005-06 were supported with fellowships, scholarships, and department assistantships.
- ***Future Faculty Fellows:*** Students from minority groups who plan to become college or university professors receive departmental nominations for the Future Faculty Fellows Program. A total of 35 graduate students have received Future Faculty Fellowships since 1991. In 2004-2005, the Graduate School supported five Future Faculty Fellows. Similarly, in 2005-06 the Graduate School supported six Future Faculty Fellows with stipends and scholarships.
- ***Joint Faculty Development:*** The Joint Faculty Development Program was implemented in several Alabama historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) for practicing college teachers who do not have a terminal degree. Faculty members participating in this program receive support from their home institution and a stipend and full tuition scholarship from the UA Graduate School. Institutions participating in this program include Alabama State University, Alabama A & M University, and Oakwood College. A total of 31 fellows have received stipends through this program since 1989. In 2004-2005, four Joint Faculty Development Fellowships supported faculty members of partner institutions. Six HBCU faculty members participated in the Joint Faculty Development Program in 2005-06.
- ***UA/Stillman College Joint Faculty Staff Development Program:*** The major objectives of the program are to provide support for faculty and staff of Stillman College, an HBCU in Tuscaloosa, AL, to complete degree requirements for a graduate degree and to provide inservice and staff development. In both 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, the Graduate School provided tuition scholarships for five faculty and staff members of Stillman College.
- ***NSF “Bridge to the Doctorate” Program:*** Beginning in fall 2007, the Graduate School will participate in the National Science Foundation “Bridge to the Doctorate” program, which will provide a \$30,000 annual stipend for students to pursue master’s degree in one of the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines.

Undergraduate students that have participated in the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation are eligible to apply to the Bridge to the Doctorate program.

5. UA African-American Graduate Student Association: The Graduate School provides funds and other forms of support for the UA African-American Graduate Student Association. The group sponsors panel discussions, information fairs, and receptions. The association's president serves as a representative to the Graduate Council. The Graduate School provides travel funds for officers to attend the National Black Graduate Student Conferences. Our officers set up a UA table at the national conference and recruit potential graduate students for UA.

Other News

1. Graduate School Preview Day: On September 22, 2005, the Graduate School held its annual "Graduate School Preview Day," consisting of training on the application process, breakout sessions on fields of graduate study, and free practice administrations of admissions tests by Kaplan, Inc. Approximately 400 prospective graduate students attended the workshop. We will continue this annual event and have scheduled the next Preview Day for September 21, 2006. Visit http://graduate.ua.edu/events/preview_day.html for more information.

2. Orientation for New Graduate Students: On August 17, 2005, the office of Graduate Student Services provided an all-day orientation for new graduate students. Among the topics covered were important policies and procedures for graduate students, including registration, recreational facilities, child care, financial aid, grant writing, dealing with department politics, avoiding graduate student stress, and the Internet. The next orientation will be August 19, 2006.

3. Workshop for New GTAs: The Bryant Conference Center was the site of the 19th annual workshop, held on August 18-19, 2005. Distinguished faculty, staff, and Graduate Teaching Fellows presented information on topics such as preparation of course syllabi and lectures; the use of active and collaborative learning techniques in the classroom; leading discussion and lab sections; and using multimedia, the Internet, and other electronic approaches in the classroom. There was also discussion of important policies and legal issues. All of the new GTAs were videotaped while teaching and received both oral and written evaluations of teaching strengths and weaknesses. More than 230 new GTAs attended the Workshop. The next GTA workshop will be August 17-18, 2006. For more information, visit http://graduate.ua.edu/events/workshop_gta_program.html.

4. Thesis and Dissertation Seminar: In 2005-2006 the Graduate School again provided a "Completing a Thesis or Dissertation" seminar twice in the fall and twice in the spring for more than 120 graduate students. The website http://graduate.ua.edu/events/seminar_td.html describes the 2005-2006 seminars.

5. Awards for Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation: This year's winners were: Thesis—Chrystal Schrum, Psychology, (thesis chair, Dr. Randall Salekin); and Dissertation—Robert Riser, History (dissertation co-chairs, Drs. Tony Freyer and Kari Frederickson). All divisional

nominees who did not win a University-wide award received an Award of Merit from the Graduate School. Award winners are listed at

<http://uanews.ua.edu/aneews2005/may05/topgrad051105.htm>

6. Graduate.ua.edu and Other Electronic Activities: Enhancements continue for the Graduate School virtual site (<http://graduate.ua.edu>) and our other electronic activities for recruitment, application and admission of new students and services for current students and faculty. Examples include the following:

- A recruitment tool initially developed in 2003-2004 and extensively updated and distributed in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 is the Graduate School Viewbook, a self-contained source of information for prospective applicants. The Viewbook is available on a small CD, which is reproduced in large quantities for distribution at professional conferences and recruitment fairs. The CD is provided to departments. The Viewbook also is found on the Graduate School's website (<http://graduate.ua.edu/viewbook/>). During 2005-2006, several departments utilized our graduate assistants in development and production of individualized department CD viewbooks, which departmental faculty distribute extensively at professional conferences.
- Between May 2004 and May 2005, the Graduate School added over 5,000 names to its general prospect database, including the database of prospects identified by departments and Graduate School staff, the database of prospects submitting the "request for information form" from our Internet site, and our "GRE prospect database" built from electronic files of GRE scores sent to us by applicants. We have added over 48,000 prospective students into our databases since they were created in April 1998. Names and contact information for prospective students are shared with departments via e-mail, and departments are encouraged to use this information for personal and individualized recruitment of applicants. In 2005-2006, we also added over 1,800 names from a national McNair database.
- The Graduate School has developed a number of electronic resources for use in its own recruitment activities and departmental recruitment. Several PowerPoint presentations were updated in 2005-2006, used at our own seminars, and shared with departments. An electronic slide show on CD-ROM was developed and contains photos regarding research and other activities relevant to graduate education. The research slides are shown at our recruitment tables during recruitment events. Graduate departments have modified our slide shows for use in their individual departmental recruitment activities.
- Several new activities have been implemented and will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our application and admissions process. The Graduate School purchased equipment and software to provide imaging of transcripts that accompany graduate applications. We recently began development of a workflow process for online review of graduate applications by department faculty. We are using the University's new Banner student information system.
- The online graduate application on our Internet site accounts for over 85% of our graduate applications. Continual improvements have resulted in an increased ease in submitting applications and quicker, more efficient processing. For example, online

- application data are automatically uploaded into our new Banner system, and online applicants may pay their application fees with credit cards.
- We use numerous online methods to assist applicants with the admissions and registration process and to provide information to departments that will assist in recruiting high-quality students. Departments receive automatic e-mails when applicants apply online, and applicants receive periodic acknowledgment and reminder e-mails following their online application submission. During 2005-2006, we enhanced an extensive tracking system to send emails or phone calls to applicants to inform them of the status of their incomplete applications. All applicants may check the status of their applications at mybama.ua.edu. We also send periodic e-mails to new students, after their acceptance to a degree program, which provide information about the University, encourage admitted students to attend UA, and instruct students in online course registration procedures.
 - For current graduate students and faculty members, required forms (e.g., transfer of credit, admission to candidacy, and application for degree) are on our virtual site and can be completed on students' computers, ready to print.
 - Most Graduate School publications and announcements are included on the website. Publications include the *Graduate Catalog*, *Graduate School Brochure*, *Graduate Program Procedures and Policy Guide*, *Thesis and Dissertation Guide*, *Graduate Assistant Guide*, *Semester Deadlines for Graduate School*, *Financial Aid Handbook*, and the *Graduate School Annual Report*.
 - University-wide policy changes for graduate students (e.g., admissions policies and residency requirements) are placed on the site immediately following approval.
 - The overall design of the Graduate School's virtual site continues to be enhanced, and new features are added.
 - During 2005-2006, a full-time programmer analyst was added to the staff. The programmer analyst and graduate assistants serve as the information technology resources for the Graduate School and assist with our website development, online applications, and other activities. The Graduate School's technology staff also serves as a resource for graduate departments and provides consultation and assistance to departments in their website design, prospect databases, etc.

7. *Departments' Guide to Administration of Graduate Assistantships*: The Graduate School publishes a *Departments' Guide to Administration of Graduate Assistantships* (<http://www.graduate.ua.edu/publications/dept/guidecover.html>). The *Guide* includes all of the guidelines and qualification requirements governing the appointment and administration of graduate assistantships and clarifies difficult but key areas such as the impact of income and payroll taxes on student stipends and tuition awards, the application of SACS rules for classroom teaching, and permitted combinations of work and enrollment hours. The *Guide* is included on the Graduate School's website. Workshops about these procedures are held annually for faculty. In addition, all of the Graduate School forms relating to the appointment of graduate assistants and the processing of tuition awards are available from the website.

8. *Academic Program Review*: Again this year, the Graduate Council had at least one member serve on each academic program review committee for departments with graduate programs.