

August 30, 1999

MEMORANDUM

TO: Graduate Faculty

FROM Ronald Rogers

SUBJECT: Report of Graduate Council and Graduate School Activities for 1998-99

Policy Changes

Provisional Language Admission.

An international graduate applicant to the University of Alabama may be considered for "provisional language admission" if he or she does not meet the minimum TOEFL score requirement of 550 (i.e., he or she has a lower TOEFL score or has not taken the TOEFL). The applicant must meet all other admissions criteria, as stated for regular or conditional admission on pages 71-72 of the *Graduate Catalog*, meet all financial and immigration requirements, and be recommended by the individual University of Alabama graduate department to receive provisional language admission. Students who have provisional language admission are accepted to the Graduate School, but must attend full-time intensive English language instruction at the English Language Institute (ELI). The student must complete the ELI's Intensive English Program with a minimum GPA of 3.5 in the advanced levels (Levels 4, 5, and 6) OR earn a score of at least 550 on the TOEFL before he or she will be allowed to enroll in graduate courses and/or be awarded a graduate assistantship.* When a student with provisional language admission begins enrollment in graduate courses, he or she must meet all other requirements for conditional admission, as stated on page 72 of the *Graduate Catalog*.

**In special circumstances, the Graduate School, department, and ELI may grant permission for a student who has completed Level 4 or higher of the ELI with a 3.5 GPA to enroll in one graduate course per semester while completing the remaining levels of the ELI. The specific course must be approved by the instructor and department prior to enrollment.*

Renewal of Graduate Council Fellowships.

A student who receives a Graduate Council Fellowship may *not* be nominated to renew the fellowship within the same category, (i.e., Regular, Research, or Dissertation/Thesis), but *may* be nominated for the other categories of Graduate Council Fellowships. With this option, a student possibly could receive funding through all three categories of Graduate Council Fellowships. The maximum period of Graduate Council Fellowship funding for a student would thus be three years.

University-wide Doctoral Time Limit.

The Council passed a policy increasing the doctoral time limit to 7 years. The revised doctoral time-limit policy that includes the university-wide change and the MLC change is as follows:

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within the seven-year period following admission to the doctoral program, with the following specific

exceptions: psychology and modern languages and classics (eight years if entering the doctoral program with a baccalaureate, not master's, degree) and the doctor of public administration (eight years). Previous graduate credit may be applied to the doctoral degree if the credit was earned during the six-year period prior to admission to the doctoral program.

Time to Read Thesis Manuscripts.

There has been a long-standing policy on the minimum time a doctoral student must give the dissertation committee to read the manuscript before to the final defense; however, there has not been a similar policy for master's thesis committees. The Council this year passed a policy requiring thesis-writing master's students to give members of the examining committee a minimum of two weeks to read the thesis before the final oral examination.

Activities of the Committees of the Graduate Council

Committee on Financial Aid: (Dr. Brian Gray, Chair; Dr. Margaret Johnson; Dr. Carol Pierman, Dr. David Roskos-Ewoldsen, Dr. Will Schreiber; Dr. R. Carl Westerfield; Dr. Pat Harrison--Graduate School Representative).

From the 170 nominations for fellowships, 62 students received awards from the available pool of \$628,500. The fellowships carry full tuition and fee scholarships. A summary of the awarded fellowships appears in the table below.

Fellowship Type	Amount	Number Awarded
Regular	\$10,000	39
Thesis	\$10,500	3
Dissertation	\$11,000	7
Research	\$10,000	13
TOTAL	\$628,500	62

Students who are beginning graduate study in 1999-2000 received 35 of the 39 Regular Fellowships.

In addition, 15 fellowships were awarded for the summer of 1999 with stipends of \$3,500 each. There were 8 Dissertation Fellowships, 4 Research Fellowships, and 3 Regular Fellowships in the group of summer fellowships.

The Committee completed a follow-up analysis of students who held Graduate Council Fellowships during the 1993-94 to 1998-99 academic years. The data are summarized below:

- The Graduate Council Fellows had average graduate GPAs ranging from 3.75 to 3.89 during enrollment in their graduate programs, in comparison to the university wide averages of 3.7 for 500 level courses and 3.3 for 600 level courses.
- Data taken from the Graduate Council Fellows' original graduate applications indicated that average undergraduate GPAs generally were in the 3.5 and 3.6 range, and average GRE scores were in the low 2000s.
- Data about our first Graduate Council Research Fellows, those that held fellowships in 1997-98, indicated that a total of 79% of the Research Fellows prepared proposals for grants or funded research and 64% of the Research Fellows received funding for their grant and research proposals

Committee on Research and New Programs. (Dr. Stephen J. Thoma, Chair; Dr. Deborah Crown; Dr. Jeri Duncan; Dr. Steven Prentice-Dunn; Dr. Jack W. Sulentic; Dr. John Schmitt--Graduate School Representative).

The committee had no new graduate program proposals to consider this year. The majority of the committee's time was spent working as part of the larger Committee on Graduate Faculty Membership.

Committee on Program and Degree Requirements. (Dr. Joseph A. Hornsby, Chair; Dr. Thomas Lee; Dr. Kathryn Oths; Dr. Harry Price; Dr. Elizabeth K. Wilson; Mr. Sal Mercogliano, Student Representative; Dr. John Schmitt--Graduate School Representative).

The committee evaluated a number of long-standing policies affecting matriculated students. The Council approved committee-proposed policy changes for the university-wide doctoral degree time limit, the time limit for modern languages and classics doctoral students, the time thesis students must give allow for the thesis committee to read the manuscript prior to the oral defense meeting, The committee also worked with several departments on submission of fourth-year review reports for master's programs offered via the QUEST program.

Committee on Admissions and Recruitment. (Dr. Joan Atkinson, Chair; Dr. Gary Copeland; Dr. Nathan Green; Dr. Jamie Satcher; Dr. Paul Stuart; Mr. David Arrington, Student Representative; Dr. Pat Harrison--Graduate School Representative).

As part of a recommended 4-year review procedure, the committee reviewed data for several departments that have been approved to waive or modify the admissions test requirement: Master of Social Work, College of Engineering, Department of Criminal Justice, and Department of Art. The committee noted that waiving the admissions tests was associated with a strong increase in applications for Social Work and Criminal Justice. The association between numbers of applications and waiving the admissions test score was less clear for the College of Engineering and the Department of Art; the committee discussed that other factors may affect graduate application rates for these departments, including increased job opportunities at the undergraduate level and other national trends in the field. The committee also noted that, even when applications increased for a department, departments tended to admit about the same number of applicants. The committee concluded that departments seemed to maintain high standards for admission of graduate students, even when admissions test scores were not used.

The Department of Theater and Dance was approved to eliminate the admission test requirement for their master's applicants. The Capstone College of Nursing was approved to eliminate the admission test requirement for regular admission, if the applicant holds an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher (or 3.0 or higher on the last 60 semester hours). The Capstone College of Nursing was approved to modify the requirements for conditional

admission to include a GPA of 2.5 overall, PLUS a score of at least 1500 on the GRE or 50 on the MAT.

Committee on Teaching and Research Awards. (Dr. Donald L. Hooks, Chair; Dr. Barbara Chotiner; Dr. James D. Leeper; Dr. Duk-Won Park; Dr. Inez C. Rovegno; Dr. S. Allen Wilcoxon; Dr. John Schmitt--Graduate School Representative).

The Committee selected the following winners of Graduate School Awards:

Award	Level	Winner	Department
Teaching	Masters	Andrew Duncan	English (Creative Writing)
Teaching	Doctoral	Amy Vessel	Elementary Education
Research	Masters	Peggy Renner	Psychology
Research	Doctoral	Kevin Roe	Biological Sciences

Committee on Graduate Faculty Membership. (Dr. Jack W. Sulentic, Chair; Dr. Lynn Beck; Dr. Deborah Crown; Dr. Jeri Dunkin; Dr. James D. Leeper; Dr. Steven Prentice-Dunn; Dr. David Roskos-Ewoldsen; Dr. Paul H. Stuart; Dr. Stephen J. Thoma; Mr. Sal Mercogliano, Student Representative).

This year the committee completed the review of the departments' and colleges' proposed criteria for graduate faculty membership, concluding a three-year process. Beginning with the 1999 fall semester, applicants will be appointed for 6-year renewable terms as either associate or full members of the graduate faculty, following criteria proposed by each department or college and approved by the Graduate Council.

Financial Support for Graduate Students

1. The University employed 1,157 graduate assistants, with an average stipend of \$8,638 per year for a 0.5 FTE assignment.
2. *The Presidential Graduate Fellowship Supplement Fund* augments graduate fellowships for new fellows and those preparing for careers in teaching. In the 1998-99 academic year, 47 students benefited from this fund by receiving supplements ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000.
3. *The National Alumni Association Collegiate License Tag Endowed Graduate Education Fund* provided fellowships of \$10,000 each to 27 students in 1998-99, and it will fund 27 students in 1999-00. The fund is for residents of the State of Alabama.
4. A total of \$22,831 was awarded to 116 students from the *Graduate Student Research and Travel Grants Fund* in 1998-99.
5. Again this year, the Graduate Council had at least one member serve on all committees that conducted academic program reviews of departments having graduate degree programs.

Minority Affairs

1. **SREB Fellowships:** The SREB Minority Doctoral Scholars Program encourages ethnic minority students to pursue doctoral degrees and become college professors. The UA Graduate School held the #1 ranking for number of SREB doctoral scholars in 1997-1998 and the #2 ranking in 1998-1999 (behind the University of Kentucky). It is anticipated that UA will reclaim the #1 ranking for total number of SREB scholars.
2. **Future Faculty Fellows Program:** This program is for minority-group students who plan to become college or university professors. Future Faculty Fellows receive a combination of annual stipends from the Graduate School, departmental assistantships, and full tuition scholarships for up to four years of full-time graduate study. A total of 19 doctoral students have received Future Faculty Fellowships since 1991, and 7 have received their degrees.
3. **Joint Minority Faculty Development Program Fellowships:** The Joint Faculty Development Program was implemented for practicing college teachers in Alabama HBCUs 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. A total of 19 fellows have participated in the program since 1989, and eight have received their degree. Academic year 1998-1999 was a banner year for the program--six Joint Faculty Development Fellowships were awarded to faculty members of partner institutions, more than any other year since the inception of the program.
4. **UA/Stillman College Joint Faculty Staff Development Program:** The major objectives of the program are to provide support for Stillman College faculty and staff to complete degree requirements for a graduate degree and to provide in-service and staff development. The Graduate School provides tuition scholarships for 5-10 Stillman faculty and staff each semester.

Other News

1. Workshop for New GTAs. The Bryant Conference Center was the site of the 13th annual workshop, held on August 18-20, 1999. Distinguished faculty, staff, and Graduate Teaching Fellows presented information on topics such as preparation of course syllabi and lectures, different models of instruction for different teaching situations, leading discussion and lab sections, and using multimedia and the Internet. There was also discussion of important policies and legal issues. All of the new GTAs were videotaped while teaching and received feedback on teaching strengths and areas for improvement.
2. Orientation for New Graduate Students. On August 18, 1999, the office of Graduate Student Services provided an all-day orientation for new graduate students. Among the topics covered were registration, recreational facilities, dining facilities, child care, financial aid, grant writing, dealing with department politics, avoiding graduate student stress, and the Internet.
3. Awards for Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation. This year's winners were: Thesis—Stefano Lepre (Aerospace Engineering) and Dissertation—Igor Terekhov (Physics). All divisional nominees who did not win a University-wide award received an Award of Merit from the Graduate School, recognizing the high quality of their thesis or dissertation.

4. Enrollment and Degrees Conferred. Graduate enrollment for the 1998 fall term was 3,391, including 547 off-campus students. The 1998-99 academic year total of 1,294 graduate degrees awarded included 135 doctoral degrees, 97 educational specialist degrees, and 1,062 master's degrees.

5. Web Site. Modifications and enhancements continue for the Graduate School web site (www.ua.edu/graduate/). An electronic application for U.S. applicants was added in February 1997, and 15-20% of applicants submit on-line applications. International applicants can also submit on-line applications. New features included on our web site in 1998-1999 were a financial aid handbook, links to financial aid web sites, master Graduate School calendar, and checklists and forms for masters and doctoral students. Most Graduate School publications and announcements are included on the site, including the *Graduate Catalog*, *Graduate Program Procedures and Policy Guide*, *Thesis and Dissertation Guide*, *Semester Deadlines for Graduate School*, and the *1997-98 Graduate School Annual Report and Statistical Analysis*. University-wide policy changes for graduate students (e.g., admissions policies, residency requirements) are placed on the site immediately following approval.

6. Graduate School Recruitment Workshop. On September 10, 1998, the Graduate School held a workshop on "Applying to Graduate or Professional School," 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 500 prospective graduate students attended the workshop. We will continue this annual event and have scheduled another workshop for September 9, 1999.

7. Program Merger. As part of the University's "Principles and Procedures for Merger or Discontinuance of Academic Units," the Council discussed the proposed merger of the program in Health Education and Promotion into the College of Human Environmental Sciences. Representatives of the Colleges of Education and HES provided the Council with background information and a rationale for the merger. The Council unanimously supported the move, which resulted in a new Department of Health Sciences. The recommendation was given to Provost Barrett for her consideration.

8. Departments' Guide to Administration of Graduate Assistantships. Two workshops were held for faculty and staff to provide information about the activities of the Graduate School office. At the same time, the Graduate School published a *Department's Guide to Administration of Graduate Assistantships*. 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.

9. Thesis and Dissertation Seminar. In 1998-99 the Graduate School provided four seminars on completing a thesis or dissertation.