

TRANSMITTAL

DATE: April 23, 2004

TO: Rebecca Scott
Senate Council

FROM: Lissa Holland
Graduate Council

The Graduate Council met on April 8, 2004 and approved the following:

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Master's Degree – Change in Time Limit

Master's/Specialist Degrees. Activities used to satisfy degree requirements must be completed within **six** years preceding the proposed date of graduation. Extensions of time will be considered by the Graduate Council only upon written recommendation by the appropriate Director of Graduate Studies. No activity completed more than 10 calendar years preceding the proposed graduation date will be considered for graduation.

Programs may opt to extend or shorten the required time to complete the Master's degree. Those wanting to officially require a shorter or longer completion time must petition Graduate Council for approval. The program must demonstrate that the time limit of 6 years would be detrimental to the progress of their students or to the program itself. If extending the limit, the program must demonstrate how students will remain current in the field over the extended period. Such a change in time limit would apply to all students in the program.

Proposed date of change and those effected:

The change will be in effect for students admitted after Spring 2004.

Rationale:

1. This change will allow a more coherent, coordinated plan of study for students.

Students who take coursework in a concentrated time frame stay more current in their fields as they progress through the plan of study. The compact plan of study allows them to apply information from one course to another more effectively. Faculty can better coordinate curriculum if they are sure that the student body has had a coherent, shared set of courses. Students will be better able to succeed in final examinations if their course material is current.

2. This change will still allow part-time students sufficient time to complete a master's degree.

Students in a 36 credit program could take courses in the following manner:

One 3-credit course per semester in Fall-Spring x 6 years = 12 courses, 36 credits

One 3-credit courses Fall Spring Summer x 6 years = 18 courses, 54 credits

Two 3-credit courses per summer x 6 = 12 courses, 36 credits

Three 3 credit courses per summer x 6 = 18 courses, 54 credits

3. This change will allow more efficient use of University resources.

Because courses must be updated to reflect advances in knowledge, they change greatly over a decade. Students who have amassed outdated information in past coursework must often work with faculty to catch up again before final examinations. Often students need independent study courses to fill out past degree requirements for graduation. This patchwork approach at the end of the course of study is inefficient.

While faculty happy to help students move toward graduation, this kind of catch-up work is not the most effective use of faculty time, nor is it the best way for the student to receive a coherent education. The closer the preparatory coursework to the completion of the degree, the better for the program, the faculty, and the student.

4. We will align our requirements with most of our benchmarks.

A study of our benchmarks shows that the University of Kentucky has a longer time limit than all our benchmarks, equal to only one benchmark.

Proposal to Change the Time Limits for the Master's Degree

Current:

Time Limit for Degrees

Master's/Specialist Degrees. Activities used to satisfy degree requirements must be completed within eight years preceding the proposed date of graduation. Extensions of time will be considered by the Graduate Council only upon written recommendation by the appropriate Director of Graduate Studies. No activity completed more than **12** calendar years preceding the proposed graduation date will be considered for graduation.

Proposed:

Time Limit for Degrees

Master's/Specialist Degrees. Activities used to satisfy degree requirements must be completed within **six** years preceding the proposed date of graduation. Extensions of time will be considered by the Graduate Council only upon written recommendation by the appropriate Director of Graduate Studies. No activity completed more than **10** calendar years preceding the proposed graduation date will be considered for graduation.

Programs may opt to extend or shorten the required time to complete the Master's degree. Those wanting to officially require a shorter or longer completion time must petition Graduate Council for approval. The program must demonstrate that the time limit of 6 years would be detrimental to the progress of their students or to the program itself. If extending the limit, the program must demonstrate how students will remain current in the field over the extended period. Such a change in time limit would apply to all students in the program.

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A study of our benchmarks shows that the University of Kentucky has a longer time limit than all our benchmarks, equal to only one benchmark. See attached chart.

Potential problems:

1. What about programs that require more than 36 credit hours?

Below is a list of these programs those programs that require substantial hours are often planned, lock-step curricula ending with a professional certification test, and are intended to be for full-time students only. Some have substantial practica, internships, or project components which gain many hours in a concentrated time.

UK masters programs with more than 36 credit hours

Administration & Supervision Specialist: 39* Standard coursework required is 36

Master of Architecture 57 planned as a two-year curriculum

MFA (does not count) 60 treated as doctorate

Professional Master of Biomed Eng 42 courses, project internship

M.S. in Clinical Sciences 37/38

Master of Health Admin 44 planned as a two-year curriculum

Master of Hist. Preservation 48 2-year core; internship; project

M.S. in Nursing 40 planned as a two-year curriculum

Masters of Physician Asst.Studies 100 planned as a 2.5 year curriculum

MPA 45 planned as a two year curriculum

Master of Social Work 60 22 credits waived if student has
baccalaureate in SW

M.S. Special Education 39

2. What about older transfer work? Won't this penalize students who are returning to school after a hiatus?

This is an issue for Council to consider. I take the stance that knowledge changes quickly, and that methods and practices learned more than 10 years ago are far out of date in our fields.

Institution	Limit	Extension	Conditions	Notes
UKentucky	8 yrs	Up to 4 yrs	Council approval	
U Arizona	6 years	None		
UCLA	Program decides			Most are under 3 years
U Florida	Master's 7 years Specialist 7 years			Engineers must complete 30 credits within 5 years of graduation
U Georgia	6 years	Granted only for circumstances beyond control of student		
U Illinois	5 years	Yes, petition to Grad School	Departments can set a shorter limit	Can petition for older transfer work
U Iowa	Done by program.			Most have a set curriculum in 5-6 semesters. Transfer work will be taken up to 10 years
U Maryland	5 years			Transfer work is excepted
U Michigan	6 years	By petition		
U. Minnesota	7 years Specialist 12 years			
UNC	5 years	By petition		
NCCU	6 years		Unless stricter limit from program	Even if on approved leave of absence
OSU	Set by programs			

Penn State U	8 years	Possible	Programs may set shorter limit	
Purdue U	No prior coursework can be used if student has been inactive 5 years.			
U Texas	6 years	Older work acceptable only w dean's permission		
Texas A&M	MS & MA: 7 years			Other master's set own limit
U Virginia	MS: 5 years MA: 5 years ME: 7 years			

Plus: University of Louisville: 6 years, with possible time extension.