

**Douglas Michael**  
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs  
Dorothy Salmon Professor of Law  
151 Law Building

May 7, 2020

Prof. Jennifer Bird-Pollan  
Chair, University Senate Council  
Main Building  
University of Kentucky


Dear Prof. Bird-Pollan:

On behalf of the College of Law, I request a waiver of the University Senate Rules Committee interpretation of Rule 5.4.2.2 which states that “[t]he minimum number of credit hours that must be included in the GPA calculation for students earning JD ... degrees is 75% of the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree.”

As a result of the unprecedented impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on our students, the College of Law faculty determined to require pass-fail grading for Spring 2020. As a side-effect of that decision, however, many students will drop below the minimum number set by rule 5.4.2.2. Students could have as many as 18 additional pass-fail credits not anticipated when Rule 5.4.2.2 was written.

We request that this 75% number in the Rules Committee interpretation be reduced to 65% for all students in the College of Law who were enrolled in the Spring 2020 term.

Sincerely,



Douglas C. Michael

see blue.

Snippet of *Senate Rules 5.4.2.2*

**5.4.2.2 Conditions of Merit and Circumstance for Degree Honors**

Students shall be graduated "Summa Cum Laude" who attain a grade point average of 3.8 or higher for at least three years of work at the University of Kentucky (excepting correspondence study). [US: 10/11/94; US: 4/11/94]

Students shall be graduated "Magna Cum Laude" who attain a grade point average of 3.6 or higher for at least three years of work at the University of Kentucky (excepting correspondence study). [US: 4/11/94]

Students shall be graduated "Cum Laude" who attain a grade point average of 3.4 to 3.6 for at least three years of work at the University of Kentucky (excepting correspondence study). [US: 4/11/94]

Students with a minimum of two but less than three years of work at the University shall receive the appropriate commencement honors if they attain a grade point average of 0.2 greater than the above.

- \* Courses taken under the Study Abroad and National Exchange Student programs (and for which students pay their tuition to the University of Kentucky) are considered as courses taken at UK for purposes of both the residency requirement of SR 5.4.1.1 and for graduates to be conferred commencement honors at the time of award of their degrees under SR 5.4.2.2. [SREC: 2/14/01; SREC: 5/31/2005]

The degree with honors from a professional college shall be based solely upon work done in the professional college.

The bachelor's degree with honors in a student's major or a degree with honors from a professional college will be conferred upon a student whom the faculty of the student's department, or college in the case of a professional college, and the dean of the student's college recommend receive the degree. A student may be required to complete work in addition to that required for the bachelor's or professional degree to receive a degree with honors. [US: 12/13/82]

- \* A student who has invoked the academic bankruptcy rule (SR 5.3.1.5) during his/her University career shall be considered, for the purposes of commencement honors, as having attended the University only for those hours earned subsequent to readmission. [SREC: 6/21/83]
- \* A student need not be enrolled full-time to fulfill the years of work necessary to receive commencement honors. Two years of work means 60 credit hours; three years means 90 credits. [SREC: 5/8/85]
- \* The SREC interpreted that under this rule, it is the cumulative GPA that is used to test for qualification for graduation honors, and that the minimum number of hours that must be included in that GPA calculation (i.e., quality hours) is 90 hours. However, for historical reasons, the minimum number of credit hours that must be included in the GPA calculation for students earning JD or PharmD degrees is 75% of the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree. [SREC: 2/24/2006; 9/9/2019]