March 6, 2007

MEMORANDUM

To: E. James Potchen, Chairperson, Executive Committee of Academic Council
Fr: Linda O. Stanford, Associate Provost for Academic Services
Re: DF-Deferred Grade Policy – Request for Policy Change

The request referenced above was forwarded to me by Karen Klomparens, Dean of The Graduate School. The University Graduate Council (UGC) approved a revision to the DF-Deferred policy on November 6, 2006. The Executive Committee of Academic Council (ECAC) met on January 9, 2007 and determined this request needs to be returned to the University Graduate Council for clarification. The UGC at its February 12, 2007 meeting, amended the original proposed language. I am returning this request to the ECAC for its determination of whether further consultation with academic governance is needed.

Proposal:
To change the current policy so that when a DF is given, the student has one year to complete the work and have a grade reported. It is recommended that exactly two 6-month extensions be permitted, by action of the instructor of the course. No further extensions would be allowed.

- The current policy states that a graduate student can receive a DF grade for a course in which they have not completed the course work by the end of the semester in which they are enrolled in it.

Rationale:
By requiring that the work be completed within a year, and that extensions be limited in number and shorter term, this policy supports the graduate students.

- It supports moving timely toward the degree.
- It calls for periodic attention by the faculty member, if there is legitimate need for extension of the deferral.

The current policy encourages the postponement of course work until it is nearly forgotten, and creates situations in which the faculty member also loses touch with the student and/or the student’s work in the course. The policy seems not to be supportive of students’ timely progress to the degree.

Proposed Revised Text:

DF-Deferred
The DF-Deferred applies to the numerical, the CR-NC, and P-N systems.

Given only to graduate students who are doing satisfactory work but cannot complete it because of reasons acceptable to the instructor.

The required work must be completed and a grade reported within two calendar years 6 months, with the option of a single six-month extension. If the required work is not completed within the time limit, the DF-Deferred will become U-Unfinished and will be changed to DF/U under the numerical and Pass-No Grade (P-N) grading systems, and to DF/NC under the Credit-No Credit (CR-NC) system. This rule does not apply to graduate thesis or dissertation work.

Cc: Klomparens, Speas