

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Graduate Advisors

**FROM:** Philip Cohen, Dean, Graduate School

**RE:** New Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence Policies for Graduate

**DATE:** 29 August 2006

**cc:** Dana Dunn, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost; Deans; Associate Deans; Department Chairs; Office of Graduate Studies Staff

At its April 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Graduate Assembly passed two new policies regarding graduate student enrollment. Both policies go into effect in Fall 2006. The new policy on continuous enrollment defines the minimum level of enrollment a student must maintain each semester in order for the Graduate School to consider that student to be an enrolled student. Students failing to meet the continuous enrollment requirement must reapply for admission unless they have an approved leave of absence. This modest enrollment requirement will enable graduate programs to track more easily their students' progress through their degree plans.

The second new policy creates a formal leave of absence requirement. Previously, students failing to enroll in one or more long semesters were required to reapply, pay fees and be formally readmitted after their applications were reviewed by the Office of Graduate Studies and the student's intended program. Under the new leave of absence policy, students may qualify for a leave of absence of up to two long semesters and return to the University at the end of that leave without having to go through the readmission process.

These policies are described fully in the revised online Catalog

[http://www.uta.edu/gradcatalog/general\\_info](http://www.uta.edu/gradcatalog/general_info).

Key elements of these new policies are presented below.

**Continuous Enrollment Policy:** Graduate Students must enroll in at least one credit hour of work related to their degrees each long semester (Fall and Spring) in order to be classified as enrolled students. Some programs may require a higher level of enrollment and should publish their requirements in their student handbooks or other documents. Enrollment in Summer sessions is not required, and students who do not enroll in summer will not be considered in violation of the continuous enrollment policy. Meeting the minimum enrollment requirement does not exempt students from enrollment requirements for holding graduate assistantships, fellowships, or from requirements of other programs, offices or agencies such as the Veterans Administration, Immigration

and Naturalization Service, federal financial aid and certain other loan programs. It is the student's responsibility to determine the enrollment requirements of such entities.

**Leave of Absence Policy:** A student in good academic standing who has not been suspended for academic or disciplinary reasons is eligible to apply for a leave of absence if there are exceptional circumstances that prevent him or her from being continuously enrolled. Examples of circumstances for which a leave of absence is appropriate include, health related issues, childbirth, childcare, elder care or other significant family concerns, and other major personal circumstances that interfere with a student's ability to undertake graduate study. Leaves are granted for up to two long semesters. Students returning from leave as scheduled will be automatically readmitted and will not be required to submit an application or pay any application fees. A student requesting leave should complete the Leave of Absence Request form (available online through the Virtual Graduate School Advisor link) and obtain the approval of his or her Graduate Advisor. Final review and approval of these requests will be made by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Please use this link to access the Leave of Absence Request form:

<http://grad.uta.edu/currentStudents/VirtualGraduateSchoolAdvisor.asp>