September 15, 2014

TO: Jocelyn Milner, Director, Academic Planning and Institutional Research
Steve Cramer, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning
Scott Owczarek, Registrar, Office of the Registrar
Wren Singer, Director, Office of Undergraduate Advising

FROM: Wendy Crone, Interim Dean, Graduate School

RE: End of Senior-Grad Mechanism Effective Fall 2014

CC: Daniel Kleinman, Associate Dean, Graduate School
Kelly Haslam, Assistant Dean, Graduate School
Steve Hahn, Assistant Dean, Graduate School
Judy Bauman, Director of Admissions, Graduate School
Jennifer Martin, Academic Planning Specialist, Graduate School
Michelle Holland, Student Services Coordinator, Graduate School

A series of new Graduate School policies were approved by the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC) on October 11, 2013 and the University Academic Planning Council (UAPC) on October 24, 2013. Although prompted by the Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC) institutional accreditation criteria, these policy changes are one of the many ways in which our campus ensures the integrity of its degrees and the quality of the student experience.

One of the approved policy items was related to prior course work. This policy details what type of and how much prior course work can satisfy graduate requirements. The policy has specifications for post-baccalaureate course work from other institutions, course work from a student’s Undergraduate Career at UW-Madison, and course work from a student’s University Special Student Career at UW-Madison. The focus of this memo is with respect to prior course work from a student’s Undergraduate Career at UW-Madison, and more specifically, highlights that the Senior-Grad mechanism is no longer available to undergraduates effective Fall 2014.

In the past, undergraduate seniors within 1-6 credits of completing the requirements for a bachelor’s degree could apply for senior-graduate status and take additional coursework to count towards their
graduate degree. These students paid for the graduate application fee and also paid graduate tuition. Given new accreditation expectations and approval of new Graduate School policy around prior course work, the senior-grad mechanism is no longer available effective Fall 2014. In turn, graduate programs have been informed of this change and have aligned their practices with new campus policies that become **effective Fall 2014:**

- **Concurrent Enrollment Eliminated** – Undergraduate students are no longer allowed to be concurrently enrolled in the Undergraduate Career and the Graduate Career. This also eliminates the Senior-Grad category. Thus, undergraduates must complete their undergraduate degree before enrolling in a graduate program.

- **Treatment of UW-Madison Undergraduate Career Prior Course Work** -- For well-prepared advanced students, a student's graduate program may decide to accept up to seven credits (numbered 300 or above) of required or elective courses from the undergraduate work completed at UW-Madison toward a UW-Madison graduate degree. This work will not appear on the Graduate Career portion of the UW-Madison transcript nor count towards the Graduate Career GPA.

- **Graduate Students Enrolled Prior to Fall 2014** – Master’s students enrolled prior to Fall 2014 have the option to complete their degree under the prior policy requirements if they can complete all degree requirements and are awarded the degree BEFORE Fall 2016. Appeals will be considered in exceptional cases and must be accompanied with a pre-established plan of study.

- **Maximum Credits Per Term** – Effective Fall 2014, the new Graduate School policy is that non-dissertator students are allowed to enroll for a maximum of 15 credits. This is an increase from 12 credits and allows students to more flexibility in the length of time to finish a degree.

- **Policy Details and FAQs** – Full policy details and FAQs can be found on the Graduate School’s KnowledgeBase at [https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=41499](https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=41499)

As noted, these Graduate School policies related to prior course work as well as several other policy areas become effective Fall 2014. Nevertheless, as illustrated above, the policies maintain a pathway to allow up to seven credits of UW-Madison undergraduate credits (numbered 300 or above) to satisfy graduate requirements. The Graduate School views these policy changes as an important avenue to maintain the quality and integrity of all of our graduate programs.

For policy questions, please contact Kelly Haslam, Assistant Dean for Academic Planning and Assessment at haslam@grad.wisc.edu or Wendy Crone, Interim Dean of the Graduate School at wcrone@grad.wisc.edu. For implementation questions, please contact Michelle Holland, Student Services Coordinator at holland@grad.wisc.edu or Steve Hahn, Assistant Dean for Admissions and Academic Services at smhahn@grad.wisc.edu.