

Memorandum

To: Dr. Neely, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: Dr. Linda Stonecipher, Graduate Programs Director

Date: March 10, 2010

Re: Graduate policy proposal: to accept three-year baccalaureate degrees from countries that are signatories of the Bologna Declaration to meet university baccalaureate admission criteria for graduate programs

Current admission criteria:

Applicants must provide evidence of completion of a bachelor's degree from a four-year accredited institution as defined by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

Proposal

Members of the Graduate Studies Committee voted unanimously during the February meeting to accept three-year baccalaureate degrees from countries (currently 46) that are signatories of the Bologna Declaration.

Rationale:

- One of the four main goals of the Bologna Process was to align European higher education requirements to more closely match the American system. According to *A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* (2005), the "first cycle qualifications may typically include / be represented by 180-240 ECTS credits (p.72)." Each academic year is equivalent to 60 ECTS credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) and approximately 1,500-1,800 hours of study. Students who complete the first cycle earn a bachelor's degree.
- Many universities in the United States accept three-year baccalaureate degrees from countries aligned with the Bologna Declaration as equivalent to U. S. baccalaureate degrees for admission to graduate programs.
- Our current admission criteria were developed before our graduate programs recruited international students. This proposal will align our admission criteria with current practice in the United States and abroad.

Policy review process:

The policy was endorsed by the Faculty Senate on March 9, 2010. If approved, this policy would be effective immediately.