

Graduate Program Resource Manual

To assist programs in their efforts to ensure effective educational programs,
continuous improvement and staying in compliance with accreditation requirements.

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August 2009



Required Processes:

I. Recruitment

Adhere to:

- SACS “Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status” available at:
<http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/advertising.pdf>
- Texas Wesleyan “Marketing and Communications Advertising Approval Process & Media Protocol” available at:
<http://www.txwes.edu/communications/documents/OfficeofCommunicationsApprovalProcess.pdf>

II. Admission

1) Follow program admission criteria as specified in the Catalog.

- 🍏 If flexibility available in how admitted: retain information on actual criteria used to admit, including actual gpa, test scores, etc. (use Colleague to enter information to the extent possible)
- 🍏 Exceptions should not be made except in very rare, well-documented situations

2) Enter information and codes as appropriate into Colleague:

NOTE: There is a **workflow** for admission processes. Following the established workflow will assure all required information is entered. Use the following Colleague screens: XGAP AND XGAC.

- Type of admission (per catalog criteria)**
 - AC for regular
 - ACP provisional
 - ACCP conditional
 - Enter provision/condition code if student is admitted provisionally or conditionally.
 - Track provisionally/conditionally admitted students per provision/condition to ensure these are met by deadline.

- **Academic program code** for the program to which student is admitted, per graduate catalog criteria. If academic program cannot be entered or a former program has not been “ended,” contact Student Records immediately.
 - Indicate the chosen concentration(s), if applicable and according to catalog, in addition to academic program.
 - In Education and Counseling: If not admitted directly into a graduate program, but, instead, into a leveling or “pre” program, use these codes: PRE.EDU.GR or PRE.COU.GR codes.
- ✓ Track students who are accepted to an Education or Counseling “pre” program so they cannot register in graduate courses until the leveling courses have been completed.
- ✓ Once the graduate program director has determined the student can be admitted to a graduate program (leveling course work completed), the academic program should be changed to the selected graduate program.

🍏 **Student type**

- This code **must** be entered correctly in APPN because this is what drives billing and keeps students from taking courses they should not. Student types are ME for masters level Education; DE for doctoral level education; MSP for Counseling; MBA for Business; GPNA for masters level nurse anesthesia; DNAP for DNAP; and UG if taking “leveling courses only.”

3) Send complete file to Office of Student Records including official transcripts from all institutions of higher education attended **by official 12th day** of the first semester enrolled.

III. Orientation

Hold formal graduate student orientation each semester for which students are admitted (either in conjunction with other graduate programs or for the individual program).

- 🍏 Work in conjunction with the Office of New Student Programs on the agenda and to ensure students are provided with up-to-date information about various University services/requirements (e.g. financial aid, cashier, student records, library services, career services, disability accommodations, and general information such as bookstore location, dining services, security).

- 🍏 Track attendance. Have a process for follow-up with students who miss orientation to ensure they are provided with the required information.

IV. Enrollment

- 1) **Enroll students** in classes only **in program** to which the student has been **admitted** and as reflected in Colleague. (Counseling students should not be enrolling in Education courses, etc.)
- 2) Use the **automated Degree Audit** in Colleague (not a manual process) to verify course requirements and ensure students follow these; Office of Student Records does final program audit.
- 3) Provide **course syllabi** created according to University **standards**.

V. Graduation

- 1) Ensure students **apply for graduation** by the catalog **deadline** (in the semester before projected graduation) through the Office of Student Records.
- 2) Ensure students have followed **catalog requirements** for the program; Office of Student Records does final program/graduation audit to verify requirements completed. Submit student degree audits to Student Records Office well ahead of graduation for confirmation.
- 3) **Retain graduation data** (run Colleague report) each semester, i.e. information on graduation rates and which students graduate.
- 4) **Contact students** post-graduation (at different intervals) to obtain the following information to use in annual assessment:
 - ✓ employment information
 - ✓ information on additional studies
 - ✓ feedback on program.

VI. Faculty course assignments & loads

Ensure University policies are followed with regards to:

- 1) Qualifications** to teach graduate courses (terminal degree required to teach doctoral level; terminal degree required to teach masters level except in rare, well-justified and well-documented circumstances);
- 2) Course loads** (follow Graduate Faculty Appointments and Assignments Policy as well as policy for maximum use of adjuncts).

VII. Assessment of Admission Criteria and Graduation Rates

- 1) Review admission data** annually, to include:
 - 🍏 profile of admitted students (how admitted—regularly, conditionally? on which criteria?)
 - 🍏 student performance (gpa)
 - 🍏 student persistence/retention
 - 🍏 student graduation rate
 - 🍏 profile of graduate students in light of how admitted (which students succeeded)
- 2) Use established program committee(s)** to discuss data outlined above. Retain minutes of discussions and decisions. Move proposed changes forward through school and university committees as outlined under X, below.

VIII. Academic Program Assessment

- 1) Follow instructions** from the Provost Office for **annual planning and assessment** of student learning outcomes.
- 2) Review outcomes annually** and ensure that any **program changes** proposed are based on:
 - analysis of outcomes data** by program faculty;
 - broad based discussions** involving all faculty/programs affected;
 - Established program **committee(s) is(are) used**; and
 - minutes are retained** and document the outcomes analysis and rationale of change.
- 3) Engage in periodic self-study audits** (every 3-4 years).

IX. Technology/Budget Requests

1. Use **University Strategic & Assessment Plan** forms to establish technology and budgetary needs: complete **form 3** that is part of the annual Strategic & Assessment Planning packet.
2. Base University technology and budget requests submitted through IT or other channels on information included on form 3.

X. Program Changes/New Program Proposals

- 1) Program changes should only be proposed after **documented collection and documented broad-based review of relevant supporting data** such as student learning outcomes; outside requirements (e.g. certification); and other needs assessment (e.g. market analysis or professional association data analysis).
- 2) Program changes should be **discussed in *established* program, school, and University committees, in the following order:**
 - Program, department, and/or school committee(s)**
 - Minutes from committee meetings must be retained and clearly indicate proposal, rationale, including information on documented data driving proposed change; and impact on program learning objectives.
 - Standing faculty **Committee on Graduate Programs**
 - Academic Affairs Committee**
 - For program changes, use the “Curriculum and Course Change Request Form”
 - For new program proposals, follow the “Proposal Guidelines for New Academic Programs.”

These forms may be found at:

<http://www.txwes.edu/provost/AcademicAffairsCommittee.htm>

Programs should be able to provide information and evidence of the following if above processes are followed:*

Recruitment & Admission

1. Admissions policies are based on widely accepted standards for applicants.
2. Admissions policies for the institution and for specific programs are consistent with the stated mission of the institution.
3. The standards for admissions to specific programs are clear, reasonable, and consistently implemented.
4. Admissions requirements are appropriate to identify qualified students who have the ability to complete a program successfully.
5. Admissions policies for graduate programs ensure that students are prepared to develop skills for independent learning.
6. The institution disseminates admissions policies, and they are uniform in all publications.
7. Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices and policies.
8. The institution provides information about its educational programs, including philosophy, goals, and required courses, that is sufficient for a student to make informed choices. All appropriate documents, print and otherwise, provide clear, complete, and consistent information about each major program.

Program Quality

1. Requirements for graduate programs conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs.
2. Degree programs show compatibility with the mission of the institution.
3. Graduate degree programs are progressively more advanced (more complex and rigorous) in academic content than undergraduate programs (as demonstrated through learning outcomes). Advanced degree programs build upon the foundation established by undergraduate programs.
4. Degree programs demonstrate coherence in sequencing, increasing complexity, and linkages between and among program components.
5. Graduate curricula (1) include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) ensure ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences.
6. Effective graduate instruction fosters independent learning so that graduates have the ability to work and learn independently and contribute to a profession or field of study. (Learning outcomes reflect expectations for independent learning.)
7. Degree programs are of sufficient length to include appropriate course work, of sufficient duration to provide for mastery of all aspects of the subject matter.

8. Requirements in courses not specifically designed for graduate credit but that allow both undergraduate and graduate enrollment ensure that there is a clear distinction between the learning outcomes of undergraduate students and graduate students (separate syllabi with distinct learning objectives).
9. Policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer are consistent with the mission; transfer credit policies are developed and evaluated to ensure comparability to the institution's own degree programs. The institution periodically reviews and revises policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit.
10. For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration. Individuals competent in the field oversee all majors or curricular areas or areas of concentration in graduate degree programs in order to ensure that each contains essential curricular components, has appropriate content and pedagogy, and maintains currency in the degree. Degree programs normally are coordinated by academically qualified faculty who hold degree credentials or other qualifications appropriate to the degree offered. If responsibility for coordination for curriculum development and review are assigned to persons other than faculty, then the institution should provide appropriate documentation.
11. The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of the academic programs.

Program Effectiveness

1. Expected outcomes are clearly defined in measurable terms for each educational program and for each administrative and educational support unit.
2. Assessment activities show the extent to which the program achieves these expected outcomes.
3. There is broad-based participation in assessment activities.
4. The program engages in periodic reviews in which programmatic outcomes such as retention, graduation rates, employer and alumni satisfaction, and the like are assessed, reviewed, and used for improvements.
5. The program evaluates success with respect to student achievement including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates.
6. The program analyses and uses assessment results to improve educational programs and administrative and educational support services.

***Statements derived from the 2005 "Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations For Quality Enhancement" of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.**