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DOC 2004-05 Participation in May Commencement Short of Required Credits

University of Dayton. Academic Policies Committee

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PROPOSAL TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE

TITLE: Participation in May Commencement Short of Required Credits

SUBMITTED BY: Academic Policy Committee

DATE: October 29, 2004

ACTION: Consultative

Background

1. Official conferral of degrees at the University of Dayton is no longer tied to commencement, i.e., official diplomas are not awarded at the commencement ceremony. Participation in the commencement ceremony is primarily for the benefit of parents—the major investors in their child’s education. Therefore, if the student is “close” to meeting university requirements, then an exception should be made to let her/him participate in the commencement ceremony and allow the student and the parents to have positive feelings toward the university.

2. Although degrees are awarded in August, UD no longer has an August commencement. Thus if a student just falls short of the required hours to participate in the May Commencement, she/he must wait until December to participate in commencement exercises. This probably will not happen and thus the student and parents will not have the positive aspect of the ceremonial rite-of-passage.

Proposal

It is proposed that undergraduate students be allowed to participate in May commencement short of the required number of hours for graduation. Note that this is an exception to the current policy. The following is the wording of the proposed exception:

However, undergraduate students who are short not more than seven credit hours prior to the May commencement may, with the approval of their dean, participate in the May graduation ceremony. Such students must be registered for sufficient hours to complete degree requirements during the subsequent summer terms at UD, or have attained approval to fulfill their remaining requirements at another institution, and must provide official documentation of work completed no later than the official date for submission of grades at the conclusion of UD’s second summer session. Any exceptions to this policy are the decision of the dean of the student’s academic unit. After all degree requirements are met, the degree will be conferred on the next conferral date as noted on the official university academic calendar.

Attachment 1 shows the wording change as would be incorporated in the University’s commencement/graduation policy statement; Attachment 2 shows the current version, and Attachment 3 shows the wording changes.
Rationale for wording of statement:

1. **Undergraduate Students** – The exception only applies to undergraduate students for many reasons. Graduate students often do not attend commencement. Many graduate students pursue their degree part-time—thus it is difficult to establish an appropriate cut-off that would cover all. Since many graduate students are local, they can more readily postpone attendance at commencement to December. Finally, if the policy were to apply to graduate students as well, it would greatly extend the length of the May commencement ceremony and possibly create problems for hosting commencement at UD Arena because its capacity.

2. **May Commencement Only** - For those not completing requirements in time for the May commencement, there is no commencement ceremony in the immediately following Summer terms (August). For those short of credits to participate in the December commencement, there is a commencement in the immediately following term (May).

3. **Seven Hours** – The assumption was that students should be within less than a full term of course work from completing their required number of hours to participate in commencement. A full-time student takes 12-18 during the regular term. In the summer session a full-time student can take 12 hrs across the two terms. Since a full-time student takes 12 hrs, 50% would be 6 hrs. But since some of the required hours may include a lab, 7 credits were chosen as the magic number.

4. **Restrictions for Make Up** – As part of granting this exception to participate in commencement, students must indicate that they plan to complete the requirements by registering for the summer term at UD or elsewhere. If they are unwilling to make this commitment, then the exception should not be granted. The date for official notification of grades was set after conferring with the Associate/Assistant Deans of the Schools and College.

5. **Exceptions** – Policy cannot cover all possible circumstances. Exceptions can be made by the deans. This adds flexibility to the policy.
Commencement at the University of Dayton is formal recognition of students who are graduating from the University. Consequently, University policy limits participation in commencement to students who have completed all the requirements for their degree. However, undergraduate students who are short not more than seven credit hours prior to the May commencement may, with the approval of their dean, participate in the May graduation ceremony. Such students must be registered for sufficient hours to complete degree requirements during the subsequent summer terms at UD, or have attained approval to fulfill their remaining requirements at another institution, and must provide official documentation of work completed no later than the official date for submission of grades at the conclusion of UD’s second summer session. Any exceptions to this policy are the decision of the dean of the student's academic unit. After all degree requirements are met, the degree will be conferred on the next conferral date as noted on the official university academic calendar.

If the student is declaring candidacy for Graduation, a #7 Form must be completed either online (http://www.udayton.edu/~registr) or via hard copy and turned into the Registrar's Office, located on the second floor of Albert Emanuel Hall. If a student is receiving two degrees, two separate #7 forms, one for each degree, must be completed. For further information visit the Registrar's website at http://www.udayton.edu/~registr.

After the summer of 2002, students completing their degree requirements during the summer term will receive a diploma and their academic transcript will denote an August graduation date, but they will have to wait until December to participate in a graduation ceremony.
Commencement at the University of Dayton is formal recognition of students who are graduating from the University. Consequently, University policy limits participation in commencement to students who have completed all the requirements for their degree. Exceptions to this policy are granted only under the most extraordinary circumstances. Receiving an incomplete or failure in a course necessary for graduation or personal conflicts with scheduled commencements are, for example, not considered extraordinary circumstances.

Students wishing to appeal this policy can do so by submitting a written request to the Registrar. The final decision concerning any appeal is made by the Graduation Appeals Committee consisting of the Registrar, a faculty representative, and an undergraduate student selected by the Student Government Association. All appeals must be submitted at least two weeks before the graduation ceremony in question. If the student is declaring his candidacy for Graduation a #7 Form must be completed and turned into the Registrar's Office, located on the second floor of Albert Emanuel Hall. If a student is receiving two degrees, two separate #7 forms, one for each degree, must be completed. For further information visit the Registrar's website at http://www.udayton.edu/~registr.

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