PROPOSED

Graduate Student Admissions and Classification

Proposal:
Modify the admission process for graduate students and change the classification scheme for admitted students.

Problem:
The current graduate school admissions process is misunderstood by students, requires additional communication with students because of confusion communications, and the student admissions classification system for students does not mesh well with Federal government financial aid terminology.

Justification for a change:
Currently, most if not all, graduate students are admitted to Graduate Studies at Southeastern prior to being admitted to his or her specific degree program. Admission to Graduate Studies does not guarantee admission to a graduate degree program, thus there is a disconnect between admission to the University and a specific graduate degree program. Admission to Graduate Studies and a specific degree program should occur simultaneously. Currently, once admitted a student is classified as Regular, Conditional or Temporary. The Temporary classification terminology has caused the need for further definition of the term to ensure that Southeastern meets Federal guidelines for providing a graduate student financial aid. Modification of the terminology to ensure alignment with Federal guidelines and terminology is necessary so that further clarification of our classification terminology is not necessary.

Recommendation:
The following changes are recommended to address the issues noted above.

Graduate Student Admissions: All applications would be processed as noted.

1. Once a paid application for an individual is received in the Office of Graduate Studies, an active file is created, the application packet with an Applicant Screening Form assembled and the application forwarded to the appropriate graduate program coordinator. (The basic logistics for processing applications have been agreed upon; however, the details are yet to be worked out.)

2. Programs can implement particular interviewing or screening criteria for applicants as long as the criteria meet or exceed the minimum required by Southeastern and occur in a timely manner. For example, a graduate coordinator for a program might distribute (or route) an application to appropriate faculty or a screening committee. If an applicant had been in discussions with a particular faculty member in a program, the graduate coordinator would ensure that the faculty member is given first right of acceptance or refusal of the applicant. All recommendations for admission would be processed through the degree program graduate coordinator.

3. The Applicant Screening Form would be completed by the graduate coordinator to indicate an admission recommendation and related information as necessary. The completed form would be returned to the Office for Graduate Studies.

4. The Office of Graduate Studies then conducts the final evaluation and sends the official admission notification to the student.

Graduate Student Classifications: All individuals taking graduate courses would be classified into one of the following categories. An individual cannot remain in certain classifications beyond one full time semester or nine hours. Classification terminology (definitions are provided in the Addendum) would be changed to the following:

- Regular
- Provisional
- Contingent
- Non-degree (for example, plus 30 and certificate programs)
- Unclassified
**PROPOSED ADDENDUM**

Definition of admission classification terminology.

1. *Regular admission*: Graduate programs may prescribe requirements for regular admission in addition to those described below. Any person admitted for graduate study must hold a bachelor’s degree. In addition to holding an undergraduate degree, an applicant who receives regular admission status must have an acceptable GRE or GMAT score and satisfy one of the following minimum graduate admissions requirements based on the level of work completed at the time of the application:
   a. 2.50 GPA on the undergraduate degree or
   b. 2.75 GPA on the last two years (approximately 60-70 semester hours or 90-100 quarter hours) of undergraduate academic course work
   c. 2.75 GPA on 30 or more semester hours undergraduate credit after earning the first bachelor’s degree
   d. 2.75 GPA on the last two years (approximately 60-70 semester hours or 90-100 quarter hours) of undergraduate academic course work and a 3.00 GPA on fewer than 24 hours graduate course work
   e. 3.00 GPA on 24 or more graduate hours
   f. An earned master’s degree or higher-level degree.

An applicant not satisfying the minimum grade point average may be admitted to a degree program as a provisional student if recommended by the graduate coordinator of the academic unit offering the degree program.

A student in a Regular admission status is eligible for a graduate assistantship.

2. *Provisional Admissions*: A student who has not fully met the requirements stipulated by the University and the appropriate program for admission to graduate study may be granted admission as a degree-seeking graduate student with provisional status. Such student must have as the initial objective advancement to regular status.

   A student admitted to provisional status is eligible (not guaranteed) for advancement to regular status after receiving a 3.00 GPA on the first nine hours of regular graduate level courses taken during the first semester at Southeastern Louisiana University. Part-time students will be allowed a maximum of 12 consecutive months in provisional status in order to complete the required nine hours with a 3.00 GPA in all courses taken while in provisional status. A student must be continuously enrolled to achieve the nine hour requirement. Once the required nine hours is met an admission decision will be made. Neither transfer credits nor credits earned while in Unclassified status can be used to satisfy this nine-hour requirement. The provisional student may be dismissed from the graduate program if he/she does not complete the required 9 hours within 12 consecutive months, or if the required 3.00 GPA on all courses taken while in provisional status is not attained. Otherwise, the student's status will be changed to Regular or Unclassified as appropriate. Academic departments may set higher standards for students admitted provisionally into their programs. While in the provisional status, a student is not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship; however, an exception may be granted by the Dean for Research and Graduate Studies in well-justified cases.

3. *Contingent Admissions*: A student may be admitted with a contingency, usually needing the final transcript recording the bachelor’s degree or providing particular scores, e.g., GRE, GMAT or PRAXIS scores. In the case of completing the bachelor’s degree, the applicant has met all admissions requirements and is in the final semester of bachelor’s degree work. The student is admitted in contingent status until official verification is provided that the undergraduate degree was completed. When the Office of the Graduate Studies receives the transcript showing the degree was awarded, the contingency is removed from the student’s record. A contingent admission can also be changed to regular when the Office of Graduate Studies receives GRE/GMAT or other required test scores.
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An applicant may also be admitted with one or more departmental contingencies, requirements the
department expects the student to fulfill by a certain deadline. Departmental contingencies are
monitored by the department and usually are prerequisite courses, standardized tests, or another
similar requirement.
A student in the contingency status is eligible for a graduate assistantship. Continued eligibility for a
graduate assistantship beyond the initial semester would require removal of the contingency status
during or by the completion of the initial semester of coursework at which time the student must
qualify for regular admissions status. Students may not be moved from contingency status to
provisional status. Failure to qualify for regular admission status will prevent the student from
registering for the next semester.

4. Non-Degree-Classified
An applicant not wishing to pursue a graduate degree but wishing to achieve a special certification or
plus 30 credit hours for teaching purposes (applicant must have a Master’s degree), would apply for
admission to the University through the Office of Graduate Studies for Non-degree-regular
admissions. A student enrolled at least half-time in this status is eligible for specific types of financial
aid. Individuals should contact the Student Financial Aid Office for additional information. Students
seeking admission as non-degree classified must meet or exceed the university minimum requirements
for admission (see minimum requirements stated under Regular admissions).

5. Unclassified Admissions
Unclassified admission is available to students desiring graduate level study for purposes other than
an advanced degree, certificate program, or plus 30 credit hours for teachers. Students admitted in
unclassified status must remain unclassified for one semester before being admitted to a degree
program. No more than nine graduate hours of work received as an unclassified student may be
counted toward credit for a degree program. Courses taken in the unclassified status that are to be
counted for credit toward a graduate degree must be approved by the departmental graduate
coordinator and department chair or in cases where a student has a graduate advisory committee,
approval of courses to count toward the graduate degree must be approved by the student’s graduate
committee and the departmental graduate coordinator. Hours completed in this status may not be used
to satisfy provisional admission requirements. There are limitations to financial aid when in the
unclassified status. Contact the Student Financial Aid Office for additional information. Students
seeking admission as unclassified must meet or exceed the university minimum requirements for
admission (see minimum requirements stated under Regular admissions).