

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**RESOLUTION FROM THE RESPONSIBILITIES, RIGHTS, AND WELFARE OF GRADUATE
STUDENT ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE ENDORSING THE GRADUATE STUDENT
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES DOCUMENT**

On behalf of the Responsibilities, Rights, and Welfare of Graduate Student Academic Employees Committee, Allan H. Cole (committee chair and professor, social work) submits the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities Document for Faculty Council endorsement. The document will be considered by the Faculty Council at its meeting on May 2, 2016.



Hillary Hart, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

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Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities

- I. Right to graduate under requirements specified by the graduate catalog at time of acceptance;¹
Responsibility to proactively fulfill program requirements;²
- II. The right to the university continuing to maintain its interest in students achieving a basic standard of living;³
The responsibility to be good stewards of our resources afforded to graduate students;
- III. Right to periodic reviews of performance pertaining to academic standing and/or employment status;^{4*}
Responsibility to act upon feedback and recommendations in order to maintain good standing with the university;
- IV. Right to transparent grievance processes that can include some form of graduate student peer support, without fear of reprisal;^{5*}

* is defined as where adoption of the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities would entail an amendment to current policy

¹ University Catalogs: The University of Texas at Austin, Graduate Catalog 2015-2017: Degree Requirements: Graduation: Graduation under a Particular Catalog.

URL: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/degree-requirements/graduation/>

² University Catalogs: The University of Texas at Austin, Graduate Catalog 2015-2017: Graduate Study: Student Responsibility.

URL: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/graduate/graduate-study/student-responsibility>

³ Examples of this include the new graduate student housing being built in East Austin, participation in finding transportation solutions for commuters, and information provided online by the university and colleges regarding funding, jobs, and other resources.

^{4*} The Milestones Agreement provides a feasible model for a system that could be expanded and implemented university-wide, to be accessible to all graduate students.

The University of Texas at Austin, Graduate School, Milestones Agreement.

URL: <http://gradschool.utexas.edu/advisers-and-coordinators/milestones-information>

Current Policy: University Catalogs: The University of Texas at Austin, General Information Catalog 2015-2016: Academic Policies and Procedures: Academic Advising

URL: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/>

- Responsibility to voice concerns and participate in grievance process;
- V. Right to nondiscrimination by the university in academic and employment matters;^{6*}
 Responsibility to not discriminate against any student, faculty, or staff member;
- VI. Right to be treated respectfully and professionally by university administration and faculty;
 Responsibility to conduct oneself according to the University of Texas Honor Code⁷ and
 represent the University in an appropriate professional manner;
- VII. Right to representation in and shared governance of the college and university, along with
 inclusion in formal conversations about policy changes that impact graduate students;⁸
 Responsibility to participate in shared governance.

^{5*} The BoRR committee suggests an amendment to existing policy such that departmental grievance processes provide an opportunity for graduate student representation, to be determined by each Graduate Studies Committee (GSC).

Current policy: Handbook of Operating Procedures 9-1240, Section D. The University of Texas at Austin, The Graduate School, Executive Sponsor: Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. February 15, 2005.

URL: <http://www.policies.utexas.edu/policies/graduate-school>

The BoRR committee also recommends that the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) support the selection and training of graduate student peer advocates who can act as liaisons and provide support to graduate students throughout various grievance processes.

^{6*} The University of Texas at Austin, General Information Catalog, Appendix I: Non-Discrimination Policy.

URL: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-i/>

This policy currently refers to discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, including sexual harassment, age, disability, citizenship, and veteran status, and on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; the BoRR committee proposes adding pregnancy and family status to this list.

⁷ Standards of Conduct. The University of Texas at Austin, Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students.

URL: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/conduct.php>

⁸ Handbook of Operating Procedures 9-1240, Section C. The University of Texas at Austin, The Graduate School, Executive Sponsor: Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. February 15, 2005.

URL: <http://www.policies.utexas.edu/policies/graduate-school>