

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The following document was reviewed with the Project Team and approved during a meeting held February 16, 2011.

### “TO BE” PROCESS ENABLERS

This document contains the key assumptions that are critical to enable the “To Be” process to become a reality. The prime focus of this project is the Graduation Checkout Process.

#### Context for these Enablers (per original RFP issued 2010)

“The University of Memphis will utilize the ARRA time period to implement process and service efficiencies across the whole institution that will continue to benefit the University after that time period. The outcomes of the process and service improvements will significantly advance the University’s strategic goals and objectives. In addition to the specific immediate outcomes, the process itself should foster a culture of enhanced institutional flexibility and adaptability, so that the University of Memphis can better anticipate and more rapidly respond to changes in the external environment on an on-going basis, whether those changes are in customers’ needs, competitors’ actions, economic fluctuations, or development opportunities.”

#### POLICY AND PROCEDURE ASSUMPTIONS

1. In the spirit of achieving **Service Excellence** (a published University Strategic Goal), we will strive to make the administrative processes as simple as possible, while adhering to best practices, policy and regulatory requirements.
2. All participants in a process, across the institution, will adhere to the relevant policies and to the agreed process steps, including published deadlines. **Example: a deadline of October 1 does not mean wait until a few days before that date and then attempt to schedule an appointment with your Academic Advisor. Rather do it now.**
3. Participants in the process will respect the process and will trust it. Roles will be defined and people will follow the processes assigned to their role. **Example: do not override the process when an exception arises, refer to the process and manage the exception accordingly. Ask your staff what to do (maybe you can show them first time).**
4. Incorrect or incomplete forms will be returned for prompt correction and resubmission. **Example: encourage your staff to check data accuracy before submitting applications. Let them know that it is OK for them to make occasional mistakes, provided you foster an environment of constant improvement.**
5. At all levels of management, managers will support these policies and will foster a culture of service excellence by their staff, both internally (between units) and to outside constituents. **Example: if your staff comes to you with an issue, help them resolve it by discussing with your counterpart that your staff and his/hers will have to get together and learn how not to perpetuate the issue. Support your staff in this.**
6. The fact that a process is critical to student service is not grounds for expecting colleagues to make good on your errors and omissions. **Example: if your staff/department created unnecessary work**

for another department (e.g. by making an error), that department should not be expected to drop everything to rectify your error. You should get it right the first time.

7. The University will inform all students to ensure their academic, demographic and contact details are always updated in the U of M system of record, starting with their first semester and continuing to their graduation date. Relative to the Graduation Checkout process, students will be responsible for obtaining transcripts, updating their degree plan, enrolling for classes in that plan and consulting with Academic Advisors regarding any changes in their intentions. They will be responsible for any consequences arising from outdated, incomplete information or failure to notify the university of external information (e.g. transcripts for a summer class taken at another institution). **Example: (1) if a student has not kept their information updated, do not automatically interrupt the process to give this special priority. (2) Both the student and the Academic Advisor must ensure the update of the student's degree plan at the time of any change to that plan.**
8. Students and Academic Advising staff will become familiar with, and adhere to, Academic policies regarding degree planning and will not commit the University to any terms that conflict with TBR/U of M policy or with laws. **Example: if an Advisor manager is not sure, ask first.**
9. It is the obligation of each person at the University to make full use of the resources (including training) provided to help them perform better; it is also the obligation of each manager to ensure their staff receives appropriate training to use these resources. **Example: managers need to motivate their staff to learn their systems to understand more and more. This goes a long way towards reducing shadow files and spreadsheets.**
10. The University will inform all employees and students to check their U of M email or MyMemphis portal for notifications regarding Graduation Checkout and Commencement requirements. They will be responsible for any consequences arising from failure to respond in a timely manner. **Example: students who may be eligible to graduate must follow the steps to declare their Intent to Graduate and to provide accurate information to allow the Commencement Office to plan the Commencement event efficiently.**
11. The University will assess the improvements in any process at regular intervals to identify opportunities to further refine and improve the process, identify policy changes and continue the process improvement. **Example: encourage and recognize suggestions for improvement.**
12. The Commencement Office will be responsible for coordinating the Commencement event each semester and for the printing and distribution of certified diplomas; accordingly they do not play an active role in the Graduate Checkout process. They will rely on the Colleges to provide accurate and timely information within the University systems (see Technology below) to allow the Commencement Office to plan the event, invite qualified students and print the program. Similarly, the Commencement Office will rely on the Colleges to accurately certify students' degrees so that the Commencement Office can plan, print and distribute diplomas to the right students at the right addresses. **Example: The Commencement Office will not initiate the notice to students to file their "intent to graduate."**
13. Each College will ensure that it adheres to the University's academic requirements in performing the checks to certify each student's degree and furnish the Registrar's office with accurate information for the student's official transcript. **Example: TBD**

## TECHNOLOGY ASSUMPTIONS

1. The process will be supported by using available technologies that include online form entry, document scanning, workflow based approvals that will help reduce errors through system controls, links to other systems and ease of use. The new paradigm is one that emphasizes electronic content/data over paper.
2. Participants in the process will make optimal use of software to reduce the creation of paper based processes and will make every effort (including training) to exploit the functionality of the software. In particular, for this process, Banner (including Degree Works) and Hobsons CRM are considered important tools to enable this process to work efficiently and effectively.

Note: this document includes certain content from the first To Be Enablers document prepared for the Graduate Assistantship Appointment process which was reviewed with the Process Improvement task Force\* and Project Team April 14, 2010. The content included in this document refers to To Be Enablers that are considered common to administrative process improvement projects.

\*this body later became the current Program Management Group.