

Policy number: 405

Subject/Title: Verification of Degrees for International Applicants

Effective Date: September 15, 2004

Policy Statement: All international applicants and domestic applicants who have obtained their degrees abroad must submit a credential verification certified by a recognized outside agency to the UTHealth Office of the Registrar as part of the application materials. The UTHealth School of Public Health will accept verification of the undergraduate degree from either the World Education Service (WES; <http://www.wes.org/>).

Of note: WES will supply a credential evaluation (degree verification only, not a course-by-course equivalency) for \$100.

Reason for Policy:

- The validity of the degree and proof that the applicant has indeed completed a baccalaureate degree is sometimes difficult to ascertain when reviewing international transcripts. UTHealth School of Public Health receives a large number of applications from international students and this number has been increasing over the years.
- The Office of the Registrar has no mechanism for making this determination for the hundreds of international applications that it receives on behalf of the six component schools of the health science center.
- The only method that the Office of the Registrar has to ensure that international applicants have indeed completed the equivalent of baccalaureate studies is to receive an official transcript directly from the degree-granting institution. Oftentimes, international applicants find it nearly impossible to have the transcript forwarded and thus, the Office of the Registrar will accept an unofficial transcript along with a copy of the letter from the applicant that requests the official transcript be sent to our Office of the Registrar. If admitted, the student will be allowed to matriculate and reminder notices will be sent to request that the official transcript be forwarded to our institution. A hold can be placed on the student's registration if the official transcript is not received (this often happens to domestic students, and the consequence is that they are not allowed to register any further. The consequence for an international student is that if they are not allowed to register, they must return home).
- If the records in the Office of the Registrar are audited, and it is determined that we have students enrolled who do not have evidence via an official transcript, the institution will be out of compliance with our accrediting bodies.

Definitions: N/A

Scope and Audience: All international and domestic applicants who have obtained their degrees abroad.

Responsibilities and Procedures:

Related Policies, Forms and Information: N/A

History: Approved by Executive Council: September 15, 2004

Responsible Office/Contact Information: Office of Academic Affairs and Student Services
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