




## University Senate CHARGE

<b>Date:</b>	September 14, 2012
<b>To:</b>	Christopher Davis Chair, Academic Procedures & Standards
<b>From:</b>	Martha Nell Smith  Chair, University Senate
<b>Subject:</b>	Calculation of Commencement Honors
<b>Senate Document #:</b>	12-13-03
<b>Deadline:</b>	February 15, 2013

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) requests that the Academic Procedures & Standards (APAS) Committee review the attached proposal regarding Calculation of Commencement Honors and make recommendations on whether changes are appropriate.

Commencement honors are awarded to the top 10% of all students graduating in each college over the course of a year. To be eligible for this recognition, students must earn at least 60 credits at the University. Because final grades are not officially recorded until after graduation, computation of the student's GPA for commencement honors does not include grades from the student's final semester at the University. However, the credits taken during that last semester will apply toward the 60-credit requirement. We would like the committee to review whether commencement honors should be calculated so that they include the student's final semester and whether such calculations should be included on the student's diploma following the final GPA recalculation.

Specifically, we ask that you:

1. Review the *Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors* section of the University's Undergraduate Catalog (<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1544>).
2. Consult with the proposer about his specific concerns.
3. Consult with a representative from the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Studies.
4. Consult with a representative of the Office of the Registrar.
5. Review the process for commencement honor calculation at our peer universities.

6. Research the potential cost and feasibility of implementation of changes to existing procedures.
7. Review data on the impact of potential changes to existing procedures.
8. Consult with the University's Office of Legal Affairs.
9. If appropriate, recommend whether the current procedure for calculating commencement honors should be revised and published in the Undergraduate Catalog.

We ask that you submit your report and recommendations to the Senate Office no later than February 15, 2013. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Reka Montfort in the Senate Office, extension 5-5804.



## University Senate PROPOSAL FORM

<b>Name:</b>	Benjamin Kurtz
<b>Date:</b>	9/29/2011
<b>Title of Proposal:</b>	Honors Graduation
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<b>Campus Address:</b>	Off campus/ 8209 Stone Trail Dr. Bethesda Maryland 20817
<b>Unit/Department/College:</b>	Criminal Justice/BSOS
<b>Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):</b>	
<b>Description of issue/concern/policy in question:</b>	My concern is the manor for which final class rankings are computed.
<b>Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:</b>	Please see below

<b>Suggestions for how your proposal could be put into practice:</b>	Please see below
<b>Additional Information:</b>	

*Please send your completed form and any supporting documents to [senate-admin@umd.edu](mailto:senate-admin@umd.edu) or University of Maryland Senate Office, 1100 Marie Mount Hall,*

*College Park, MD 20742-7541. Thank you!*

*My area of concern is the manor for which final class ranking are computed . First I must state, I understand as to why final semester grades are not used to compute honors as per graduation ceremonies; but I don't believe this reasoning should justify why true class rankings can't be computed for printed diploma. Specifically, I believe there to be an intrinsic value as to having cum laude printed on a diploma. I believe that once printed on the diploma, issued by the University, that finality has occurred and it is implied by any and all looking at the diploma, that the individual has indeed graduated in the top ten percent of*

*his or her college. It is not assumed by future employers or graduate programs that this implies that said individual was in the top ten percent of his or her class up and until his or her last semester. In furtherance, I believe a potential graduate has a "Property" interest in their diploma and thus should have adequate due process in challenging their ultimate final position within their class. My proposed remedy is neither overly burdensome or costly; I would suggest that after all grades are posted for the final semester( for which the college must wait in order to issue diploma) that a re-calculation of final class standings is done, and diploma's are printed and awarded accordingly. It is inherently unfair that a student could potentially graduate with a higher GPA than a fellow student, and yet the aforementioned may not have cum laude printed on his/her diploma while the other would.*

*Points of reason*

*1) Property interest in diploma*

*2) Intrinsic value In having cum laude printed on diploma*

*3) lack of due process and transparency in calculation of true final class standing*

*4) Inherently unfair to have potential higher GPA than those with honors, yet not receive honors yourself*

*5) Remedy would be easy to implement, and make final class standing accurate and fair*

*Thank you for your consideration,*

*Benjamin Kurtz 111545278*