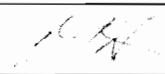


SENATE LEGISLATION APPROVAL

Date:	April 9, 2013
To:	Wallace D. Loh
From:	Martha Nell Smith Chair, University Senate 
Subject:	Calculation of Commencement Honors
Senate Document #:	12-13-03

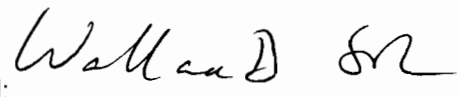
I am pleased to forward for your consideration the attached legislation entitled, "Calculation of Commencement Honors." Christopher Davis, Chair of the Academic Procedures and Standards (APAS) Committee, presented the proposal. The University Senate approved the proposal at its April 4, 2013 meeting.

We request that you inform the Senate Office of your decision as well as any subsequent action related to your conclusion.

Enclosure: Calculation of Commencement Honors
Senate Document # 12-13-03

MNS/rm

Cc: Mary Ann Rankin, Senior Vice President & Provost
Reka Montfort, Executive Secretary and Director, University Senate
Juan Uriagereka, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs
Terry Roach, Executive Assistant to the President
Janet Turnbull, President's Legal Office
Elizabeth Beise, Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs
Sylvia B. Andrews, Academic Affairs
Adrian Cornelius, University Registrar

Approved:  Date: 4/10/2013
Wallace D. Loh
President



University Senate TRANSMITTAL FORM

Senate Document #:	12-13-03
PCC ID #:	N/A
Title:	Calculation of Commencement Honors
Presenter:	Christopher Davis, Chair, Senate Academic Procedures and Standards (APAS) Committee
Date of SEC Review:	March 13, 2013
Date of Senate Review:	April 4, 2013
Voting (highlight one):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On resolutions or recommendations one by one, or 2. In a single vote 3. To endorse entire report
Statement of Issue:	At the end of the Spring 2012 semester, a student submitted a proposal to the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) regarding concern about the manner in which Commencement honors are currently calculated and awarded at the University. The proposer asked that the Senate consider recommending a change in the current process to take into account a student's final semester grades in the computation of Commencement honors.
Relevant Policy # & URL:	Undergraduate Catalog, Section 4. Registration, Academic Requirements, and Regulations: Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm
Recommendation:	The Senate APAS Committee recommends that the current Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors section of the Undergraduate Catalog (in Part 4. Registration, Academic Requirements, and Regulations) be revised to reflect a new process for calculating Latin honors. The committee recommends that the new process be implemented in Fall 2014. The principles of this new process are outlined in the attached report. The guiding principle is that Latin honors accord recognition for academic excellence achieved over the duration of a student's entire official undergraduate coursework at the University of Maryland, and a list of minimum GPA cut-offs for each honor designation should be published by College or School for each upcoming academic year. The final GPA of each graduating student should be compared with

	<p>the published GPA cut-offs in effect for the student’s graduation year to decide if a Latin honor is earned: top 2% summa cum laude, next 3% magna cum laude, next 5% cum laude. While the minimum GPA cut-offs for Latin honors will change from year to year, they will at all times remain static, once calculated, for the entire upcoming academic year and will not be recalculated during that academic year. Thus, students will be able to know what the firm minimum GPA cut-off is for their College or School for each Latin honor level in advance of graduation.</p>
<p>Committee Work:</p>	<p>The APAS Committee received the charge in September 2012. APAS consulted with representatives of the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Studies, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, and the Office of the Registrar about the current procedures related to the calculation of Commencement honors. APAS reviewed data on the impact of potential changes to existing procedures, as compiled by the Office of the Registrar. APAS also reviewed procedures for the calculation of Commencement honors at a number of peer and other institutions. The committee particularly focused on the way that these honors are calculated at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).</p> <p>The committee met with an Assistant Registrar and the University Registrar to review the current process, as well as to discuss how the process could be feasibly reworked. After thorough review of this topic, APAS decided that the process should be changed; it used the UCLA procedures for Latin honors as a guide for crafting new procedures to recommend for use at the University.</p> <p>APAS determined that the Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors section of the University’s Undergraduate Catalog should be updated to reflect the new recommended process for calculating Latin honors. The Registrar reviewed the committee’s final recommendations, which are outlined in the attached report, and agreed that the recommended process is achievable and appropriate for the University.</p> <p>At its meeting on February 22, 2013, APAS voted unanimously in favor of recommending that the current Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors section of the Undergraduate Catalog be revised to reflect the new process for calculating Latin honors.</p>

Alternatives:	The Senate could choose not to approve the recommended changes to the Undergraduate Catalog, Section 4. Registration, Academic Requirements, and Regulations: Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors. The section on Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors would remain as is currently written, and the process would not be changed.
Risks:	There are no associated risks.
Financial Implications:	There are no related financial implications.
Further Approvals Required:	Senate Approval, Presidential Approval.

Senate Academic Procedures and Standards (APAS) Committee

Report – Senate Document 12-13-03

Calculation of Commencement Honors

March 2013

BACKGROUND

At the end of the spring 2012 semester, a student submitted a proposal to the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) regarding concern about the manner in which Commencement honors are currently calculated and awarded at the University (Appendix 5). The proposer asked that the Senate consider recommending a change in the current process to take into account a student's final semester grades in the computation of Commencement honors.

The proposer asserted that prospective graduates have a vested interest in their diploma, and thus the diploma should accurately reflect their earned honors level at the end of their undergraduate career. The student proposed that it is "inherently unfair that a student could potentially graduate with a higher GPA [grade point average] than a fellow student, and yet the aforementioned may not have cum laude printed on his/her diploma while the other would."

Proposals from students and alumni regarding the calculation of Commencement honors at the University have been submitted to the Senate many times over the years, resulting in at least two major reviews of the process in 1981 and 1990. The SEC charged the Senate Academic Procedures and Standards (APAS) Committee with reviewing this proposal in September 2012 (Appendix 4). The SEC asked APAS to review whether Commencement honors should be calculated so that they include a student's final semester, and whether such calculations should be included on the student's diploma following the final GPA recalculation. The SEC asked APAS to make recommendations on whether changes to the process are appropriate.

CURRENT PRACTICE

Commencement honors are awarded to the top 10% of all students graduating in each College or School over the course of a year. Summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude are the highest Commencement honors that the University bestows for sustained excellence in scholarship. Summa cum laude is awarded to students with a GPA equal to the highest two percent of all college graduates over the past three terms, magna cum laude to the next highest three percent, and cum laude to the following five percent.

To be eligible for this recognition, students must earn at least 60 credits at the University of Maryland, College Park. No more than 6 credits taken pass/fail or

satisfactory/fail can count toward the 60-hour minimum. In addition, no student with a GPA of less than 3.3 will be considered for a Commencement honors.

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.

COMMITTEE WORK

The APAS Committee began its review by consulting with representatives of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Studies, and the Office of the Registrar about the current procedures related to the calculation of Commencement honors.

The committee contacted the University Registrar with specific questions about the process, including:

- 1) For each of the last three Commencement ceremonies, how many students were listed in the Commencement Program as having graduated summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude?
- 2) For each of these last three graduation cycles, how many students in each category would not have received the honor after their final GPA was calculated?
- 3) For each of the last three graduation cycles, how many students not listed in the Commencement Program would have earned an honor after all grades (including the last semester) were incorporated into their final GPA?
- 4) For each of the last three graduation cycles, how many students listed in the Commencement program as having received a summa, magna, or cum laude honor would have lost this honor or been changed to a higher or lower honor?

The Office of the Registrar provided statistics in response to each question from APAS (Appendix 3). In November 2012, the committee reviewed data on the impact of potential changes to existing procedures, as compiled by the Office of the Registrar. The Office of the Registrar also provided a reference sheet of Commencement Honor GPA Range by College/School and Term for the committee's evaluation. The committee found that 64 total graduates (from the Spring 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012 graduation cycles) who did not have an honor designation at the time of their commencement would have earned cum laude after calculation of their final GPA.

The committee also reviewed procedures for the calculation of Commencement honors at a number of peer and other institutions across the country, including the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Michigan; and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

The committee particularly focused on the way that the honors are calculated at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). At UCLA, Latin honors are awarded according to a student's overall GPA at graduation. To be eligible, a student must have completed at least 90 (98 for the School of Nursing) University of California units for a letter grade. For specific minimum GPA requirements, which are subject to yearly change, the Latin honors breakdown is available under "Degree Policies" of the Academic Policies section in the UCLA Schedule of Classes (available online at <http://www.registrar.ucla.edu/soc/policy.htm>). For other eligibility restrictions, students are advised to contact their specific College or School, or see "Academic Excellence" in the Undergraduate Study section of the current UCLA General Catalog.

The APAS Committee reviewed the Office of the Registrar's process for calculating Commencement honors with an Assistant Registrar at its meeting on December 12, 2012. The committee confirmed that prospective graduates are listed as 'Candidates for Commencement' in their graduation ceremony programs. The committee agreed that students should be similarly listed in the program as candidates for their honor designations, as calculated at that point, pending final grades. The committee, through an ex-officio member, consulted with undergraduate representatives of the Student Government Association (SGA) about the committee's potential recommendations. The SGA representatives were supportive of the recommended process change of including all semesters in the calculation for the awarding of these honors.

The committee met with the Registrar on February 22, 2013, to discuss how the University's current process could be feasibly reworked. The Registrar advised that if the calculation of Commencement honors process is going to be changed to include the final semester of grades, the honors should be re-named as Latin honors, as opposed to Commencement honors. After thorough review of this topic, the APAS Committee decided that the process should be changed; it used the UCLA procedures for Latin honors as a guide for crafting new procedures to recommend for use at the University. The committee determined that changing the process will not result in a financial burden for the Office of the Registrar. The committee believes that the new process will provide transparency and clarity in the way that Latin honors are calculated and awarded.

The committee determined that the section of the University's Undergraduate Catalog on Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors should be updated to reflect the new process for calculating Latin honors. The committee also consulted with the Registrar about how the Office of the Registrar's website should be edited to reflect the recommended process changes. The Registrar reviewed the committee's final recommendations and agreed that the recommended process is achievable and appropriate for the University.

At its meeting on February 22, 2013, the committee voted unanimously in favor of recommending that the current Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors section of the Undergraduate Catalog (Appendix 2; in Part 4. Registration, Academic Requirements, and Regulations) be revised to reflect the new process for calculating Latin honors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senate APAS Committee recommends that the following principles be implemented by the University and the Office of the Registrar beginning in Fall 2014:

- 1) Latin honors accord recognition for academic excellence achieved over the duration of a student's entire official undergraduate coursework at the University of Maryland.
- 2) All Colleges and Schools at the University should award Latin honors based on a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) at time of graduation. As such, **this GPA should be calculated using grades from all courses taken at the University, including the student's final semester of studies upon graduation.** The levels, or categories, of Latin honors are summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude.
- 3) **Final Latin honors should be officially annotated on the transcripts and diplomas of the students who have graduated, and should include the GPA of the students' final semester upon graduation, which are calculated sometime after the commencement activities.**
- 4) For the purpose of identifying in the University's commencement ceremony the graduating students who have potentially earned Latin honors, the cumulative GPAs of all graduating undergraduates should be calculated based on all grades earned at the University prior to the semester of commencement. A disclaimer should be placed in the commencement program highlighting that *the Latin honors published in this booklet are tentative and unofficial, pending the submission and calculation of all final grades for the semester of commencement.*
- 5) To determine the Latin honors cut-off in each honor category for a particular year, the Office of the Registrar should calculate at the end of a given academic year, after final grades have been submitted, the minimum GPA for each Latin honor designation, by College or School, based on cumulative GPA averages of the previous academic year's three graduating terms (Fall, Spring, and Summer).
- 6) These minimum GPAs should be considered as firm cut-offs for earning Latin honors during the academic year following the calculations, and should be published within the first couple of months of the upcoming academic year. **While the minimum GPA cut-offs for Latin honors will change from year to year, they will at all times remain static, once calculated, for the entire upcoming academic year and will not be recalculated during that academic year.** Thus, students will be able to know what the firm minimum GPA cut-off is for their individual College or School for each Latin honor level in advance of graduation.
- 7) The minimum GPA cut-offs for each Latin honor by College or School (e.g. College of Arts & Humanities: 3.924 for summa cum laude; 3.858 for magna cum laude; and, 3.766 for cum laude) should be published on the Office of the Registrar's website (www.rr.umd.edu) and other online and printed publications. A link to the Office of the

Registrar's website should be included in the Undergraduate Catalog section on Latin honors. The published cut-offs should include a statement underscoring that they change from one year to the next, and any other eligibility restrictions.

8) The final GPA of each graduating student should be compared with the published GPA cut-offs in effect for the student's graduation year to decide if a Latin honor is earned: top 2% summa cum laude, next 3% magna cum laude, next 5% cum laude. No student with a GPA of less than 3.3 should be considered for a Latin honor.

9) Implementation of the new calculations of Latin honors should begin in Fall 2014.

10) Beginning with the publication for the 2014-2015 academic year, the Undergraduate Catalog entry on "Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors" (in Section 4. Registration, Academic Requirements, and Regulations) should be renamed as, "Graduation Applications and Latin Honors." The entry should be revised as follows; edits are indicated in blue/bold font (Appendix 1):

Commencement Honors Latin Honors

Summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude are the highest **commencement Latin** honors that the University bestows for sustained excellence in scholarship. They are awarded to the top 10% of all students graduating in each ~~College~~ **or School over the course of a year**. Summa cum laude is awarded to students with a GPA equal to **or greater than** the highest two percent of **GPA's from the specific College or School averaged over the previous academic year** ~~all college graduates over the past three terms~~, magna cum laude to the next highest three percent, and cum laude to the following five percent. To be eligible for this recognition, at least 60 semester hours must be earned at the **u**University or at a program in which credit earned is counted as University of Maryland, College Park, resident credit (contact the Office of the Registrar to determine program eligibility). No more than 6 credits taken pass/fail or satisfactory/fail **grade modes** shall count toward the 60-hour minimum. No student with a grade point average of less than 3.3 will be considered for a **commencement Latin** honor. **See the Office of the Registrar's website (www.rr.umd.edu) for a list of the minimum GPA cut-offs for each honor designation, published by College or School.** ~~Because grades for a term generally are officially recorded after the term's graduation day, computation of the student's GPA will not include grades for courses taken during the student's final semester at the university. However, the hours taken during that semester will apply toward the 60-hour requirement.~~

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Recommended Changes to the “Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors” section of the University’s Undergraduate Catalog

Appendix 2 – Current Version of the “Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors” section of the University’s Undergraduate Catalog

Appendix 3 – Data Analysis from the Office of the Registrar, October 2012

Appendix 4 – Charge from the Senate Executive Committee (SEC), September 2012

Appendix 5 – Proposal from Benjamin Kurtz, May 2012

RECOMMENDED CHANGES
Noted in Blue/Bold Font

Undergraduate Catalog

<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1544>

Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors

Graduation Applications

Each candidate for a degree or certificate must file a formal application with the Office of the Registrar. The deadline for application is the end of the schedule adjustment period for the semester in which the student plans to graduate, or at the end of the first week of the second summer session for August degrees.

In all cases, graduation applications must be filed at the beginning of the student's final semester before receiving a degree. The graduation applications are available on the internet at www.my.umd.edu or at the Registrar's Office, 1st floor Mitchell Building.

Commencement Honors Latin Honors

Summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude are the highest ~~commencement~~ **Latin** honors that the University bestows for sustained excellence in scholarship. They are awarded to the top 10% of all students graduating in each ~~eCollege~~ **or School over the course of a year**. Summa cum laude is awarded to students with a GPA equal to **or greater than** the highest two percent of **GPA's from the specific College or School averaged over the previous academic year** ~~all college graduates over the past three terms~~, magna cum laude to the next highest three percent, and cum laude to the following five percent. To be eligible for this recognition, at least 60 semester hours must be earned at the ~~u~~**University** or at a program in which credit earned is counted as University of Maryland, College Park, resident credit (contact the Office of the Registrar to determine program eligibility). No more than 6 credits taken pass/fail or satisfactory/fail **grade modes** shall count toward the 60-hour minimum. No student with a grade point average of less than 3.3 will be considered for a ~~commencement~~ **Latin** honor. **See the Office of the Registrar's website (www.rr.umd.edu) for a list of the minimum GPA cut-offs for each honor designation, published by College or School.** ~~Because grades for a term generally are officially recorded after the term's graduation day, computation of the student's GPA will not include grades for courses taken during the student's final semester at the university. However, the hours taken during that semester will apply toward the 60-hour requirement.~~

...

CURRENT VERSION

Undergraduate Catalog 2012-2013

<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1544>

Graduation Applications and Commencement Honors

Graduation Applications

Each candidate for a degree or certificate must file a formal application with the Office of the Registrar. The deadline for application is the end of the schedule adjustment period for the semester in which the student plans to graduate, or at the end of the first week of the second summer session for August degrees.

In all cases, graduation applications must be filed at the beginning of the student's final semester before receiving a degree. The graduation applications are available on the internet at www.my.umd.edu or at the Registrar's Office, 1st floor Mitchell Building.

Commencement Honors

Summa cum laude, magna cum laude and cum laude are the highest commencement honors that the University bestows for sustained excellence in scholarship. They are awarded to the top 10% of all students graduating in each college over the course of a year. Summa cum laude is awarded to students with a GPA equal to the highest two percent of all college graduates over the past three terms, magna cum laude to the next highest three percent, and cum laude to the following five percent. To be eligible for this recognition, at least 60 semester hours must be earned at the university or at a program in which credit earned is counted as University of Maryland, College Park, resident credit (contact the Office of the Registrar to determine program eligibility). No more than 6 credits taken pass/fail or satisfactory/fail shall count toward the 60-hour minimum. No student with a grade-point average of less than 3.3 will be considered for a commencement honor. Because grades for a term generally are officially recorded after the term's graduation day, computation of the student's GPA will not include grades for courses taken during the student's final semester at the university. However, the hours taken during that semester will apply toward the 60-hour requirement.

...

Graduates by Term & College

Graduates with Honors (10/1/12)
Answers Question 1

Term	College	Graduates	Summa Cum Laude	Magna Cum Laude	Cum Laude	Grand Total
SPRING 2011		4,922	102	157	259	518
	AGNR	182	3	6	12	21
	ARCH	36	1		1	2
	ARHU	907	21	20	46	87
	BMGT	732	16	13	31	60
	BSOS	1,284	21	62	76	159
	CLFS	412	5	20	24	49
	CMPS	197	5	9	11	25
	EDUC	180	8	2	6	16
	ENGR	522	14	18	28	60
	JOUR	96	2	2	7	11
	SPHL	362	6	3	17	26
	UGST	12		2		2
FALL 2011		1,456	26	31	37	94
	AGNR	58	1	1	3	5
	ARCH	4				
	ARHU	266	6	6	5	17
	BMGT	162	5	2	7	14
	BSOS	401	6	11	9	26
	CMNS	185	3	4	3	10
	EDUC	15			1	1
	ENGR	147	3	3	4	10
	JOUR	15		1		1
	SPHL	202	2	3	5	10
	UGST	1				
SPRING 2012		4,813	173	168	271	612
	AGNR	197	6	9	16	31
	ARCH	57	2	1	5	8
	ARHU	812	29	34	38	101
	BMGT	722	31	22	44	97
	BSOS	1,241	36	45	76	157
	CMNS	670	26	15	33	74
	EDUC	150	5	2	4	11
	ENGR	511	16	22	33	71
	JOUR	98	3	2	7	12
	SPHL	346	19	16	13	48
	UGST	9			2	2
Grand Total		11,191	301	356	567	1,224

Change in Commencement Honor After Calculation of Final GPA (10/1/12)
Answers Questions 2 and 4

Term	Honor Received	Honor After Final GPA	Count
Spring 2011			518
	Summa Cum Laude		102
		Cum	2
		Magna	7
		Remain	93
	Magna Cum Laude		157
		Cum	22
		Summa	8
		No Honor	2
		Remain	125
	Cum Laude		259
		Magna	21
		No Honor	38
		Remain	200
Fall 2011			94
	Summa Cum Laude		26
		Cum	1
		Magna	2
		Remain	23
	Magna Cum Laude		31
		Cum	7
		Remain	24
	Cum Laude		37
		Magna	3
		No Honor	6
		Remain	28
Spring 2012			612
	Summa Cum Laude		173
		Cum	1
		Magna	16
		Remain	156
	Magna Cum Laude		168
		Cum	33
		Summa	12
		No Honor	1
		Remain	122
	Cum Laude		271
		Magna	10
		No Honor	35
		Remain	226
Grand Total			1224

Graduates With No Honor Who Would Have Earned Cum Laude Honor After Calculation of Final GPA (10/1/12)
Answers Question 3

Term	College	Total
Spring 2011		29
	AGNR	2
	ARHU	4
	BMGT	4
	BSOS	5
	CLFS	4
	ENGR	5
	SPHL	5
Fall 2011		4
	BMGT	1
	BSOS	1
	CMNS	1
	SPHL	1
Spring 2012		31
	ARCH	1
	ARHU	5
	BMGT	5
	BSOS	9
	CMNS	3
	ENGR	4
	SPHL	4
Grand Total		64

Reference Sheet of Commencement Honor GPA Range by College and Term (10/1/12)

College	Term	Summa High	Summa Low	Magna High	Magna Low	Cum Laude High	Cum Laude Low
AGNR	Spring 2011	4.000	3.950	3.949	3.848	3.847	3.690
	Fall 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.876	3.875	3.724
	Spring 2012	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.876	3.875	3.729
ARCH	Spring 2011	4.000	3.976	3.975	3.972	3.971	3.851
	Fall 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.868	3.867	3.752
	Spring 2012	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.868	3.867	3.752
ARHU	Spring 2011	4.000	3.968	3.967	3.917	3.916	3.839
	Fall 2011	4.000	3.969	3.968	3.906	3.905	3.826
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.969	3.968	3.910	3.909	3.818
BMGT	Spring 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.949	3.948	3.895
	Fall 2011	4.000	3.975	3.974	3.935	3.934	3.872
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.975	3.974	3.936	3.935	3.872
BSOS	Spring 2011	4.000	3.975	3.974	3.901	3.900	3.811
	Fall 2011	4.000	3.974	3.973	3.916	3.915	3.827
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.971	3.97	3.914	3.913	3.82
CLFS	Spring 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.949	3.948	3.875
	Fall 2011						
	Spring 2012						
CMNS	Spring 2011						
	Fall 2011	4.000	3.981	3.980	3.948	3.947	3.878
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.982	3.981	3.954	3.953	3.896
CMPS	Spring 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.950	3.949	3.872
	Fall 2011						
	Spring 2012						
EDUC	Spring 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.972	3.971	3.929
	Fall 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.976	3.975	3.911
	Spring 2012	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.960	3.959	3.925
ENGR	Spring 2011	4.000	3.975	3.974	3.912	3.911	3.825
	Fall 2011	4.000	3.975	3.974	3.906	3.905	3.822
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.978	3.977	3.905	3.904	3.818
JOUR	Spring 2011	4.000	3.931	3.930	3.873	3.872	3.797
	Fall 2011						
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.943	3.942	3.861	3.860	3.791
SPHL	Spring 2011	4.000	3.926	3.925	3.860	3.859	3.730
	Fall 2011	4.000	3.892	3.891	3.773	3.772	3.666
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.886	3.885	3.761	3.76	3.663
UGST	Spring 2011	4.000	4.000	3.999	3.957	3.956	3.843
	Fall 2011	4.000	3.968	3.967	3.909	3.908	3.764
	Spring 2012	4.000	3.968	3.967	3.909	3.908	3.764



University Senate CHARGE

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

Name:	Benjamin Kurtz
Date:	9/29/2011
Title of Proposal:	Honors Graduation
Phone Number:	240-498-7657
Email Address:	bkurtz1@terpmail.umd.edu
Campus Address:	Off campus/ 8209 Stone Trail Dr. Bethesda Maryland 20817
Unit/Department/College:	Criminal Justice/BSOS
Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):	
Description of issue/concern/policy in question:	My concern is the manor for which final class rankings are computed.
Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:	Please see below

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

Please send your completed form and any supporting documents to 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