OPTION III DEGREE PROGRAMS
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES GUIDE
(Revised September 2020)

Authority for all graduate Option III programs has been delegated by the President to the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies. Questions and concerns should be directed to Assistant Dean Michelle Broadway (232-3625, mbroadway@austin.utexas.edu).

This summary of admission, registration, budgeting, billing, graduation, and program review procedures is intended to assist the University and Option III degree programs in providing services to students and to integrate these programs into the administrative environment of the University.

Please note that a separate but related document, the Option III Administrative Process Questionnaire, must be completed by faculty proposing new Option III programs during the proposal process. This questionnaire is maintained by the Office of the Registrar and should be completed following the Graduate Assembly’s approval of a proposed degree program.

I. PROGRAM BUDGETS AND BILLING PROCEDURES

A. BUDGETS

Contact for budgets and budget transfers: Don Aleman, Chief Business Officer for Graduate Studies (471-6384, aaleman@austin.utexas.edu)

New Program Budgets. All Option III program proposals submitted to the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies must include a five-year program budget that has received preliminary approval from the Provost’s Office. All budget submissions must use the standard template available from the Graduate School.

Revised Budgets. For existing programs to increase a program fee or add a new enrollment deposit, a revised budget must be submitted for review and approval. Requests to increase fees should be addressed to the Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies and sent to Assistant Dean Michelle Broadway at mbroadway@austin.utexas.edu. Dean Broadway will route the request for the Provost’s budgetary approval via Don Aleman.

Operating Budgets. Approved Option III programs should submit an operating budget during the annual operating budget preparation. This process is separate from the program budget discussed in the previous paragraphs. The instructions for the operating budget preparation are distributed by the Budget Office through the Dean of the College/School or Vice President.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE TRANSFER, BILLING, COLLECTION, AND DISBURSEMENT OF OPTION III OTHER EXPENSES AND FEES
(Items 11-16 on the Budget Template)
**Program Billing and Collection of Program Fee from Student or Sponsor.** Option III graduate program coordinators will bill students or their sponsors for the approved program fee and will collect and deposit the fee into the program income account using the **3096 object code**. Programs will establish payment deadlines for their students or sponsors.

**Transfer and Disbursement of Funds.**

1. **Departmental Administrative Fee (Item 11 on Budget Template).** If there are administrative fees assessed by the department, the amount should be included in the program operating budget document (BUD) as a transfer from the income account to the appropriate departmental account (this must be a budgeted account).

2. **College Administrative Fee (Item 12 on Budget Template).** If there are administrative fees assessed by your dean’s office, this amount should be included in the annual program budget document (BUD) as a transfer from the income account to the appropriate account within the dean’s office (this must be a budgeted account).

3. **Graduate School Program Administrative Fee ($75 per student per semester) (Item 13 on Budget Template).** This fee should be included in the annual program budget document (BUD) as a transfer from the income account to the Graduate School account 19-1401-2095. Please call Karen Sacratini, Administrative Manager in the Graduate School at 232-3610 with the budgeted amount, so she can include the same amount in the Graduate School budget. The transfer must cover fees for fall, spring, and summer semesters. Any needed adjustments in the amount transferred to the Graduate School account, to reflect the actual number of students enrolled, may be arranged by contacting Karen Sacratini (232-3610, sacratini@austin.utexas.edu)

4. **5% Administrative Fee, Institutional Overhead (Item 14a on Budget Template).** This fee should be an estimate of expenses to be included in the annual program budget document (BUD) as a transfer from the income account to account **19-0206-0695 (Administrative Charge-Designated)**. For additional information concerning the expenses that are subject to the administrative fee, contact the Budget Office at 471-3727, bd.help@austin.utexas.edu. Through the normal administrative fee assessment process, the program account will be assessed the fee each month based on actual expenses.

5. **Mandatory Student Fees, Institutional Overhead (Item 14b on Budget Template).** Students must pay all mandatory student fees but do not pay tuition, or course-related or program and service-related fees. One hundred percent of the amount due is required by the University payment due deadline for the semester and students’ registrations will be cancelled through the automated process according to the schedule for regular students if payment is not made by the deadline.

**Program Budget Document (BUD)** The estimated mandatory fees should be included in the annual program budget document (BUD) as an estimated expense. A “70” subaccount should be set up in the budget for these fees.

**Student Accounts Receivable Fee Billing (Office of Accounting, Special Tuition and Fee Billing).** Student Accounts Receivable will bill program accounts for the Option III fee (in lieu
of fees required of all students) and mandatory fees required of international students. **The mandatory fees will include the General Property Deposit (a one-time charge), the certification fee (School 6 only - $10 per long semester), and late-registration charges when applicable.**

In order for the program accounts to be charged for the fees, Option III program staff must process a *DEFINE SS2 document for each student each semester prior to the established payment deadlines for regular students. Questions concerning SS2 documents should be directed to Tuition Billing at (512) 475-7666 or tuition@austin.utexas.edu.

SS2 users must be authorized. Please make sure the graduate program is set up with a scholarship (70) subaccount that accepts the tuition object codes (1605) before processing the SS2 document. **It is the responsibility of each new Option III graduate program to contact Tuition Billing (tuition@austin.utexas.edu/512-475-7666) AND Centralized Receivables (SAR@austin.utexas.edu/512-232-9561) for training in the use of *DEFINE documents for the billing process.**

Although the student account is posted immediately, the charge will not post to the program account until the middle of the semester when the automated Special Billing processing occurs. **The program coordinator must ensure that funds are available in the account to cover these charges.**

Changes or cancellation of amounts for registration may be made on the SSB document.

**Optional fees:** Option III graduate program coordinators will list on the SS2 document optional fees (such as the late registration fee or the ISSS/other international fees) to be paid for a student and, when registering the student, will select those optional items. Bills sent to the graduate program will reflect the optional fees, if any, to be paid for individual students.

**International students:** Although programs must pay the mandatory international student fees as applicable, waiver of the International student health insurance fee may be requested from Texas Global for international students in programs not meeting in Austin. Contact the Texas Global Insurance Adviser (insuranceadviser@austin.utexas.edu) for additional information. All international students must pay the $125/semester International Student Support Services (ISSS) fee. This is a mandatory fee that may not be waived. For questions about VISA requirements, contact Teri Albrecht in Texas Global.

**6. Facilities Overhead Fee, Institutional Overhead ($50 per Semester Credit Hour per student for On-campus programs) (Item 14c on Budget Template).** An estimate of facility overhead for fall, spring, and summer should be made and budgeted in the annual program budget document (BUD) as a transfer from the income account to **account 19-0610-5096 – Option III Program Facility Overhead.** This fee applies to programs that are classified as on-campus. On-Campus is defined as utilizing UT Austin Education & General Purpose space for program activities for any period of time for program use. Types of program activities/use are orientation, meetings, ceremonies, recordings, etc. Education and General Purpose space excludes auxiliary entities like AT&T Conference Center, Thompson Conference Center, Texas Unions, Bob Bullock Museum, etc. In addition, this excludes shared space that is paid for in the student’s fee such as UT Libraries.
7. Tuition Reduction Benefit (Item 14d on Budget Template). Students enrolled in self-supported (Option III) degree programs are not eligible to receive the Tuition Reduction Benefit (TRB); however, graduate students enrolled in state-funded (Option I) degree programs may be appointed in student academic positions (TAs and GRAs) designed to support Option III programs and are eligible for TRB.

8. Certification Fee ($18 per student per long semester) (Item 15 on Budget Template). This fee does not apply to McCombs School of Business Option III programs. The certification fees should be included in the annual program budget document (BUD) as an estimated expense in the “21” or “50” subaccount.

9. Student ID Fee ($10 One-time Fee Per Student) (Item 16 on Budget Template). ID fees should be included in the annual program budget document (BUD) as an estimated expense in the “21” or “50” subaccount.

When it is time for the students to receive IDs, the program must provide a list of students to the Student ID Center with an account number to bill. The list should include the EID, date of birth, and full name. The ID Center will charge the program account via interdepartmental fund transfer (VT5).

For instructions on obtaining student IDs and activating EIDs, See Section VII. MISCELLANEOUS, UT ID and EID.

To contact the ID Center: https://ut.service-now.com/utss/KAhome.do?number=KB0011346

II. ADMISSION

Contact: Shannon Neuse, Director, Graduate and International Admissions Center (GIAC) (475-7397, shannon.neuse@austin.utexas.edu)

Application to Graduate School. Applications must be processed through GIAC. Students may apply using the usual Graduate School on-line application. Programs can work with GIAC to customize the application form, including the addition of departmental specific questions.

GIAC will collect the Graduate School application fee, separate and official transcripts from all senior-level colleges attended, and the required standardized test scores. Option III programs may choose to collect supporting application materials from their applicants. If the program collects the supporting application materials, all must be sent to GIAC, not just those for students to be admitted. GIAC must be notified of the program’s intentions for collecting supporting application materials, and arrangements must be made for delivery and processing.

Deadlines for applying. GIAC must be notified of deadlines for applying to the program.
**Test scores.** Official test scores should be sent directly to GIAC from the testing agency. If you wish to establish a program specific code for sending and receiving scores, notify GIAC before contacting the testing agency directly.

**Transcripts.** Separate and official transcripts from each senior-level college or university attended by the applicant should be sent directly to GIAC. During the application process, transcripts are uploaded by the applicant via MyStatus. If admitted, students will need to provide official paper transcripts directly to GIAC.

**Application fees.** Standard application fees must be paid for applicants. Payment is typically made by the applicant via the on-line application. Payment must be made to GIAC before applications will be processed. The Option III program may arrange an alternative payment method with GIAC.

**Residency status.** For statistical purposes, residency must be determined, independent of program costs charged. International students are subject to all additional rules and charges applicable to other University international students in regular, formula-funded (non-Option III) programs. Questions about visa requirements and health insurance for international students in Option III programs not meeting in Austin should be directed to Texas Global (471-2477).

**Offer of admission.** The offer of admission will be sent out by GIAC for the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies upon the recommendation of the graduate program. Standard procedures will apply.

**Transfer to another graduate major.** Students transferring from one graduate major to another must follow standard procedures through GIAC. This is especially important for students transferring from one Option III major code to another (even within the same graduate program – i.e. from a site-based to a web-based cohort) because not only the major code, but often the irregular program code, must be changed by GIAC. Both codes affect the courses for which a student may be enrolled, and incorrect codes may block the registration of students thereby causing late-registration fees to be charged to the graduate program.

**III. UNIVERSITY FINANCIAL AID**

**Contact:** Gordon Lipscomb, Associate Director of Compliance,  
([glipscomb@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:glipscomb@austin.utexas.edu)) Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid

Students in Option III programs are eligible **only** for federal guaranteed loans and some private sector loans. The Office of Financial Aid can advise Option III students on availability of these loans and required procedures for applying.

**Veteran Benefits and Exemptions (Office of the Registrar)** Students in Option III programs are not eligible for Hazelwood Act Exemptions (for Texas ex-servicemen and their children, spouses, or dependents), but may be eligible for GI Bill® benefits. Direct questions to Jodi Torrez, Assistant Registrar, 475-7525.
IV. OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR: CATALOGS, CURRICULUM, SCHEDULING, REGISTRATION, STUDENT RECORDS, AND CERTIFICATION

Contact: Priscilla White, Assistant Registrar. Office of the Registrar
(475-7638, offpubs@austin.utexas.edu)

Publication of the Program in the Graduate Catalog: All Option III programs will be listed in the Graduate Catalog and on the Web sites for graduate admissions and the Graduate School. Option III programs should coordinate with the Graduate School and Official Publications regarding publication deadlines. February 1 is the deadline for legislated catalog edits to be made for the graduate catalog in University systems.

Course Inventory: Regular procedures for adding courses to the inventory and adding course sections must be followed.

August 1 is the deadline to request a new field of study for the upcoming course inventory cycle. Users must update their course inventory and add courses for a new field of study each fall September through October. November 1 is the deadline to submit requests for additions or changes in course inventory for courses to be offered the following fall semester.

A topics course should be added to the course inventory of each Option III graduate program to allow for the addition of courses under the general course inventory description (e.g., Topics in Engineering Management). The course information and prerequisites should be generic enough to accommodate courses added after normal deadlines for adding new courses to the inventory.

Contact the Official Publications team at offpubs@austin.utexas.edu regarding adding courses to the inventory, including the appropriate wording of course descriptions. Resources regarding wording of course descriptions are available in UT Box at https://utexas.box.com/v/registrar-standards.

Scheduling and Registration:

Note: Because of State reporting rules, students in self-funded (Option III) programs CANNOT enroll in formula-funded (Option I or II) classes. Option I and II students CANNOT enroll in Option III classes for the same reasons. With the approval of the Graduate Assembly, room-share arrangements may be established in order to enable these distinct populations of students to attend class at the same time and location. See the Guidelines for Option III Graduate Degree Programs (Revised 2018) for more information.

Courses for the program will be added to the online Course Schedule according to standard procedures each semester. Changes in the Course Schedule to add unnumbered topics and sections of existing courses in the inventory may be made much later than Course Inventory deadlines.

The total semester fee must be listed in the Course Schedule heading for the courses offered each semester by the program.
Distance education elements are indicated via the Course Schedule ‘Instruction mode’ and must be set by the course scheduler for each section scheduled (faculty teaching off campus; courses taught via electronic media, teleconferencing, web-based, etc.).

On the Class Manager (CM) or Course Schedule Update (CSU) online form, a note must be added to the section notelines identifying the course as an Option III course and listing the irregular program code as follows: (Note: Option III – IP code XXXXX). **Option III courses and sections must be restricted to Option III students IN EVERY CASE.** Course schedulers must request the option III code be applied to applicable sections as they are initially scheduled.

Option III students, with appropriate approvals, may enroll concurrently in UT Extension courses or audit regular courses without changing out of the Option III major. University Extension courses may not, however, be used to satisfy option III degree requirements. There is no charge for a UT student auditing regular UT courses. See the General Information catalog for details.

**Registration:** Registration will conform to the University deadlines listed in the official calendar in the Course Schedule, although classes may be scheduled at times other than the official University beginning and ending class dates with appropriate approvals.

Course schedulers must report class meeting dates and provide substantiated academic need when initially scheduling each section if the class will not meet according to the Academic Calendar. Schedulers see ‘Classes that do not Conform to the Academic Calendar’ for information, impact to students, and additional responsibilities for the academic unit when scheduling this way.

Option III departmental personnel will register students through *NRREGP (previously called *NRTTVR). Option III students will register during the designated registration slot for graduate students. *NRREGP users must be authorized.

**Late registration deadlines and charges will apply and will be billed to the Option III program by Student Accounts Receivable.**

**Withdrawal and dropping courses:** Refunds will be calculated according to standard University deadlines, policies, and procedures, and will be returned to the program that paid the student’s fees. **Fees will not be refunded to students, only to the graduate programs.**

**Student Records:** Grading practices, grade reporting, transcripting, and the academic calendar will be according to standard University policies and procedures as specified in the Course Schedule and General Information catalog.

**Certification of Enrollment:** Enrollment certification will be determined by the number of hours for which a student is registered.

V. GRADUATION

**Contact:** Julie Meyer, Director of Graduate Student Services, Office of Graduate Studies, 232-3607, julie.meyer@austin.utexas.edu
**Graduation ceremonies:** Option III degree candidates are invited to attend the Graduate School Convocation as well as the University Commencement in May. *(See note below regarding graduation options for Option III MBA students)*

**McCombs School of Business (School B):** In order for students to receive the mailing inviting them to attend graduation ceremonies, Option III program coordinators/degree evaluators must list students on the *NRRECS, VO screen as applying for a graduate degree in the appropriate semester. The application deadline for each semester is listed in the University Academic Calendar and is generally about two weeks after the beginning of the semester.

Option III MBA students do not participate in the Graduate School convocation, but they may participate in the Business School ceremony and in the University’s evening commencement ceremony. Students who do not receive the graduation mailing and who want to attend these two ceremonies should contact the Business School and University Events for additional information.

**All other Graduate School Option III programs (School 6):** When it is time to apply for graduation, master’s degree candidates must submit an online Master’s Graduation Application by the deadline published in the University’s Academic Calendar. Graduate School degree evaluators process these applications, resulting in an update to the NRRECS <VO> screen. The <VO> update results in the student’s name being added to the certification list and to the mailing list of students who will receive an invitation to the Graduate School Convocation and University Commencement. Students who do not receive the graduation mailing and who want to attend these two ceremonies should contact the Graduate School and University Events for additional information.

**Texas Exes Graduation Reception:** Students, their friends, and families are invited to the Texas Exes reception following the Convocations where faculty and administrators will join students in celebration of the occasion.

**VI. PROGRAM REVIEW**

Option III programs must complete an Annual Progress Report that includes program metrics defined by the Graduate Assembly. Every three years the Graduate Assembly conducts a comprehensive review of all Option III degree programs.

Additionally, Option III degree programs undergo external review on a 7- to 10-year cycle in accordance with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) rules. The review schedule and requirements established by the THECB supersede those established by the Graduate Assembly in 1998. Graduate program review materials are submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Graduate program review guidelines and a schedule of reviews are available at [http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/adv-coor/](http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/adv-coor/).

Questions regarding annual progress reports and graduate-program reviews may be directed to Michelle Broadway, Assistant Dean, Graduate School, 232-3625, mbroadway@austin.utexas.edu.
VII. MISCELLANEOUS

Immunization Requirements for Students in Programs Meeting Outside of Austin. Questions about waivers of University requirements should be directed to Jamie Shutter, Director, University Health Services (475-8349, j.shutter@uhs.utexas.edu).

Taxpayer Relief Act Reporting for Tuition and Fees Paid to the University. Questions about University policies and procedures for reporting to IRS the program fees paid by students (or their sponsors) in Option III programs should be directed to Tuition Billing (tuition@austin.utexas.edu/512-475-7666)

UT ID and UT EID: Students will be eligible to receive a UT Austin student ID upon enrollment. Payment of the required fees and receipt of an ID card entitles the student to receive all applicable University services.

When a student applies to the university, a UT EID is generated. Students may activate their UT EID at https://idmanager.its.utexas.edu/eid_self_help/. Assistance is available through the ITS Help Desk at 512-475-9400. Electronic services provided to students with a UT EID are based upon whether or not the student is enrolled in the current semester.

To obtain IDs for Option III students, the program coordinator should send a list of newly admitted option III students to ID Center administrators at id_center@utlists.utexas.edu before escorting the new students as a group to the ID Center in Flawn Academic Center. Associated charges for students included on the list will be processed as IDT payments. Students who are not included on the list will be billed through their “What I Owe” accounts. Students must have appropriate identification with them in order to obtain a UT ID. A list of acceptable forms of identification is published at www.utexas.edu/its/idcenter.

If a student is unable to apply for the ID in person, the program coordinator must contact the ID Center for instructions. This option is available only to students who will never be in Austin.