The PG Secretariat has recently updated and released:

- Guidelines on thesis preparation;
- Guidelines for MPhil students wishing to take thesis examination;
- Guidelines for PhD students wishing to take thesis examination;
- Guidelines on the appointment and roles of chairman and examiners of PhD examination committees; and
- Guidelines on the conduct of MPhil and PhD thesis examinations.

**OTHER TOPICS COVERED:**

- Abolishment of the Policy to Allow Engineering Departments to Grade Courses Which Do Not Count Toward Graduation, Either by P/ F Grades or Letter Grades (p.2)
- Review of the Use of the Terms Advanced Standing, Credit Transfer and Course Exemption (p.2)
- PGS Rate for 2001/ 02 (p.2-3)
- Academic Programs Manual Updated (p.3)
- Statistical Information on PG Students 2000/ 01 (p.3)
- Membership of the Committee on Postgraduate Studies (p.3)

The new procedures will become effective from Fall Semester, 2001/ 02. As a transitional arrangement, research postgraduate students who will take their thesis examination before 31 August 2001 may follow either the current or the new guidelines on thesis preparation. Copies of the above guidelines can be obtained from departmental offices. Alternatively, you may download the PDF files via http://www.ust.hk/~webaa/pgsec/home.htm

**Maximum Time Limit for RPgs to Submit Their Final Corrected Thesis After Their Thesis Defense**

Under the current arrangement, the maximum length of time a research postgraduate student (RPg) is allowed to submit their final corrected thesis after a thesis defense is not specified. In the past few years, a small number of RPgs had taken very lengthy durations to complete their thesis correction work, thus creating more ‘out-timers’ on research programs. At the Senate meeting held on 14 February 2001, the following guidelines on time limits for RPgs to submit their final corrected thesis were endorsed, and will take effect from Fall Semester, 2001/ 02:

1. For RPgs who have passed their thesis examination but subject to minor corrections, their final thesis copies must be submitted to the University within three months from the date of the thesis examination, or a date specified by the thesis examination committee, whichever is earlier. This requirement is applicable regardless of the mode of registration of the student.

(Continued on p.2)
(Continued from p.1)

2. For RPgs who have passed their thesis examination but subject to major corrections, their final thesis copies must be submitted to the University within 12 months from the date of the thesis examination, or a date specified by the thesis examination committee, whichever is earlier. This requirement is applicable regardless of the mode of registration of the student.

3. In the event that an RPg misses the deadline for the submission of the final thesis copies, the student will be viewed to have failed to meet the thesis examination requirements of the University and will be deemed to have failed the requirements of the degree program being pursued.

4. If the delay in submitting the final thesis copies is no fault of the student, the student may appeal for an exception to be made for the above rules to apply to the case.

Abolishment of the Policy to Allow Engineering Departments to Grade Courses Which Do Not Count Toward Graduation, Either by P/F Grades or Letter Grades

The Senate endorsed a proposal submitted by the Engineering PG Studies Committee (EPSC) in June 1995 to establish a mechanism to allow its departments the discretion to grade courses which did not count toward graduation either by Pass or Fail grades, or letter grades. The EPSC recently reviewed the above policy and considered it redundant as students can attend courses as auditors to serve similar purposes. The Senate has, at its meeting held on 10 April 2001, endorsed EPSC’s recommendation to abolish the policy starting Fall Semester, 2001/02.

Review of the Use of the Terms Advanced Standing, Credit Transfer and Course Exemption

To maintain consistency with the regulations governing UG studies, the Senate has, at its meeting held on 14 February 2001, endorsed a proposal submitted by the Committee on Postgraduate Studies that:

1. The term ‘Advanced Standing’ currently in use in regulations governing PG studies will be replaced by ‘Credit Transfer’. Credits gained at the University or elsewhere which have been approved for transfer to the program of study at the University are called Transfer Credits. All current conditions governing Advanced Standing will continue to apply to ‘Credit Transfer’ cases.

2. Students applying for credit transfer to a PG program must produce evidence, such as a transcript and course syllabus, to illustrate that a course is equivalent in content and level to another course taken elsewhere, for which a satisfactory grade has been obtained. Such courses must be at 300-level or above.

3. The term ‘Course Exemption’ as used in the regulations governing PG studies of the University will be replaced by ‘Course Substitution’. A course taken previously must be equivalent to 300-level or above in order for it to be considered for course substitution. In approving an application for course substitution, a student is required to take an approved alternative course.

The above changes will become effective from Fall Semester, 2001/02.

PGS Rate for 2001/02

The PGS rate for the 2001/02 academic year will remain unchanged for the fourth consecutive year at $15,500 per month, which is the highest among the three research universities in Hong Kong. Related to this, room rental for accommodation in the PG
Hall of Residence will remain unchanged, too for the next academic year. PGS is a general term that covers studentship awards supported by centrally allocated TA funding or research grants of faculty. The terms and conditions of PGS can be obtained from departmental offices. Alternatively, it can be viewed at http://www.ust.hk/~webaa/pgsec/home.htm

**Academic Programs Manual Updated**

The Academic Programs Manual was first issued by the VP-AA Office in September 1995 as an official source of information of the policies, regulations and procedures governing the academic programs offered by the University. The sections pertaining taught and research PG programs have recently been updated and are accessible via this URL: http://www.ust.hk/~webaa/APM/pm10.htm

**Release of Statistical Information on PG Students 2000/01**

As a continuation of the work done last year, the ARRO in consultation with the PG Secretariat of the VP-AA Office has again prepared detailed statistics on applications and offers, enrollment, and completion and attrition for all PG programs offered by the University for the 2000/01 academic year. The statistics, which are useful for future academic planning, have been disseminated University management and the relevant faculty members and administrators of the University for reference in late April.

**Membership of the Committee on Postgraduate Studies**

The Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS) is a committee established by the Senate to advise and make recommendation to the Senate on policies and regulations, and to monitor and review procedures, quality and performance relating to postgraduate studies. Members on CPS include representatives from the four schools and the Students' Union. The terms of reference and membership of the Committee can be found on p.524-5 of the 2000/01 Academic Calendar. As of 1 May 2001, the membership of CPS is as follows:

**Chairman:**
Prof Dik Lun LEE (COMP)

**Member and Secretary, ex-officio:**
Prof Nelson CUE (AVP-AA(PG))

**Members:**

**Science** -
Dr Wan Keung WONG (BICH)
Dr Weikun GE (PHYS)

**Engineering** -
Prof Yeou-Koung TUNG (Assoc Dean)
Dr Helen C.M. SHEN (COMP)

**Business & Management** -
Dr Steven J. DeKREY (Assoc Dean)
Prof Kalok CHAN (FINA)

**Humanities & Social Science** -
Dr Leonard K. K. CHAN (HUMA)
Dr Yimin LIN (SOSC)

**DARR, ex-officio** - Mr Robert BRASHEAR

One postgraduate student each from the four schools -

**Science** - Mr NG Siu-Wing (MATL)

**Engineering** - Mr WONG Hon Leung, Kelvin (MECH)

**Business & Management** - Vacant

**Humanities & Social Science** - Vacant

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**FROM THE PG SECRETARIAT**

This newsletter has been prepared by the PG Secretariat of VP-AA Office. If you have any feedback or suggestions on this newsletter, please contact Vincent Cheung at aackc@ust.hk or Katherine Wong at aakwong@ust.hk.