Proposal Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Proposal to Revise an Academic Policy**

**(Action Item)**

Contact Person: Michelle Hollis, [michelle.hollis@wku.edu](mailto:michelle.hollis@wku.edu), 745-4321

1. **Identification of proposed policy revision**: Revise the residency requirements for graduation honors for baccalaureate degree recipients.

**2. Catalog statement of existing policy:**

Students who maintain superior cumulative grade point averages are recognized at graduation according to the following designations:

**With Distinction**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.4 - 3.69 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**With High Distinction**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.7 - 4.0 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**Cum Laude**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.40 - 3.59 and a minimum of 54 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**Magna Cum Laude**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.60 - 3.79 and a minimum of 54 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**Summa Cum Laude**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.80 - 4.00 and a minimum of 54 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**3. Catalog statement of proposed policy:**

Students who maintain superior cumulative grade point averages are recognized at graduation according to the following designations:

**With Distinction**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.4 - 3.69 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**With High Distinction**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.7 - 4.0 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**Cum Laude**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.40 - 3.59 and a minimum of 45 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**Magna Cum Laude**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.60 - 3.79 and a minimum of 45 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**Summa Cum Laude**—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.80 - 4.00 and a minimum of 45 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

**4. Rationale for proposed policy revision:** During the past few years,WKU has developed articulation agreements and joint admissions agreements with several institutions to assist students in transferring coursework to fulfill requirements for a baccalaureate degree. In addition, recent state legislation (HB 160) has been passed to enhance students’ transfer experience. With this increased focus on transferability of credit, it is proposed that the number of residence hours to receive graduation honors be reduced from 54 to 45 for baccalaureate degrees **for students transferring from those institutions only**. This intent of this proposal is to avoid penalizing transfer students with excellent grades who take advantage of the articulation and joint admissions agreements.

Students can earn a baccalaureate degree with a minimum of 25% of the degree program earned in residence hours (essentially 30 hours or two semesters). The proposed number of residence hours for graduation honors would exceed the minimum number of hours to earn a baccalaureate degree by 15 hours, respectively. Four of the public universities in Kentucky require 45 hours for residency or less.

Three of our Benchmark Institutions allow students who have completed 45 credits in residency to graduate with honors (California State University – Fresno, Florida Atlantic University – Boca Raton and Northern Arizona University. Five of our Benchmark Institutions allow transfer students who meet the GPA requirements to graduate with honors with no stipulation on the minimum number of credit hours earned in residency.

**5. Impact of proposed policy revision on existing academic or non-academic policies:**

None

**6. Proposed term for implementation:** 2014 Spring Semester

**7. Dates of prior committee approvals:**

CAD Endorsement January 22, 2014

UCC Academic Policy Subcommittee February 7, 2013\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

University Senate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_