MEMORANDUM

June 16, 2011

TO: Chief Academic Officers of Universities and Health-Related Institutions and Graduate Deans

FROM: MacGregor M. Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner, Academic Affairs and Research Division

RE: New Rules on the Periodic Review of Graduate Programs

Background Information:

At their April 27, 2011 meeting, the Coordinating Board adopted revisions to Section 5.52 of Board rules. This revised section adds new criteria and procedures for the review of existing graduate programs. The rules create a seven-year cycle during which all master's and doctoral programs must be reviewed. The link to Section 5.52 is: http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/.

Implementation Procedures:

- 1. By December 1, 2011, each institution with graduate programs must submit a schedule of review to the Assistant Commissioner of Academic Affairs and Research. This schedule must list the review date for every master's and doctoral program on the institution's inventory during the next seven years, 2012 through 2018.
- 2. The first round of scheduled reviews for the upcoming seven-year cycle should begin by Fall 2012. During any given year of a cycle, an institution may review no more than 20 percent of its graduate programs.
- 3. Alterations to the schedule of review are possible, but they must be formally requested. An institution wishing to make changes to its schedule of review should send a formal request from the provost to the Assistant Commissioner of Academic Affairs and Research. This request should include a list of the programs and review dates being altered, accompanied by a justification for the changes being requested. In no case shall an institution be allowed to move the review dates for its programs beyond the limit of the current seven-year cycle.
- 4. During the seven-year cycle, each program is reviewed using the criteria listed in Section 5.52. The process must include a programmatic self-study and a review by external consultants with discipline expertise. Doctoral programs shall be reviewed by at least two external consultants, and master's programs by at least one.
- 5. No later than 90 days after the conclusion of each review, institutions shall submit electronically a report of the outcomes of each review to the Academic Affairs and Research Division. This report must include a

- summary of the programmatic self-study and the full text of the external reviewers' evaluation, as well as the institutional response to the external evaluation.
- 6. Board staff will review and analyze each report, followed by an official response to the institution which may include requirements for program improvement.

If you have any questions regarding these policy changes, please contact Dr. James Goeman at <u>James.Goeman@thecb.state.tx.us</u> or at 512-427-6249.