MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 13, 2007

TO: Dr. R. Douglas Slack
   Speaker, Faculty Senate

FROM: Dr. David W. Parrott
       Chair, Rules and Regulations Committee

SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to the Texas A&M Student Rules

Attached please find proposed revisions to the Texas A&M University Student Rules as approved by the Rules and Regulations Committee. These changes are for the following section:

Section 8.4 & 8.5 Special Examinations
Student Rule: 8.4 & 8.5

EXISTING RULE:

8.4 Special Examinations. An undergraduate student who has completed all the requirements for graduation, both in hours and grade points, except for a passing grade in one course undertaken and failed during his or her last two semesters, may be given, with proper approval, one special examination in that course. Before a student will be considered for a special examination, he or she must have substantially completed the work of the course. A request for such special examination should be initiated by the student through the head of the department offering the course and the dean of the student’s college, and submitted to the registrar for approval after the close of the semester or summer term. No special examination shall be given without the approval of both the head of the department in which the course was offered and the dean of the student’s college.

8.5 If a passing grade is made on an authorized special examination, the head of the department will notify the registrar, who will record on the student’s permanent academic record a notation of credit by special examination with the appropriate number of semester hours of credit.

RULE WITH PROPOSED CHANGES:

8.4 Special Examinations. An undergraduate student who has completed all the requirements for graduation, both in hours and grade points, except for a passing grade in one course undertaken and failed during his or her last two semesters, may be given, with proper approval, one special examination in that course. Before a student will be considered for a special examination, he or she must have substantially completed the work of the course. A request for such special examination should be initiated by the student through the head of the department offering the course and the dean of the student's college, and submitted to the registrar for approval after the close of the semester or summer term. No special examination shall be given without the approval of both the head of the department in which the course was offered and the dean of the student’s college.

8.5 If a passing grade is made on an authorized special examination, the head of the department will notify the registrar, who will record on the student’s permanent academic record a notation of credit by special examination with the appropriate number of semester hours of credit.

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED CHANGE:

The Academic Operations Committee (AOC) voted to request that 8.4 and 8.5 be removed from the Student Rules. These are very old rules that are rarely used. Additional reasoning includes:

1. students who fail a course even though they “have substantially completed the work of the course”, should repeat the course;
2. it is unfair for some students who fail a class to be allowed to have an opportunity for a special exam while other students are not provided the same opportunity; and
3. only a very small number of students are granted permission to take a special exam, possibly 1 or 2 a year.
Rule 8.5 is contingent on the existence of 8.4, therefore, it should also be removed.

Based on these recommendations and additional review, the AOC supports the deletion of 8.4 and 8.5 as no longer needed and academically unsound.

Submitted by:

Dr. Kriss Boyd, Associate Dean  
Undergraduate Programs, General Academic Studies

Dr. J. Martyn Gunn  
Dean of Undergraduate Programs and Associate Provost for Academic Services

Approved by the Rules and Regulations Committee on 4/13/2007