A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE UNIVERSITY’S APPLICATION FOR REQUIRED LICENSE TO TEACH IN IRAN

Summary: The resolution urges the Graduate School to apply for, and supports any such application for the required license to provide online instructions and services to registered UMD students who are based in Iran. The resolution describes the impact of absence of the required license on graduate students from Iran who have to stay abroad for justifiable reasons such as late arrivals due to delayed VISA process and unexpected situations that require them go back to Iran temporarily.

WHEREAS, according to the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations\(^1\), the university cannot offer online services to students who are Iranian citizens and are “ordinarily resident in Iran.” The Export Compliance Office of the university must apply for a license for individual students with specific course requirements from the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) to be able to offer online services to Iranian students who are “ordinarily resident in Iran”; and

WHEREAS, according to the Export Compliance Office of the university, no online services (such as library, email, classes etc.) are accessible to the aforementioned category of Iranian students due to the sanction regulations, and such online services are essential to class and research work done by graduate students; and

WHEREAS, many international students cannot be physically present (either temporarily due to unexpected situations or due to an online certification program) in the United States to meet their program requirements, and while the university has alternative hybrid teaching options for many other situations, those hybrid teaching options are inaccessible to Iranian students because the university does not have the required license to teach in Iran; and

WHEREAS, many Iranian students who need to temporarily go back to Iran due to emergency situations, such as illness or loss of family members, would not be able to maintain their academic status using online services during their temporary stay in Iran, but if the required teaching license in Iran is acquired by the University, this category of Iranian students can be taught online until they are able to return to the United States; and

WHEREAS, many Iranian students who apply for F(student) and M(non-academic student) VISAs have to wait in the state of “Administrative Processing” that ranges from months to years, and the delay causes them to arrive on US soil later than expected; if the required teaching license in Iran is acquired by the University, the delayed students can be taught online, until they are granted the VISAs to enter (or return to) the United States; and

\(^1\) https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-31/subtitle-B/chapter-V/part-560
WHEREAS, the VISA process is even further delayed for Iranian students because the lack of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Iran, which forces students who seek a VISA to travel to neighboring countries (Turkey, UAE, Armenia or Cyprus); and

WHEREAS, the recent and ongoing COVID-19 travel restrictions have detrimentally impacted the trips to the neighbor countries for Iranian students, resulting in many students deferring their admissions and putting their education on hold, sometimes for a year or more; and

WHEREAS, the delayed VISA process prevents Iranian students from meeting their program requirements, and they may then be forced to defer their admissions, lose their funding; or in some cases, have their admission waived by the university after a certain number of deferrals; and

WHEREAS, if the hybrid capacity was utilized for Iranian students, they would not need to defer their admissions anymore, or suffer from admission withdrawal or loss of funding.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government requests that the Graduate School and Export Compliance Office take all steps to begin the application process and supports the application for any required licenses to teach in Iran in a hybrid format and make the university’s online services accessible to graduate students living in Iran.

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Date of Presentation:

Action(s) Taken:

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Decision of GSG President

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Signature of GSG President Date