Transcript Visible Specializations at the Graduate Level

Constraints:

- Should not impact the multitude of “Areas of Concentration” (AOCs) currently approved and in the catalog. The intent is to NOT convert all AOCs into becoming transcript visible specializations. Departments have the choice of converting some of the AOCs into transcript visible “options”.
  - At the undergraduate level, there are both transcript visible options and non-transcript visible areas of concentration. We are using the term “option” to refer to a transcript-visible specialization within an existing graduate degree – for lack of a better term.
- Needs to be supported by a formal curriculum approval process to ensure appropriate agencies are informed (Graduate School, Registrar, etc.) This could be similar to the process currently used to approve undergraduate options (will require modification of the curriculum proposal system, etc.)
- Needs to be a formal process to approve the addition of an “option” to a graduate degree candidate (will require the Registrar to enter a banner code into the student record).

Issues:

- The Registrar needs to be able to validate that the requirements for the “option” have been met.
  - They would like each “option” to have a minimum set of core requirements. There would be extra work for the departments in deciding which courses make up the various “options” and getting the information into the catalog, and departments would have to assure that the courses are taught regularly so the students can earn the “options”.
  - There are alternatives that could be investigated in the future, such as having the approved program plan in degree works.
- The Graduate Council would need to develop a definition as to what constitutes a transcript-visible option. Currently, the absolute minimum used by the Graduate School to establish a new Area of Concentration is to have a minimum of 3 courses and 2 faculty.

Advantages:

- Allows tracking of student information within banner/data warehouse. Information regarding enrollment, degrees by gender, ethnicity, residency, age, etc. becomes available to the academic unit and the University.
- There would be greater scrutiny on the part of faculty, administrators, advisors, liaisons, as to what constitutes the courses and requirements for each specialization within a graduate degree program.

Disadvantages:

- Will require more effort by Graduate Council and Curriculum Council to formally approve graduate specializations.
- Also additional workload for Graduate School, Registrar, Catalog, SIS etc.

Next Steps:

- Meet with interested departments to collect input and interest
- Begin formation of formal proposal – December deadline?