



Mount Holyoke College  
50 College Street  
South Hadley, MA 01075  
[www.mtholyoke.edu](http://www.mtholyoke.edu)

## Memorandum

---

To Members of the College Community  
From Elizabeth Pyle, Registrar  
Date February 26, 2008  
Subject H-1B Application Letters

Some international students who are seniors have asked staff and/or faculty for letters attesting to their status vis a vis degree requirements, for the purpose of applying for H-1B visas this Spring. This announcement spells out how such requests will be handled.

- Students who completed all requirements for their degrees at the end of the Fall 2007 or January 2008 terms and who are no longer enrolled at the College should contact the Registrar's Office. They will be issued a standard letter confirming completion of all requirements for the degree and our expectation that their degrees will be awarded in May 2008.
- Students who are candidates for degrees that will be awarded this Spring (2008) and who are still enrolled at the College, regardless of whether they may have completed all of the requirements for the degrees they expect in May, will not be issued letters attesting to their status vis a vis degree requirements. We will not pre-certify completion of degree requirements for those currently enrolled.

The decision not to pre-certify degree requirement status for students currently enrolled was made after extensive discussion and after surveying peer institutions about their practices. The decision was made jointly by the Dean of the College, the Vice President for Enrollment and College Relations, the Director of the McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives, the Registrar, and other representatives from the Registrar's office, the McCulloch Center, and the Career Development Center.

The decision was difficult. We understand clearly the pressures and high stakes involved, and we sympathize with our seniors' desire to participate in the H-1B application process while still students of the College. However, pre-certification of degree requirements for current students would be a major step for Mount Holyoke into uncharted territory. We don't have the processes or resources in place to ensure our certifications would be accurate, timely, and consistent. Beyond those administrative issues, however, pre-certification would introduce into the College a new set of concerns that will require broad campus discussion. Thus, for this year at least, we have resolved that our procedures must exclude pre-certification of degree requirement completion for students currently enrolled at the College.

Our decision to continue with past practice is in line with all the peer institutions we surveyed. Nonetheless, we will continue to explore whether to change our policy in coming years.