

FACULTY SENATE

October 25, 2012

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION TO MODIFY ACADEMIC POLICIES ON COURSE REPETITION AND ACADEMIC SEPARATION

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education's (FSCUE's), Subcommittee on Academic Standing has made recommendations on a cluster of issues related to course repetition, restarting the GPA when a student returns from academic separation, and requiring a cumulative GPA of at least 2.000 for graduation; and

WHEREAS, on May 1, 2012, the FSCUE reviewed and approved the recommendations, attached hereto as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, on October 12, 2012, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee voted that said recommendations, attached hereto as Exhibit A, should be placed on the agenda for consideration by the Faculty Senate at its October 25, 2012 meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT
FOR ALL CWRU UNDERGRADUATES:

1. Grades for all iterations of repeated courses be included in the calculation of the GPA, but that the prohibition on using the P/NP option for a repeated course be lifted; and
2. That we cease the practice of restarting the GPA calculation after a period of academic separation, and that we now allow students to maintain all credits earned before separation (not just those for which a grade of C or better was earned).
3. The Office of Undergraduate Studies and the Registrar's Office are empowered to work with FSCUE to put in place detailed wording for these new policies, as well as policies needed to handle the transition from the current rules on academic standing. FSCUE shall have the final authority with respect to approval of these new transition policies.

Course Repetition Restarting GPA Post-Separation GPA \geq 2.000 for Graduation

April 17, 2012

Report from Subcommittee on
Academic Standing to FSCUE

A Tale of Four Students

Arlene: Earns all C's; graduates with 120 credit-hours and GPA = 2.000

Bret: Earns a mix of F's and C's; not separated; repeats all courses with F's and earns C's; graduates with 120 credit-hours and GPA = 2.000

Cindy: Earns a mix of F's and C's; separated; does not repeat courses with F's; earns C's in all courses after separation; graduates with 120 credit-hours and GPA = 2.000

Don: Earns a mix of F's and C's; not separated; takes exactly the same courses as Cindy; completes 120 credit-hours but does not graduate because GPA < 2.000

Why are Bret, Cindy, and Don being treated differently from one another?

Current Course Repetition Policy

When a course is repeated, the first grade will remain visible on the transcript, but will be removed from the calculation of the cumulative grade point average and the grade point average for the semester in which the course was first taken. Also, credits earned for that enrollment will be deleted. The new grade will then be used for calculation of the cumulative grade point average and the grade point average for the semester in which it was earned, regardless of whether the new grade is higher or lower than the first grade. The student's transcript will show the comment "REPEATED: NO CREDIT AWARDED" directly below the original grade.

Some Concerns

Incentives: Do we mean to provide a GPA incentive for a student to repeat a course in which he received a disappointing grade rather than move on to something else?

Definitions: If a student fails the honors version of a course (PHYS 124) and then (wisely?) takes the non-honors version (PHYS 122), should that count as a repeat under the policy? Since all USSY seminars fill the same curricular niche, should the course repeat option be applied if a student takes a second USSY seminar?

Some Concerns

Inequity: Courses are offered with different frequency; some are offered only once. Is it equitable for some students to improve their GPAs because they had the good luck to fail a course that is being offered again?

Consistency: Why do we omit the first iteration of a repeated course in the reported GPA when we think it is important to include it in the scholarship GPA (under old rules)?

Integrity of the transcript: Is there a mismatch between the grades showing on the transcript and the reported GPA that may confuse or mislead the reader of the transcript?

Proposal on Course Repetition

That the grades for all iterations of repeated courses be included in the calculation of the GPA

but that the prohibition on using the P/NP option for a repeated course be lifted

Current Policy on Restarting GPA

Students readmitted after being separated for reasons of academic performance will retain the credits they earned before separation only for those courses passed with a grade of C or better.

Readmitted students do not retain quality points earned before separation, and the cumulative grade point average will be restarted and include only those grades earned after readmission.

Some Concerns

Incentives: Does this distort decisions about academic probation and separation by adding a consideration beyond a student's readiness to perform at a level that will lead him back to good standing?

Consistency: Why do we omit courses taken before separation from the reported GPA when we think it is important to include these in the GPA calculation for Latin honors at graduation?

Integrity of the transcript: If a student returns from separation and then received all A's, is it appropriate that his reported CWRU GPA is 4.000?

Proposal on Restarting GPA

That we cease the practice of restarting the GPA calculation after a period of academic separation,

and that we now allow students to maintain all credits earned before separation (not just those for which a grade of C or better was earned)

Current Policy on GPA ≥ 2.000 to Graduate

Every candidate for a baccalaureate degree from the university must:

1. complete a foundation curriculum ...;
2. complete two semesters of physical education;
3. **complete a course of studies with a cumulative grade point average of no less than 2.000 for work taken at Case Western Reserve University;** and
4. earn in residence at Case Western Reserve University a minimum of 60 semester hours, of which at least 30 must be earned after the student achieves senior status.

Some Concerns

Completion of requirements vs. history: If a student has completed the requisite number of credit-hours with an appropriate GPA for those courses, why do we care that the student may have had some missteps along the way?

Difficulty overcoming bad grades: Is it right that the only ways to offset D's and F's are to earn A's and B's or repeat specific courses?

Some Concerns

Consistency with P/NP policy: If we are not concerned about D's and F's hidden behind P's and NP's for elective courses, why do we care about them if they are showing?

Consistency with major GPA: Why do we include all grades in calculating the overall GPA to check for 2.000 when we include only the courses used to fulfill major requirements in calculating the major GPA for 2.000 for those degrees that have such a requirement?

Proposal on GPA \geq 2.000 to Graduate

That we make no change to the requirement of a cumulative GPA of at least 2.000 for graduation.

Benchmarking Data

Polled AAU Registrars

43 Responded

Benchmarking on Course Repetition

If an undergraduate enrolls in the same course for a second time, which grade is included in the GPA that you calculate for the student?

55% (22) Both grades

33% (13) Only the grade from the second enrollment

13% (5) Only the grade from the first enrollment

Benchmarking on Restarting GPA

If an undergraduate is temporarily required to withdraw/suspended/separated from the university for a semester or more because of poor academic performance and then returns to the university, how are credits earned before the period of withdrawal treated?

95% (41) Student retains all credits earned before the absence

5% (2) Student retains credits earned with grades $\geq X$

0 Student loses all credit earned before absence

Benchmarking on Restarting GPA

If an undergraduate is temporarily required to withdraw/suspended/separated from the university for a semester or more because of poor academic performance and then returns to the university, how are the grades from before the period of absence treated in the GPA that you calculate for the student?

95.3% (41) All grades before separation are included in GPA

2.3% (1) Only grades for which student retains credit are included

2.3% (1) GPA is restarted

Benchmarking on $\text{GPA} \geq 2.000$ to Graduate

In addition to a total number of credit-hours earned and meeting specific course requirements, do undergraduates need to achieve a minimum GPA in order to graduate?

70% (30) Student must have a cum $\text{GPA} \geq X$

51% (22) Student must have a $\text{GPA} \geq X$ in the major

12% (5) No, but we have a different rule that makes sure the student did not skim by with minimal performance

5% (2) No, earning sufficient credit hours and meeting specific course requirements are sufficient to graduate

How Many Students Wouldn't Graduate?

783 students graduated in May 2011.

Of these, 11 had been separated earlier.

Also, looked at the 15 students who graduated with $\text{GPA} \leq 2.500$.

3 students were on both lists, for a total of 23 students.

2 would not have graduated.

1 would have had a **higher** GPA.

Summary

That the grades for all iterations of repeated courses be included in the calculation of the GPA, but that the prohibition on using the P/NP option for a repeated course be lifted;

That we cease the practice of restarting the GPA calculation after a period of academic separation, and that we now allow students to maintain all credits earned before separation (not just those for which a grade of C or better was earned); and

That we make no change to the requirement of a cumulative GPA of at least 2.000 for graduation.

THE END