

August 14, 2006

TO: Members of the Faculty

FROM: Jon Chenette, Chair, Committee on Academic Standing

RE: Academic Year 2005-06 Annual Report

The Committee met regularly to review petitions, waivers, and other requests concerning academic regulations. During January and June the Committee also reviewed the academic status of all students on the academic docket.

This year there were 5 dismissals and 23 suspensions. During the January docket, 4 students were dismissed and 10 students were suspended; in June, 1 student was dismissed and 13 were suspended. Last year a total of 6 students were dismissed and 20 were suspended. After this year's fall semester, 16 students were placed on probation; 15 were placed on probation this spring. In 2004-05, a total of 39 students were placed on probation.

The Subcommittee on Academic Honesty considered 20 cases involving a total of 28 students. This year 26 students were found guilty. Of the 26 cases resulting in a guilty decision, 6 cases involved plagiarism, 2 cases involved cheating on an exam, and 18 cases involved other forms of academic dishonesty such as inadequate citation or unattributed collaboration. Penalties were consistently imposed for those found guilty of a first instance of dishonesty: zero on the assignment, calculation of the zero into the final grade, lowering of the resulting grade one full letter, and one or two semesters of academic dishonesty probation. Two students received reduced penalties due to mitigating circumstances. One student who was found guilty for the second time was suspended for two semesters. By faculty legislation, 24 students are ineligible for graduation with honors.

The Executive Council accepted our recommendation that Grinnell-in-London and Grinnell-in-Washington be treated similarly in relation to residency requirements for graduation, with both counting as on-campus residency for Grinnell students.

The Committee approved the following changes to the *Student Handbook* in order to clarify the relationship between academic actions and withdrawal:

If a student withdraws from the College by the end of the third week of the semester, all courses enrolled in for the semester and not yet completed are deleted from the student's record. If withdrawal occurs from Monday of the fourth week of classes through Friday of the ninth week of classes, a transcript entry of "W" is recorded for each of the courses not yet completed. Students withdrawing after the ninth week of classes or after the end of the semester will receive the grades assigned by their instructors; in these cases, any CAS action based on grades earned for the semester will be posted along with the withdrawal on the student's official College transcript.

The Committee approved the following changes to the *Student Handbook* in order to clarify what actions are required when a student cannot complete a major as describe in the catalog:

Students are held to the major requirements in effect at the time they declare their major. Students are expected to plan their schedules in advance in order to complete the courses required for their major when those courses are normally offered. Since the completion of a major is one of the requirements for graduation, waiving any of the specifications of the major (required courses or course distributions) must be first approved by the department and then approved by the Committee on Academic Standing. Transfer courses may be counted towards the completion of the major if they are approved by the department and the department chair has officially notified the Office of the Registrar. A major cannot be completed out of residence.

In the case of a double major, courses must be designated to one major, but not to both majors. When a concentration and a major are related, up to 8 credits of work included in a student's major may also be counted toward the interdisciplinary concentration.

The Committee thoroughly reviewed and revised an internal document for new CAS members explaining in detail the basis for the various academic review actions such as dismissal, suspension, and probation. In general terms, in determining the appropriate action for students in academic difficulty or falling behind normal progress, the Committee weighs the student's classification (first-semester student, second-semester junior, etc.), semester and cumulative GPA, GPA trajectory, number of credits successfully completed with grades of C or better, progress towards degree, and prior record of CAS actions. Occasionally non-academic factors enter into the decision as well.

The Committee approved for next year only a continuation of this year's experimental finals week schedule, setting aside Monday as a reading day and scheduling 8 final exam periods instead of 9. The specific class times combined into the same exam period next year will differ from those combined this year, in an attempt to reduce the number of exam conflicts.

The committee briefly discussed the following proposal from the Curriculum Committee to create a two day end-of-year period for celebrating student accomplishments with respect to docket actions of suspensions and dismissals and the appeal process for such actions.

Proposal: The College should establish a 2-day period at the end of the semester for student presentations and performances and related celebrations of student accomplishments. This period would be Thursday and Friday of the last week of classes. Thursday's 11 am Convocation slot would focus on recognition of major awards, fellowships, and scholarly accomplishments achieved by students. MAP presentations and other presentations of students' scholarly and artistic work could be scheduled during limited parts of these two days so that other times remain open for study. Student presentations normally scheduled during the last two weeks of classes could be moved to these days, easing the crowding and stress of the final two weeks of classes.

To make up for these two 'lost' class days, classes would begin on a Thursday (four days earlier than in our current calendar). Since the day before classes would be a Wednesday, this would facilitate students' adding or dropping classes during a normal business day prior to the first day of classes.

Rationale: This proposal is in accord with strategy two from our Strategic Plan: **"Foster student, faculty, and staff sense of ambition, adventure, and well-being"**

A & B:

(A) Strengthen opportunities for, and celebrate, achievement inside and outside of the classroom to encourage the aspirations and leadership potential of students, faculty, and staff.

