

July 2, 2007

TO: Members of the Faculty

FROM: Jon Chenette, Chair, Committee on Academic Standing

RE: Academic Year 2006-07 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 4 dismissals and 19 suspensions. During the January docket, 2 students were dismissed and 14 students were suspended; in June, 2 students was dismissed and 5 were suspended. Last year a total of 6 students were dismissed and 23 were suspended. Last fall 12 students were placed on probation, and 11 were placed on probation this spring. Last year a total of 31 students were placed on probation.

The Subcommittee on Academic Honesty considered 14 cases involving a total of 28 students. This year 15 students were found guilty of academic honesty infractions, including one found guilty twice within the same semester. Of the 16 guilty findings, 5 involved plagiarism, 1 involved cheating on an exam, and 10 involved academic dishonesty. A standard penalty was usually 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, one or two semesters of academic dishonesty probation, and ineligibility to graduate with honors. Three cases of students found guilty of academic honesty infractions were deemed to have mitigating circumstances resulting in a less-than-normal penalty; by faculty legislation, these students are still eligible for graduation with honors. One student who was found guilty for the second time within the same semester was suspended for two semesters

It was brought to the attention of the Committee that the college did not have a clear and precise definition of "Good Academic Standing." The Committee approved the following changes to the *Student Handbook* in order to clarify the definition of "Good Academic Standing:"

Good academic standing is defined as making normal academic progress with GPA and credits and having no disciplinary or academic restrictions regarding participation in the academic program. Suspension removes a student from good standing, but warning, probation, or strict probation does not.

The Committee approved the following changes to the *Student Handbook* in order to clarify the due date for accelerated graduation applications:

A completed application must be submitted no later than Friday of the first full week of classes of the semester proposed for graduation. However, it is in a student's interest to apply for accelerated graduation no later than the time of registration two semesters prior to the expected date of accelerated graduation so that the student has two semesters in which to address any academic deficiencies identified by the Committee on Academic Standing.

The Committee approved for the foreseeable future setting aside the Monday of finals week as a reading day and scheduling 8 final exam periods instead of 9.

Based on input from language departments, other faculty members, and student affairs, the committee came to the conclusion that registration for credit is important in order to fulfill the expectations Fulbright and other agencies set for language assistants and expectations of College faculty that language assistants, like other students, are fully engaged in the course material. All language assistants should be half-time students, taking two courses or the equivalent for 8 credits. They can sign up for courses for either a letter grade or as S/D/F but not audit.

The Committee discussed the question of whether to allow triple majors, which are not mentioned as an option in the Grinnell College Catalog. The Committee decided that establishing the option of a triple major would require faculty legislation and that triple majors are not allowed under current curricular guidelines.

The Committee discussed whether to allow students in the Department of Chinese and Japanese to count more than 48 credits in the Department toward their graduation requirements in cases where the credits are split between the two languages. The Committee decided not to allow this, retaining the 48-credit limit that applies in all departments.

The Committee briefly discussed but did not take action on the following proposal from the Curriculum Committee to create a two day end-of-year period for celebrating student accomplishments:

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.

(B) Enhance programs that connect College life with students' futures (such as increased internships and active alumni networks) to promote the transition from College to a successful, professional life.

