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Submitted by: Kathleen Comerford

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Question:

Why does the Registrar grant 48 hours for reporting final semester grades but then allow student access to the grades before 48 hours after the end of the final exam period, thus showing them "grade not reported by professor" when, in fact, the grades are not yet due? Can they wait until 48 hours past the last exam, thereby preventing any confusion among students?

Rationale:

The motion to change this procedure was overwhelmingly approved by the Senate but rejected by the President. Faculty would like to know why the inconsistent policies exist, and would like to avoid a common situation: students access their grades as soon as possible, but those who have taken exams on the last two days of the exam period are dismayed to see "grade not reported". This makes the students upset and angry, and they attempt to follow up with professors. The professors are in the midst of grading at this point, which leads to a tense discussion between a very rushed professor and a confused student, and to delays in grading. The Registrar could prevent delays and confusion easily by reporting all grades 48 hours after the last exam. This will not inconvenience students and should, in fact, make the Registrar's job easier since it would mean only one reporting period.

SEC Response:

The following response was received 9/7/2006 from Provost Bleicken. Both Mike Deal (registrar) and Ginger Malphrus contributed.

1. The Faculty Handbook states that "all final grades must be entered on WINGS no later than 48 hours after the final exam is given."

2. "grade not reported by professor" does not appear until grades have been processed which is always 48 hours or later following the last final exam – see attached example of what a student sees prior to the instructor entering the grade. (Note from Pat Humphrey - the attachment referred to showed final grades for a fictitious student. Grades for three courses showed. The student was also enrolled in two additional course, which did not display).

3. Grades can be made viewable at any time. However, I would point out that many grade errors are corrected by the instructors prior to grade processing because students are currently able to view the grades and discuss grade corrections with the professor prior to the processing being done in the Registrar's Office. This has prevented instructors from having to submit a Change of Grade Form to correct the grade.

4. ADDITIONAL NOTE: In January, 2003, following the Fall 2002 grade postings via WINGS, the following was recommended by the Academic Advisory Council: Faculty Senate Librarian's Report, February 5, 2003 The Academic Advisory Council met on January 14, 2003 Update from Registrar. Mike Deal reported that grades being made available to students as soon as the faculty member posts them has created a problem for some faculty members who had students wishing to discuss their grades before they had time too [sic] finish all their grading at semester's end. It was suggested that grades be made available 24 hours after the last exam in the exam schedule.

Note from Pat Humphrey: I do not believe the 24 hour policy was in effect after this 2003 action. The Academic Standards committee (of which I was a member) did not endorse the 24 hour policy until their meeting March 30, 2004.

Senate Response:

The first request for information came from Kathleen Comerford. It basically was asking about the rationale in terms of Dr. Grube vetoing the 48-hour period for grades not to be available to students after the final exam [passed on June 21]. Dr. Bleicken responded that it's part of our student-centered mission to try to do as much for students as we can. There is also the chance that students actually being able to see their grades before grade processing is done can get grades corrected. An additional note that was provided is that, supposedly, the Academic Advisory Council approved the 24-hour limit in January 2003. I know I was on the Academic Standards Committee during that period of time, and it didn't come before us until March 30, 2004, at which point we approved the 24 hour period after final exams. One final note:

I just heard from Dr. Bleicken today, a few minutes ago, that she has been working with Mike Deal on this question. Students don't get a message saying "grade not reported" in this interim period; what they get is no grade for a class. The Registrar's office is amenable to posting some sort of message above the grades for students saying that, if less than 48 hours have passed since a final exam, the professor is probably still working on grades. So we'll get together with the Registrar and the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) and propose some sort of wording about that message.

Attachment: Viewable Grades