

January 23, 2020

Richard Hughey, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education
Office of the Chancellor

Re: CEP Response to Impacts of Absence of Fall Term Grades

Dear Richard,

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) discussed various possible impacts of the continuing lack of some Fall 2019 grades. We considered the possibility of effects spilling into the Spring Term and, unsurprisingly, found that they would grow worse than at present. We hope that the administration is taking steps to solve the problem quickly, through dialog, a unilateral offer, disciplinary action, or any other means. It is apparent that it will not be solved on its own, by graduate students or by the faculty.

Our detailed conclusions are given below:

1. **Major declaration:** Departments and programs with major qualification policies may be unable to verify if students satisfy the criteria to declare their major by the campus declaration deadline (winter quarter of the first year for transfer students, spring quarter of the sophomore year for other students). The committee felt that this was something best left to departments, who have the authority to exercise discretion if they choose to. This may result in some students being denied permission to declare a major that they would otherwise have been able to declare.
2. **Class level and Enrollment Appointments:** Under Santa Cruz Regulation SCR 6.2.1, a student should advance from one class level to the next after *passing* the appropriate number of credits. Students whose grades in some courses are still pending have not passed those courses, and should be at a lower class level than students whose Fall grades have all been submitted.

CEP has learned that enrollment appointment times are actually being set by a combination of the number of credits completed and the number of credits completed or in progress. The first of these will be affected by missing Fall grades, while the second one will not. We are not asking for any correction to this system at present, but are pointing out that students trying to enroll in high-demand classes may be affected by missing grades, and that changing this would be contrary to SCR 6.2.1.

3. **Graduation and degree satisfaction:** Students who would be able to graduate if they passed their Fall Term courses may not be able to do so if their grades are missing. CEP and the Committee on Courses of Instruction (CCI) have the authority to approve *minor* curricular adjustments and allow students to graduate under suspension of the regulations upon recommendation of the faculty of the colleges and departments, but bigger adjustments are not permitted. Missing grades may be available for individual students who

wish to graduate, but as we approach the end of the academic year, more students will want to graduate and the situation will eventually be unmanageable.

4. **Prerequisites:** At the beginning of the winter term, after discussion with the CCI and CEP Chairs, the administration informed instructors about how they could exercise their right under systemwide Senate Regulation SR 542 to drop students from their class if they had missing grades in a Fall Term prerequisite course. CEP has learned that missing Fall Term prerequisite grades will not prevent students from enrolling in subsequent courses in the Spring Term in AIS. We believe that this is contrary to SR 542, but in the present circumstances, we are not asking that this be corrected immediately by the Registrar's Office. However, the problem of students continuing to take courses in a sequence for which they are inadequately prepared, and failing, will grow worse as they move along the sequence.
5. **Academic Standing:** Determination of whether a student should be on academic probation or subject to disqualification at the end of the Fall Term is based on available grades. Because this determination is incomplete and therefore tentative, students have been able to enroll in courses on a P/NP basis in the Winter Term when they should not have been able to do so, and vice versa. The same will happen in the Spring Term if this continues. CEP agreed that, under the circumstances, this is the fairest thing to do. If Fall Term grades become available a few weeks after the start of the term, CEP agreed that it would not be advisable to force students who were erroneously allowed to enroll in a course on a P/NP basis to change to a letter grade.

Colleges may choose to not bar or restrict enrollment of students in the Spring Term, as they have done in the Winter Term. But since such action is taken when it is considered to be in the best interests of the student, the inability to do so because of missing grades is harmful to students.

6. **Financial aid eligibility:** This is not in CEP's purview, and so was not considered.

Sincerely,



Onuttom Narayan, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy

cc: Cynthia Larive, Chancellor
Lori Kletzer, Interim Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
Tchad Sanger, University Registrar
Kimberly Lau, Chair, Academic Senate
Lindsay Hinck, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
Don Smith, Chair, Graduate Council