

**PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC POLICIES AND ACADEMIC POLICIES REVISIONS
DRAFT FOR EPCC DISCUSSION
Fall 2008**

POLICY A

ACTION: NEW POLICY
POLICY: COURSE DROP/ADD POLICY

PROBLEM: Lack of clarity in current procedures, especially re: signatures and authority of the instructor

PROPOSED POLICY:

Once classes begin, if a student wishes to drop or add a course, a drop/add slip must be used.

In order for a request to withdraw from, drop or add a course to be properly processed in the Registrar's Office the signature of the instructor and the advisor are both required on the appropriate drop/add form. The meaning of the signature of the advisor is that the advisor is aware that the student is withdrawing/dropping/adding the course. In the case of a student seeking to add a course, the signature of the faculty instructor indicates the approval from the instructor to add the course. It should be noted that the instructor has no obligation to approve the student's late enrollment in the course after the beginning of the term and before the drop/add deadline. The instructor is in the best position to determine whether or not the student is able to make-up missed class work.

In the case of the student dropping or withdrawing from the class, the instructor's signature simply indicates that the instructor is aware that the student is dropping/withdrawing from the course.

In a situation where a student cannot obtain the signature of the advisor or the instructor, the Registrar will decide whether or not to accept the request. If the request is accepted, the Registrar's Office will notify both the advisor and the instructor of the action taken.

RATIONALE:

This proposal clearly indicates that in order to withdraw, drop or add a course the student must complete the paperwork, including getting the appropriate signatures. It also makes it clear that the decision to add a student after the start of the term, and before the drop/add deadline is the instructor's.

POLICY B

ACTION: NEW POLICY
POLICY: LATE WITHDRAWAL POLICY

PROBLEM: Lack of clear policy makes it difficult to uphold consistent academic standards

PROPOSED POLICY:

Students who wish to withdraw late after the official withdrawal deadline must petition giving the reasons for the late withdrawal. The petition will be reviewed by the Academic Petitions Committee and the Registrar for approval or denial. Normally, only reasons beyond the control of the student; e.g.: medical, personal, family, military, etc. will be approved.

RATIONALE:

This proposal makes clear the means for requesting a variance from the withdrawal deadline and that normally the reason for missing the deadline is substantial and beyond the student's control

POLICY C

ACTION: NEW POLICY

POLICY: COURSE RE-TAKE POLICY

PROBLEM: Lack of clear policy makes it difficult to uphold consistent academic standards

PROPOSED POLICY:

Courses taken at Simpson College and graded D- or better must be repeated at Simpson College if the student wishes to improve their GPA at Simpson College. Each time the course is retaken, it must be on a letter-graded basis. Grades for each time a course is taken remain on the permanent academic record; however, credit will be given only once and only the last grade (for Simpson College coursework) will be computed into the grade point average.

Courses taken at Simpson College which have been failed may be repeated at Simpson College or at another institution. If they are repeated at Simpson College, the original grade will stay on the transcript but only the last grade will be calculated into the Simpson College grade point average. If failed courses are repeated elsewhere, the original grade will stay in the Simpson College GPA and the new grade will not be calculated into it, but the student will receive the credit for the repeated course that is transferred in.

If a student who has received a D- or better in a course at Simpson College wishes to retake the course elsewhere and transfer it in, the student's Simpson College GPA will not be affected, because the grade of the course transferred in will not replace the grade of the course taken at Simpson College. The repeated course transferred in is not added to the Simpson College record, but it is noted in the student's degree audit that the "spirit of the requirement" has been fulfilled by the transferred in course. The outside transcript is a part of the student's file, but the course is not added to the record since the student has already passed the course at Simpson College and cannot get credit for the same course twice.

All courses to be transferred in from another institution must have at least a C-.

RATIONALE:

The proposal makes it clear how students can better their grade by repeating a course at Simpson College, repeating a course at another institution and the impact of the repeating the course on her or his GPA.

POLICY D

ACTION: REVISE EXISTING POLICY
POLICY: TRANSFER COURSE POLICY

PROBLEM: Currently students may transfer in more than 12 credits of D, but only use 12 for graduation. This is confusing to students since the credits appear on the transcript but don't count for graduation.

PROPOSED POLICY:

Keep the language as it is now in the catalog on page 32, but under the Two-Year/Community College Transfers section, #3,

Change the current language:

“No more than 12 credits of D+, D or D- may be used toward graduation.”

To:

“No more than 12 credits of D+, D or D- combining both transfer credits and credits taken at Simpson College, will be counted toward graduation. Only courses with at least a C- will count toward majors, minors, teacher licensure and competencies.”

RATIONALE:

Clarifies status of D+, D and D- courses both transferred in from another institution and how they relate to similarly graded courses taken at Simpson College.

POLICY E

ACTION: REVISE EXISTING POLICY
POLICY: PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

PROBLEM: Each year, a few students are caught short in completing their requirements. Sometimes this is learned at the very last minute. This causes hardship for students and their families.

PROPOSED POLICY:

Current Language:

GRADUATION AND SUMMER SCHOOL COMPLETION

Participation in the annual graduation ceremony will be limited to students who: 1) have completed all degree requirements by the date of the ceremony, or 2) are candidates for an August degree.

To be a candidate for an August degree a student must: 1) be within two courses (8 hours maximum) of degree completion; 2) be enrolled in the Simpson summer program for those courses that are needed to complete degree requirements; 3) be in good academic standing; and 4) have completed all competency requirements.

Proposed Language:

PARTICIPATION IN MAY GRADUATION CEREMONY

Participation in the annual May graduation ceremony will be limited to students who: 1) have completed all degree requirements by the date of the ceremony and are in good academic standing, or 2) are within two courses (8 hours maximum) and in good academic standing.

Note: For those students who fall under #2 above, participation in the commencement ceremony does not mean the student has actually graduated. The student will not be graduated and will not receive a diploma until they have completed all requirements for graduation. If degree requirements are completed within the calendar year of the student's participation in the ceremony, the student will be a member of that year's graduating class.

RATIONALE:

The commencement ceremony has no bearing on the academic status of the student. Only by completing all requirements does a student graduate from the college. This policy will reduce the number of students who cannot participate in the ceremony because they are short one or two courses. It also clarifies the graduating year of the student. The graduation date of the student is determined by the calendar year in which the transcript is amended to reflect completion of all requirements.

POLICY F

ACTION: NEW POLICY/CLARIFICATION OF EXISTING POLICY

POLICY: FINAL GRADES AND WITHDRAWALS

PROBLEM: A situation this past year helped us to realize our policy with regard to entering final grades, especially in cases of plagiarism was not clear. Having a clear policy will help us be consistent.

PROPOSED POLICY:

Final Grades

Except as noted below, final grades may not be entered prior to the end of the term in which the course was taken. Final grades must be entered by the deadline for grades which is determined to be two business days after the final exam day. Final grades may be entered late with specific

permission from the College Registrar. (The end of the term is determined by the last day the class being graded meets.)

Exception: in the case in which the student has intentionally committed academic dishonesty and the instructor has determined that the student will fail the course, the instructor will immediately enter a grade of “F” as the final grade.

Withdrawal From A Course In Cases of Academic Dishonesty

If the instructor determines that an act of plagiarizing or cheating is such that the student will fail the course, the student will NOT be allowed to withdraw even if the date of such determination is still within the withdrawal period. A grade of “F” will be entered immediately for that student. In all cases of intentional academic dishonesty the instructor will report it to the Academic Dean and the student’s advisor and a record will be entered into the student’s file.

If the instructor determines that the academic dishonesty is such that just the assignment or test will be failed, but not the whole course, then the student will be allowed to withdraw from the class if the withdrawal is processed within the withdrawal period. In all cases of intentional academic dishonesty the instructor will report it to the Academic Dean and the student’s advisor and a record will be entered into the student’s file.

A student may appeal the outcome of this policy by filing an appropriate and timely appeal with the Academic Appeals Committee, as set forth in these Academic Policies.

RATIONALE:

This proposal makes it clear that a faculty member does not have the ability to register a final grade for the course before the official end of the course, except in the case of academic dishonesty when the instructor determines the student should fail the course. It also makes it clear that the students does have the ability to weigh the consequences of their actions and make a decision to drop the course if it is within the withdrawal deadline.

POLICY G

ACTION: REVISION TO CURRENT POLICIES

POLICY: PROBATION, SUSPENSION, AND DISMISSAL

PROBLEM: Currently our practice allows students to be carried on academic probation almost indefinitely. There is a danger that a student may be carried so long that it is impossible to get themselves off probation and graduate. All the while they are often going deeper into debt. We also do not have a clear policy on how to appeal a decision to put a student on probation, suspend, or dismiss them for academic reasons.

PROPOSED POLICY:

Current Language:

Probation, Suspension, Dismissal (page 69 of current catalog)

If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below the minimum expectations for good academic standing, that student will be placed on academic probation by the Dean for Academic Affairs. Normally, the student will be expected to attain good academic standing at the end of the next semester, but in cases where definite progress is being made toward that goal, probationary status may be extended.

The College may suspend, at any time, a student whose academic standing is not satisfactory. Usually, such suspension follows a probationary period if it appears possible that probation can help the student achieve good academic standing. Academic suspension lasts at least one regular semester and that student must formally apply to the Office of the Registrar for readmission to the College.

The College may academically dismiss a previously suspended and readmitted student whose work again falls below the minimum expectations for good academic standing. A student who is dismissed may not apply for readmission. (see next page)

Proposed Language:

Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal

If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below the minimum expectations for good academic standing, that student will be placed on academic probation by the Dean for Academic Affairs. Academic probation is a proving period during which a student's continuance at Simpson College is in jeopardy. During this period the student must give evidence of significant progress toward satisfying the graduation requirements as outlined as follows.

The student is expected to earn at least a 2.00 GPA in their first semester of probation. If the student does not earn at least a 2.00 GPA in that first semester of probation, but shows improvement, the student may be granted a continuation of probation. If the student shows no improvement after their first semester of probation the student will be academically suspended.

If the student shows improvement and academic probation is continued, then in the second semester of probation, the student must earn at least a 2.00 GPA or be academically suspended. If the student does complete at least a 2.00 GPA in the second semester on probation, and therefore is still not off probation, the student will have one more semester to raise their cumulative GPA high enough to get off probation. If after the third semester the student is still not off academic probation, the student will be academically suspended.

Students who have been academically suspended have a right to appeal the suspension by contacting the office of the Dean for Academic Affairs. The appeal must be in writing, and the Dean will present the case to the Academic Appeals Committee for a final decision.

If a student is suspended, the suspension lasts one regular semester (fall or spring) at which time the student may apply for readmission. If after readmission the student still fails to get off probation, the student will be academically dismissed. Dismissed students may not apply for readmission.

RATIONALE:

This policy clearly outlines the consequences of being placed on academic probation. It also provides an avenue for appeal.

POLICY H

ACTION: CREATE COMMITTEE

POLICY: ACADEMIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

PROBLEM: The academic policies of the college are in the hands of the faculty. The practice has been to have administrators make exceptions. This does not conform to generally accepted good practice in faculty governance.

PROPOSAL:

The Academic Petitions Committee shall consist of three members of the Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee (EPCC), including the current chair of the EPCC and two volunteers from EPCC.

The Academic Petitions Committee will provide an avenue for students to petition for exemption from the academic policies established by the faculty of the college.

This committee shall meet once a month, dates to be announced, and review all appropriate academic petitions making the decision to either approve or deny the petition.

Academic Petitions shall come through the Registrar, who will then make copies and distribute to the members of the Academic Petitions Committee prior to the stated meeting.

RATIONALE:

By establishing a committee to hear petitions, the faculty assures itself that its policies are followed except in appropriate circumstances. Since the academic policies of the college are established by action of the faculty and it is not realistic to provide appeal directly to the faculty for every individual circumstance, it is appropriate that the faculty delegate the responsibility for circumventing its decisions to faculty committee.

POLICY I

ACTION: CREATE COMMITTEE

POLICY: ACADEMIC APPEAL COMMITTEE

PROBLEM: No clear avenue of appeals exists for decisions regarding final grades, or decisions regarding academic probations, suspensions, and dismissal, or decisions made by the Registrar in academic matters. This does not conform to good academic practice.

PROPOSED POLICY:

The Academic Appeals Committee shall consist of three tenured faculty members each elected to a two year term, one of whom shall be the chair of the committee.

The purpose of the committee is to meet monthly to hear appeals made by students regarding: final grades, academic probations, suspension, academic dismissal, and decisions of the Academic Petitions Committee, or actions of the Registrar.

By the end of the semester following the semester in which the decision was made, the student(s) shall present to the Registrar of the College (or directly to the chair of the committee if the appeal involves the Registrar) a written appeal stating clearly what is being appealed, and the rationale for the appeal. If the appeal directly involves a faculty member on the Committee, that person will recuse themselves and the remaining members of the committee shall appoint a faculty member to sit temporarily on the Academic Appeals Committee as a full member of the committee for the case in question.

Upon receiving an appeal, the committee will first decide whether or not they have jurisdiction to hear the appeal. If they decide they do have jurisdiction, they will determine a process to hear the appeal. In some cases, the committee may decide to use only the materials submitted for the appeal. In other cases, the committee may wish to interview the person making the appeal, and/or others named in the appeal. The committee will make their decision on the information received during the appeal process and communicate their decision to the person making the appeal and all other named parties. The decision of the Academic Appeal Committee may be appealed to the academic dean.

RATIONALE:

This proposal provides an appeal process for academic decisions.

POLICY K

ACTION: CREATE NEW POLICY

POLICY: CREDIT EARNED ABROAD

PROBLEM: There is no current policy with regard to how work performed while enrolled at institutions outside of the United States is shown on the student's transcript. Similarly, there is no formal policy on how courses taught by Simpson College professors, or those taught within Simpson College semester programs are recorded on the transcript. It would be of help to students and faculty to have a clear policy.

PROPOSED POLICY:

Any student who takes courses at a Simpson College approved institution of higher education in another country will be able to transfer in the courses based upon individual course evaluation made by the chair of the appropriate academic department and the Registrar. Credits will be transferred in according to standards already established through Educational Credential Evaluators (<http://www.ece.org>).

RATIONALE:

Our practice for transferring in credits from non-US institutions should be clear and consistent. As should how we treat courses our faculty teach abroad to our students. This policy will help us be consistent.

POLICY M

ACTION: CREATE POSTHUMOUS DEGREE POLICY

PROBLEM: From time to time, the faculty may wish to award a degree or certificate to a student who has died before completing all requirements for the degree. There is no clear mechanism to do this.

PROPOSED POLICY:

To award a degree or certificate from Simpson College posthumously, a request to do so should be made to the EPCC. The request should state the reasons that the degree should be granted. The student to be awarded the degree must have completed at least 75% of the credits required for graduation.

If the EPCC approves the request, it will be forwarded to the full faculty at its next regularly scheduled meeting. If the faculty approves the degree, the proposal will be sent to the president of the college, the secretary of the board, and the academic dean. If all three approve, the degree will be granted.

RATIONALE:

This policy would make it clear how a degree or certificate may be awarded posthumously, and sets a standard for the minimum number of credits.

POLICY N

ACTION: CREATE NEW POLICY GOVERNING INCOMPLETES LEFT BY FACULTY WHO LEAVE THE COLLEGE

PROBLEM: Recently we have had a few cases in which students still had incompletes with an instructor who left the college, and it was difficult to determine what to do in each case.

PROPOSED POLICY:

Faculty who leave the college need to make certain that they give the chair of their department the information regarding what student has an incomplete, and in what class, and what will be required by the student to complete the course. Department Chairs need to make certain that the faculty leaving the College meets with them in an exit interview, at which time any information concerning incompletes would be shared. In the absence of the instructor, the chair of the department shall determine whether or not the student has completed the course successfully and will enter an appropriate grade for the course. A pass/non-pass may be given unless the course is required for such things as teacher licensure, CPA credit, or other requirements. If the course is

needed for partial completion of a major or minor, the department chair of the department sponsoring the major or minor may allow the P or H to count as partial fulfillment of the major or minor. In the case of fulfilling a Cornerstone, the Cornerstone Director will make that determination, and in the case of a Competency, the department responsible for the competency shall make that determination.

RATIONALE:

It is difficult for one faculty member to determine a grade for a course taught by another faculty member, and rather than complicate the situation further, and so that the student is not harmed by the outcome of the grade, a Pass/Honors/No Pass grade should be given by the Chair of the Department of the faculty member who has left the College. The application of the course to the major/minor/Cornerstones/Competencies should also be allowed so that again, the student does not have to take additional course work to complete the same requirement.