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Scott A. Beck

Georgia Southern University

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Unsatisfactory Teaching Evaluation for Late Grades

Submitted by: Scott Beck

8/29/2016

Question:

What is the status of a proposed university policy stating that, beginning in Fall 2016, faculty “turning in grades late ... should receive an unsatisfactory evaluation for teaching and this evaluation should be reflected in annual merit?”

1) Is this proposed policy based upon the authority of the Provost? If so, how can such a policy and policy-making process be squared with the fact that all changes to faculty evaluation processes must be approved by the Faculty Senate?

2) If this policy has been proposed, is the “penalty” absolute and inflexible ...

a. ... to be applied in even isolated, one-time cases?

and/or

b. ... to be applied in cases where the cause for the late submission of grades was outside the control of the faculty member?

Or, is this penalty only for regular, repeat offenders?

Who is responsible for making such determinations and distinctions?

3) If this policy has been proposed, does the submission of grades on-time now trump all other measures of instructional quality and excellence? In other words, will multiple incidents - or even a single incident - of late grade submission outweigh prize-winning teaching by highly-qualified faculty who receive exceptional student evaluations and profuse praise from peer faculty members and external reviewers?

Rationale:

No such change to faculty evaluation criteria and processes has been approved by the University Faculty Senate, which has the authority and responsibility over any changes to faculty evaluation processes. Nonetheless, during August 2016, email and verbal notifications of such a policy were inconsistently distributed to some faculty in some departments and/or colleges – while other departments and colleges were apparently left out of the loop. Administrator comments regarding this issue varied across colleges. There is no documentation of such a policy in the 2016-2017 Faculty Handbook, Digital Commons' list of Georgia Southern University Policies, nor the Registrar's webpage about grade submission (<http://em.georgiasouthern.edu/registrar/faculty-staff/helpfullinks/>).

- Scott Beck, College of Education; Mark Cyr, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Response:

Request for Information Response September 6, 2016 Provost Jean Bartels

Unsatisfactory Teaching Evaluation for Late Grades

1) There has been no change in University policy regarding the evaluation of faculty.

This fall, the Provost made note to all Colleges that there has been a marked increase in the number of faculty who are not submitting final grades for their courses by required deadlines. In an effort to improve this issue, Deans were asked to review the problem in their individual Colleges. Further, they were asked to take actions to eliminate faculty's late recording of course grades. It was noted that the timely entry of grades is a requirement for all faculty and failure to do so may reflect faculty attention to their teaching responsibilities. Further, students are harmed by late grade entry.

2) Again, no formal policy has been proposed.

Certainly there may be uncontrollable situations which impact a faculty's ability to submit final grades by required due dates. These instances are rare and should be approved by the Dean and the Provost. Faculty cannot negotiate late grade entry with

the Registrar's office. At issue at the moment is the repeat offender who consistently is late with submitting grades in circumstances where there is no uncontrollable event.

3) The evaluation of teaching effectiveness continues to follow guidelines outlined in the Faculty Handbook. The evaluation of teaching should be measured by the faculty's entire demonstration of teaching effectiveness which includes attention to the requirements associated with course preparation and the execution of all teaching requirements.