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Providing Adequate Time for Grading Students' Work

Robert Costomiris
Georgia Southern University

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Approved by the Senate: 4/24/2007
Not Approved by the Senate:
Approved by the President:
Not Approved by the President: 6/20/2007

Providing Adequate Time for Grading Students' Work

Submitted by Robert Costomiris

4/12/2007

Motion:

"That faculty have 96 hours to submit Final Course Grades after administering the Final Exam for a course."

Rationale:

"Good grading takes time. A significant percentage of a student's Final Course Grade may rest on the Final Exam, especially for courses with cumulative Final Exams. Faculty owe it to our students to grade their work carefully."

SEC Response:

The SEC recognizes that especially those whose finals are at the end of the exam period may experience a time crunch in submitting final grades. However, we decided to amend the motion to reduce the time from 96 hours to 72 hours and to have this effective for Fall 2007, recognizing that any extension will most likely impinge on Registrar's Office and Financial Aid scheduling.

Senate Response:

Motion Approved by the Senate 4-24-2007 "Finally, a motion on adequate time for grading submitted by Robert Costomiris, who is asking for 96 hours after the final exam. The SEC decided that that was a little bit too long, so they wanted to amend it to 72 hours and to make that motion effective Fall 2007."

Motion on Adequate time for Grading, Maggie LaMontagne (COE) for Robert Costomiris (CLASS): Motion: "That faculty have 72 hours to submit final course grades after administering the final exam for a course."

Patricia Humphrey (COST) added that, as amended by SEC, this would take effect fall of 2007. The motion was seconded. Humphrey reminded everyone that the end-of-semester memo received on April 24 was in error. Faculty have until 48 hours after the last final exam to submit grades.

Michael Nielsen (CLASS) asked if the SEC had contacted Costomiris about the amendment.

Patricia Humphrey (COST) responded that no one had. She had already discussed this motion with Mike Deal (Registrar), who had said that 96 hours was totally unacceptable to the Registrar's office because, especially at times like the end of spring semester, they have to do all the grade processing and notify students of any suspensions. The Financial Aid office has to take care of financial aid matters. There's only a week after the end of the spring semester to do all this. So it would be totally unacceptable to delay final grade processing, in essence, two days because of those Friday final exams.

Candy Schille (CLASS), who had seconded the motion, thought that Costomiris would probably support it.

Bruce Grube (President) asked Mike Deal to speak about a memorandum that Deal had created.

Mike Deal (Registrar): "I think this explanation actually is what Pat was referring to earlier in our discussion when we talked about the grade reporting deadline being changed earlier in the year, and there are a number of things that I'd like to point out. First of all, let me clarify, as Pat has already done so, that we are very lenient in enforcing the current policy which says that final grades are to be turned in within 48 hours after the final exam. We don't really enforce until we get to 48 hours after the very last final exam which is the last day of finals.

Some of the things that are affected by making the grade reporting deadline later is, of course, delays. And some of the delays we've already talked about, but let me just reiterate those. First of all, the delay in grade reporting to students who may need to know what their final grades are in order to make decisions about what they do in the next term. That's especially important, as we've just said, at the end of spring term, but it's also true for the other terms. There are also delays in determining academic standing for students as in their exclusion or probation, Dean's list, President's list. And, of course, we're asked to report that information as soon as possible. So again,

extending the deadline would delay that. There would also be delays in notifying students of their academic standing or their eligibility to return for a subsequent term, delays in determining and notifying students of continuing financial aid eligibility for subsequent terms. And then, of course, if the grades are not turned in by the deadline, then there are manual grade processes that have to come into effect at this point.”

Rebecca Zeigler (Library) asked if the 72-hour time frame is acceptable.

Mike Deal (Registrar) answered that the delays that he had just mentioned would still be affected. So, again, he was not sure that everyone would find that palatable, and especially the students.

Bruce Grube (President) suggested that senators think this through in favor of the student.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) thought that, actually, a large part of Costomiris’ rationale was, in fact, erring on behalf of the student, and that he wants to have adequate time to give the students his best effort in evaluating each student’s performance. So we have that pedagogical issue against the practical, logistical issues that the Registrar is having to deal with in contacting the students, making arrangements, and so forth.

Clara Krug (CLASS) spoke in favor of the motion. If faculty members want to let students have the best chance to show their proficiency, it might take a little while longer to grade their exams. Patricia Humphrey (COST) Senate Moderator asked senators to vote on the motion. The motion carried.

President’s Response:

6-20-2007 From Dr. Grube
Administrative Concerns

Although I do not believe that we would provide the best service to students by delaying grade processing, the Registrar’s Office could make the 72-hour grade deadline work for both fall and summer terms because there are several weeks between those terms. However, a major concern is that this will pose a problem at the end of spring terms when there is only one week between the terms, and shortening it by even one day has significant impact. In addition to the delays in issuing transcripts and degree certifications which result in customer service issues, there will be less time for students to receive notifications of their academic standing and the processing of readmission appeals by the Registrar’s office as well as the deans’ offices. We also usually receive over 1,200 requests in the spring terms for students to take course work at another institution during the summer. All of these requests must be reviewed after grade

processing in order to ensure that the students are still academically eligible to take courses at the other institution. Therefore, I am not in favor of extending the deadline for any term. I also believe that different deadlines for different terms would be confusing. Further, I believe it would be better to reinforce the policy that course grades must be submitted within 48 hours after the last examination is given. By doing this we are giving:

120 hours for exams on Day 1

96 hours for exams on Day 2

72 hours for exams on Day 3

48 hours for exams on Day 4

Student Concerns:

During the dates of May 4 and May 31, the Registrar's Office conducted a Grade Reporting Deadline Survey via WINGS which sought student feedback on the recommended policy change. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with the recommendation that the deadline for faculty to submit final grades be extended from 48 hours to 72 hours after the last final examination is given. Preliminary survey results are as follows: Agree: 30.1%; No Opinion: 10.7%; Disagree: 59.2%. Registrar Mike Deal is working with Dr. Jayne Perkins Brown to finalize the results. The final survey results will be shared upon completion of the review by Mr. Deal and Dr. Perkins Brown.

In summary, I do not approve the amended motion.

6/20/2007: The motion approved in April to give faculty 72 hours to submit final course grades after the final exam for a course was not approved by Dr. Grube, who cited concerns over the Registrar's office and Financial Aid being able to do their jobs; he also cited the change in the reporting deadline being moved from 48 hours after your final exam to 48 hours after the last final exam, which gives faculty, depending on when the particular final exam is, up to 120 hours to submit their final grades.