Questions Regarding the Revised Grade Point Average Policy

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Questions Regarding the Revised Grade Point Average Policy

Submitted by: Rebecca Kennerly
12/7/2016

Question(s):

General Query: Since the fall 2006 implementation of the Revised Grade Point Average Policy, what, if any, data has been gathered regarding the effect of the policy on student GPA and RPG rates? Specifically:

Q: Over time (since 2006) how has the Revised Grade Point Average Policy affected student grade point average overall, in courses in the Core, and by college and department, in comparison to years previous to the implementation of the policy?

Q: Over time (since 2006), how has the Revised Grade Point Average Policy affected student ability to progress toward graduation overall, by college, and by department, in comparison to years previous to the implementation of the policy?

Rationale:

Given external pressures to move students through to graduation in an increasingly shorter time-frame (ex: although not enacted, recently it was proposed that the BOR funding formula be tied to RPG rates of the university), and our mandate to increase academic excellence in accordance to the GS Campaign for National Distinction, specifically that student transcripts reflect their actual record of academic achievement, we need to know if and to what extent polices we have in place are indeed working to those ends. The Revised Grade Point Average Policy, which eliminated the previous Grade Replacement and Adjusted GPA Policy, is one such policy.

If student GPAs and RPG rates have risen, then the overall mission to raise academic standards by eliminating the previous Grade Replacement/Adjusted GPA Policy has helped increase academic excellence, and increased RPG rates. If, however, GPAs
have been lowered (in some circumstances to the point where some students cannot recover), and the rate of RPG rates have declined, then the Revised Grade Point Average Policy should be reviewed and adjusted. In 2005 a representative from the Academic Standards Committee reported to the faculty senate that most of GS peer and aspirational institutions did not have a grade replacement policy as was in effect at GS at the time, but did have in place policies that allowed students to “repeat a course if they so wish [but] all of the grades would count toward their GPA” (Gibbison, 2005 para. 6).

This policy was adopted by GS and went into effect in the fall of 2006. Today our peer and aspirational institutions also have processes in place to adjust course grades, either an appeal based on individual student circumstances and/or a limited grade replacement application (see attachments for a few examples), so there is support for reviewing and revising our policy using the same rationale that helped create the policy.

This Request for Information should be of concern for all GS stakeholders. Having the data available for review regarding the effect of the Revised Grade Point Average Policy student GPA and RPG rates is a necessary step in the process of evaluating our policies in order to ensure that they are working in the way that they are intended, given our commitment to academic excellence and our ability to help students move through their Core courses and other courses they need to progress in their chosen major and graduate in a timely manner. Gibbison, Godfrey and Academic Standards Committee, "Revised Grade Point Average Policy" (2005). Faculty Senate Index. Paper 164. http://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/faculty-senate-index/164

Response: