

Information Gathering Group (IGG)

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The IGG met twice to discuss the proposed policy change to who may participate in commencement activities. The proposed policy states that:

Effective for Spring 2008, in order to participate in Spring Commencement, students must complete all degree requirements. The only exceptions to this rule will be those degree programs that require a final capstone experience that is scheduled in the summer term. Students must apply for Spring Commencement by September 1. By February 1, a final degree audit will be conducted to ensure that students who have applied for graduation have enrolled in their final course requirements. Any students who are not on track for completion in the spring term will be informed that they will not be allowed to participate in Spring Commencement.

***Note:** Students who complete their degree requirements in August or December will have this noted on their academic transcript and a diploma will be issued by the Registrar's Office. They may elect to participate in Commencement activities in the following spring.*

At the meetings, several issues were discussed:

1. Current Deadline to apply for graduation in the spring is September 1. In the past, the Registrar's Office has not enforced the deadline due to the number of signed excessive late applications. Last year, a total of 245 graduation applications were received after the September 1 deadline. For the upcoming spring 2007 Commencement, over 114 late applications have been submitted. Also, one academic School extended the deadline for students to submit their applications without the knowledge of the Registrar's Office.
2. The Office of the Registrar receives an increasingly large number of graduation applications each term. The number of applications received last year include:
 - a) Fall – 327
 - b) Spring – 658
 - c) Summer – 446
3. The Office of the Registrar reported the following reasons for students not completing their degree requirements:
 - a) Not completing the legislative requirements
 - b) Exit exams
 - c) Miscalculating the number of credit hours (for example, upper division hours or total hours needed)
4. The departmental Program Sheets are often difficult for students to understand. There is not standardization of the program sheets.

IGG Recommendations:

1. Review university advising system to improve processes and to address training for staff and faculty.
2. Clarify advisors and students role in the overall advising and petition process.
3. Provide advisors with routine reports listing each of their students who have petitioned for graduation.
4. Develop an Advising Handbook that will assist advisors with important information on university policies and provide annual updates to policy changes (i.e., CORE changes, Regents Test information, etc.)
5. Standardize Degree Progress Sheets to include basic information which would be included on all forms (i.e., legislative requirements, exit exam information, CORE, etc.)
6. Reintroduce Degree Evaluation Program (CAPP) to assist student and advisors with student's progress towards degree requirements. This software program will help students monitor their academic progress and enable them to run what-if scenarios should they wish to change their majors.