

GPC

Policy Request to Steering

This document includes policy requests in the following categories:

- I. Confirmation and Addition
- II. Variants
- III. Revisions/Updates

I. Confirmation and Addition

What follows are long-standing policies regarding graduate students. These policies were developed at a time when the governance structure was different and policies affecting graduate students were not always incorporated. We are requesting that these long-standing policies be confirmed through governance and added to the college-wide policy manual.

- *Academic Load, Graduate*

A full-time graduate student load is nine credits during the fall or spring semester. A graduate student may register for a maximum of 12 credits during the fall or spring semester. Graduate students may register for a maximum of nine credits for the summer semester. If a program requires more than the maximum load during a given semester, students must submit written permission from their academic adviser with approval from the dean of the student's academic school at the time of registration.

- *Graduate Enrollment in Undergraduate Courses*

Graduate students may obtain approval to take certain undergraduate courses for personal or academic reasons. Such courses do not normally count toward the graduate degree. Students should consult their graduate program advisers for guidance. Graduate students enrolling in undergraduate courses will be billed at the graduate tuition rate.

- *Grading System, Graduate*

A student's academic standing in every subject is reported at the end of each semester in the form of a letter grade. Grades are assigned by the faculty member of record.

Grade	Weight	Description
A	4.00	
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	
B	3.00	
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	
C	2.00	
C-	1.67	
F	0.00	
P*	Not calculated	-Passed (for transfer purposes, a P is considered a B or better)
U*	Not calculated	Unsatisfactory
I	Not calculated	Incomplete work
W	Not calculated	-Withdrew from course before the end of the ninth week of the semester
WD	Not calculated	-Withdrew from college before the end of the ninth week of the semester
WF	0.00	-Withdrew from college after the end of the ninth week of the semester, failing
WP	Not calculated	-Withdrew from college after the end of the ninth week of the semester, passing
CR	Not calculated	Requirement met by examination
AU	Not calculated	Audit
IP	Not calculated	In progress

- *Independent Study, Graduate*

Students who wish to supplement departmental course work by investigating a particular topic may do so under the direction and guidance of a faculty member who is considered an expert in the field. A final paper reporting the findings of the study must be submitted to the faculty member.

Requests for independent study must be submitted for approval to the faculty member and the department chair or designee. The resulting contract will describe the study, specify the format, length, and scope of the final paper, and determine the number of credits—from one to six—to be awarded.

No more than nine credits of independent study may be taken in any one graduate program.

Note: Independent study will not be approved as a substitute for an existing graduate course. If under extraordinary circumstances it becomes evident that the conferral of the student's degree will be significantly deferred because a required course is not available, that course should be waived and another course of comparable content be used to fulfill the requirement. The student must seek permission for the substitution from the coordinator of his or her graduate program, who will forward it (if approved) to the department chair and the dean of the school for final approval.

Department Project

Students enrolled in master's programs may elect to do a department project, with the approval of the student's adviser, and will be awarded three credits upon completion of the project. Advisement is usually three credit hours for one semester. Those whose projects are In Progress (IP) will register for three credits of project advisement each semester until the project is completed. Students should consult this bulletin for descriptions of department projects offered.

- *Retention Standards, Graduate*

Any student whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.0 will be placed on probation. At the end of the probationary semester, the student will be dismissed if an overall GPA of 3.0 is not achieved. Students may appeal dismissal according to the procedures provided with the notification of dismissal.

- *Program Completion, Graduate*

Students have six years from the time of matriculation to complete a graduate program. If extenuating circumstances require an extension of the 6-year window for program completion, the student must provide the coordinator with a plan for completion. The coordinator would seek approval for extension through the school dean. Petitions for extension will be considered by the dean of the student's academic school on merit.

- *Transfer Credit*

A maximum of six graduate credits may be transferred for degree programs with fewer than 45 credits. For graduate programs with 45 or more credits, nine graduate credits may be accepted pending departmental approval. Transfer courses must be applicable to the student's current program of study and have been completed at a regionally accredited graduate institution within the last six years with a grade of B or higher to be eligible for approval. They cannot duplicate any graduate or undergraduate work for which credit has been given at The College of New Jersey and cannot have been applied to an academic degree at any other institution. The Course Authorization Form is available at www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/forms/index.html and completed forms should be submitted to Records and Registration in Green Hall 112.

Transfer of Prior Course Work

Students wishing to apply for transfer of previously completed graduate credits must do so during their first year of enrollment as a matriculated student. Transfer of credits shall be understood to apply to credits previously earned at The College of New Jersey as well as at other regionally accredited graduate institutions. The Course Authorization Form is available at www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/forms/index.html and completed forms should be submitted to Records and Registration in Green Hall 112.

Approval of Future Course Work for Transfer of Credit

Matriculated students must obtain written approval from their graduate coordinators before enrolling in graduate courses that are to be transferred for credit to the College. Only courses that are to be completed at a regionally accredited graduate institution shall be eligible for such approval. The Course Authorization Form is available at www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/forms/index.html and completed forms should be submitted to Records and Registration in Green Hall 112.

II. Variants

We are requesting that the following adjustments be made to policies existing in the Policy Manual. These graduate variants will clarify the existing policy in terms of graduate students.

- *Graduation, walking at*
Walking at Graduation

The College of New Jersey allows undergraduate or graduate students who need three courses or fewer to complete the requirements for their degree to “walk” at commencement ceremonies in May provided their program of studies can be completed by the August graduation date.

Requested revision to add graduate variant:

Graduation, walking at
Walking at Graduation

The College of New Jersey allows undergraduate ~~or graduate~~ students who need three courses or fewer ~~or graduate students who need seven credits or fewer~~ - to complete the requirements for their degree to “walk” at commencement ceremonies in May provided their program of studies can be completed by the August graduation date.

III. Revisions/Updates

We are requesting that the following policies existing in the Policy Manual be updated to reflect revisions that correct errors and provide clarification.

- *Graduate Admission Policy/Procedure Changes:*
 - Admission categories: Two admission categories replace all preceding ones: Graduate Program Candidate and Special Admission. Special admission students may take a maximum of six credits before applying for admission.
 - Specified time periods for admission decisions: Admission decisions will be made (with certain specified exceptions) twice a year. Application deadlines are October 15 and April 15.
 - Submission of complete packet of materials: Applicants must assemble all materials needed for application and submit these as a package to the Office of Graduate Studies.
 - Revised application form
 - Selection decision made through graduate program committees: Each program must have a graduate program committee with at least two members and must specify its standards and criteria for admission to the Office of Graduate Studies.

We request that the following revisions be made:

Graduate Admission ~~Policy/Procedure Changes:~~

- Admission categories: ~~There are two categories of admission. They are matriculation and non-matriculation. admission categories replace all preceding ones: Graduate Program Candidate and Special Admission. Special admission students~~ A non-matriculant may take a maximum of six credits which, if appropriate to a program, may be utilized toward a program if he or she later applies and becomes accepted for matriculation, before applying for admission.
 - ~~Specified time periods for admission decisions~~ Application deadlines: Admission decisions will be made (with certain specified exceptions) twice a year. Application deadlines are October 15 and April 15. Deadlines are posted at www.tcnj.edu/graduate.
 - Submission of complete packet of materials: Applicants must assemble all materials needed for application and submit these as a package to the Office of Graduate Studies.
 - ~~Revised application form~~
 - Admission decisions are made by faculty program admission committees. Selection decision made through graduate program committees: Each program must have a graduate program committee with at least two members and must specify its standards and criteria for admission to the Office of Graduate Studies.
- *Complaint Appeals by Students (Graduate)* – [Note: Revision of this policy is in progress as part of Comprehensive Exam charge]

Graduate Student Complaint/Appeals Policy

Note: This policy is for complaints/appeals not involving discrimination or sexual harassment. Also see Major Policies Section—Sexual Harassment Policy for procedures in case of sexual harassment.

I. -Each department that has a graduate program may establish its own complaint procedure and committee, preferably with graduate student members. Appeals to the School of Nursing, Health, and Exercise Science shall go directly to its school committee.

II. -The Council of Graduate Deans shall establish a committee for appeal of complaints during fall and spring semesters. The procedure for selecting faculty and students to serve on an appeals panel will follow these guidelines:

A. -Faculty members who sit on the Graduate Programs Council, including at least one from each school offering graduate programs, shall serve on the panel. Three of these members are to be drawn by lot for each appeal. For each

appeal, one faculty member from the department involved shall sit on the committee. If one member of the panel is already from the department, no additional department member need be involved. A faculty member involved in the appeal (or who participated in a department or school committee hearing this appeal in step I) shall not sit on the committee hearing that appeal. Alternatively, if faculty who are on the GPC are not available, faculty who teach graduate courses in the appropriate school may serve on the panel.

B. -The Council of Graduate Deans shall choose three graduate students for the panel. These students are drawn by lot for each appeal. If possible, one student from the department involved shall also sit on the committee hearing that appeal. If one member of the panel is already from the department, no additional student from that department need be involved. A student involved in the appeal shall not sit on the committee hearing that appeal.

C. -The procedure for appeals shall be posted on relevant Web pages accessible to students, faculty and staff members.

III. - The order of steps to be taken by a student having a complaint against a faculty member shall be as follows. If either party is not satisfied with the decision at any step, appeal may be made to the next step.

A. Discussion with the faculty member.

B. Discussion with the chairperson of the department and/or graduate coordinator.

C. Appeal to the department complaint committee, as specified by the department or program standards.

D. Appeal to the dean of the school in which the course is being offered.

E. Appeal to the graduate complaint committee.

1- The committee reviews all procedural guidelines in order to assess whether the processes or procedures were followed. Accordingly, the Committee must have access to all relevant documents considered at every previous step of the appeals process, as described in point IV below.

2- The Committee has the authority to rule on the appeal in accordance with the authority it is granted under this policy. However, the Committee must consult with other offices on campus regarding the scope of possible remedies, as appropriate. (Other offices might include but not be limited to the Provost, the Vice President for Budget & Finance, College General Counsel, etc.)

3- In cases where appropriate, the committee shall refer the appeal back to the previous step.

F. Appeal to the provost/executive vice president.

G. Appeal to the president of the College.

IV. -The complaint and the proposed solution from step B onward shall be provided in writing to all parties involved, to the chairperson, and to the next group or person appealed to. Minutes shall be kept at each step and signed by all present. Hearings at each step shall be held within 30 college class session days after the request for hearing.

-In steps B through G, both parties to the complaint shall have the right to be present, to present testimony, and to respond to testimony by the other party.

V. -The statute of limitations on filing student appeals shall be one semester following the end of the semester in which the incident occurred.

Graduate Student Complaint/Appeal Committee Procedures

1. Both parties shall submit their full complaint response (as applicable) in writing along with supporting documents at least 5 days of work before the hearing.
2. Materials submitted by parties for review shall have been provided to all committee members as well as both of the parties prior to the date of the hearing. No additional supporting documents will be accepted 48 hours before the hearing so that all parties will have sufficient time to review all pertinent documents.
3. A staff member shall be invited to the hearing for the purpose of taking minutes.
4. Prior to the start of the hearing, the faculty members of the committee shall choose a faculty member on the committee to serve as chairperson.
5. The complainant and the respondent will be asked to enter the room.
6. The chairperson shall begin the hearing by introducing and describing the role of each person present.

7. The complainant will have the opportunity to elaborate on his/her written statement.
8. The respondent will have the opportunity to elaborate on his/her written statement.
9. The complainant will have the opportunity to respond.
10. Committee members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the complainant.
11. Committee members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the respondent.
12. The complainant and the respondent will be asked to leave the room.
13. Committee members will then review the case and render a decision in closed session or may decide to reconvene within two class session days, pending the receipt and consideration of additional information if such information has been requested. Committee members will have the opportunity to request additional information from others on campus as they deem appropriate.
14. Within four class session days, hearing minutes shall be distributed to committee members and parties for signature of all who were present.
15. The committee chairperson will draft a decision letter.
16. Within seven class session days of the conclusion of the hearing the chairperson will send the decision letter to all concerned parties.

- *Undergraduates Taking Graduate Courses*

With the permission of the department chair and the Office of Graduate Studies, a TCNJ undergraduate may take up to two graduate courses (3 credits per course) at the College. However, undergraduates enrolled in articulated programs at the College (i.e., five-year, bachelors-masters programs) may take three graduate courses (3 credits per course) at the College in order to move seamlessly from their undergraduate to their graduate studies.

We request that the following revisions be made:

Undergraduates Taking Graduate Courses

With a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, 24 or more units completed, and the permission of their major -department chair, the coordinator of the graduate program (or chair) in which the course is offered, and the Office of Graduate Studies and approval of the school dean*, a TCNJ undergraduate may take up to two graduate courses (3 credits per course) at the College. However, undergraduates enrolled in articulated programs at the College (i.e., five-year, bachelors-masters programs) may take three graduate courses (3 credits per course) at the College in order to move seamlessly from their undergraduate to their graduate studies.

If an undergraduate student takes a graduate course for graduate credit, credit for the course will not count toward the undergraduate record. If the student matriculates into a graduate program, these courses will be transferred into the graduate program and included in the graduate GPA.

If an undergraduate student takes a graduate course for undergraduate credit, the course will be credited to the undergraduate record and the grade will be included in the undergraduate GPA.

Forms are available on the Graduate Studies website for Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses for Graduate Credit and Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses for Undergraduate Credit.

*Dean's signature not required in cases of 5 year programs, unless this registration will cause a student to be over load.