

May 20, 2009

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS & PROGRAM DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Revised Procedures for Graduate Student Petitions Requesting Exceptions to Senate Regulations, Effective Fall 2009

Over the past few years, the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) has undertaken a careful review of how requests for exceptions to Senate Regulations are processed on campus. As a result of this review, the Committee changed the review process and the criteria for approval for all student petitions. Those procedures for undergraduate petitions were implemented at the beginning of this academic year, and we have already begun to see clear improvements in the review process. After additional consideration, the CEP has decided to proceed with implementation of the new review procedures for graduate student requests for exceptions. Please see the attached *Procedures for Graduate Student Petitions Requesting Exceptions to Senate Regulations*; these have been approved by CEP and are effective beginning Fall 2009. Please be sure to review these with your faculty, students and staff.

The CEP takes seriously its mandated responsibility to grant all exceptions to the Regulations of the Academic Senate and its obligation to ensure that all requests for exceptions (both undergraduate and graduate) are handled in a transparent, fair and consistent manner. Equally important, greater oversight of the petition process will inform the CEP's on-going assessment of current educational policies and Senate Regulations. Requests for exceptions often tell the Committee where the policies and Regulations chafe with the goals and needs of faculty and our students. As the Committee responsible for recommending changes to academic policies and Regulations to the Division, it is important that the CEP monitor these requests carefully.

The new procedures should not represent a great change in the way that your department or program currently processes requests—the majority of requests will still go from the department or program to the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the documentation required is the same. Where you will find the greatest changes is in the criteria for approval—this information, while always present in some form for undergraduate student petitions, has never been fully articulated for graduate student petitions. We believe you will find it helpful in preparing petitions for review by the Dean of Graduate Studies and the CEP. Other changes include:

1. All exceptions to Senate Regulations will be approved by the CEP.

Currently, the CEP reviews only a small fraction of graduate student petitions. As explained above, this impairs our ability to assess current policies and Regulations. Beginning in Fall 2009, CEP will review all requests recommended for approval by the department/program and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

2. Students are expected to know and adhere to the policies and deadlines set in the Senate Regulations.

The procedures address the special needs of students facing extraordinary circumstances. The CEP firmly believes that it is a graduate student's responsibility to know the deadlines to add, drop, withdraw, request incompletes, change grading options, etc., and to follow these. Requests for exceptions to these deadlines without good cause and supporting documentation are not permitted in the revised procedures. The procedures direct instructors, departments, and the Dean of Graduate Studies to deny requests of this nature.

3. Changes to the academic record of a single quarter must be submitted within the subsequent (regular term) academic quarter.

Students are responsible for monitoring their academic record regularly and for maintaining its integrity. The CEP has implemented a one-quarter deadline for students to submit their requests for changes to their academic record. This will ensure that transcripts accurately reflect student effort.

We wish to reiterate that departments and programs have the authority to deny petitions that do not meet the CEP criteria for approval, and are expected to do so. This step should streamline the petition review process and minimize the number of inappropriate petitions submitted to the Dean and to the CEP for review. Questions should be directed to the Academic Senate (0002).



Steve Constable, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy

ATTACHMENT: *Procedures for Graduate Student Petitions Requesting Exceptions to Senate Regulations*

cc: Academic Records
Graduate Coordinators
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**Procedures for Graduate Student Petitions Requesting Exceptions to Senate Regulations
Committee on Educational Policy**

Effective, Fall 2009

Approved by the CEP on March 6, 2009
Supersedes April 23, 2002 version

Petitions requesting exceptions to Senate Regulations may be initiated by students or by advisors acting on their behalf. Requests regarding courses and grades must be submitted first to the instructor of record and to the department chair/program director for review. The department is expected to apply the following criteria to requests and approve only those petitions that merit consideration and that include the required authorizations and documentation. Any request missing documentation or with poor justification should be considered invalid and returned to the student without review.

If either the instructor or the chair/director deny the request, the petition shall be considered denied and returned to the student without further review. If the request is supported by both the instructor and the chair/director, the petition shall be forwarded by the department to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review. Petitions submitted to the Dean must include all of the required forms and documentation, as outlined below. Those missing any of the required items or appropriate signatures shall be returned to the department/program without review.

If the Dean of Graduate Studies determines that the request meets the criteria for approval, as defined below, and supports the request, the Dean may approve the petition and submit the petition to the CEP for review. The petition must include a statement of support from the Dean regarding the basis for approval. Petitions approved by the Dean must be submitted to the CEP within one month of that review. If the Dean finds that the request does not meet the criteria for approval, or is otherwise unacceptable, the Dean shall deny the petition. Denied petitions shall be returned to the department/program, with a copy to CEP, and the Dean's decision shall be considered final, subject to appeal only if new information becomes available.

Requests regarding exceptions to degree requirements (Divisional Regulations 700-720) are to be submitted directly to the Dean of Graduate Studies by the department chair/program director. Those that the Dean determines as appropriate shall be forwarded to the CEP for final review. The Dean has the authority to deny those requests that are determined to be inappropriate. Denied petitions shall be returned to the department/program, with a copy to CEP, and the Dean's decision shall be considered final, subject to appeal only if new information becomes available.

Documentation

All petitions must include the original signatures of the reviewers (stamped signatures will not be accepted). A department chair or program director may not sign for the instructor of record unless the instructor has given written authorization, is no longer employed at UCSD, or is not accessible. If the chair or director has signed for the instructor, documentation showing the instructor's authorization, or documentation showing that email attempts were made to contact the instructor, must be included. This authorization must be included in the petition packet, or the petition shall be considered invalid for review and shall be returned to the department by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Official documentation must be independent of the student (a written statement by the student or a family member will not be accepted), and, as required in the criteria below, must list the date(s) the student was away from campus or otherwise unavailable. Medical documentation must *clearly* show how the medical condition impacted the student's capacity to follow campus procedures and will be accepted only from an authoritative source (e.g., the student's attending physician) with direct knowledge of the student's situation.

Deadlines

Requests for exceptions to the Academic Senate Regulations that do not involve degree requirements (see Divisional Regulations 700-720) must be initiated by the student or the department/program within one quarter from when the course in question was taken or appears on the academic record. Petitions requesting exception to degree requirements must be

submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies within the student's final year. Requests for extensions of Incompletes must be submitted prior to the deadline to complete the work, as listed on the "Incomplete" form. Students whose degree has been awarded are subject to the same one-quarter deadline; graduates may submit petitions only for courses undertaken during their final quarter of study and these must be received by the Dean by the end of the following quarter. Students deserve a timely response to their petitions; as a guideline, we request that the Department, Office of Graduate Studies, and the CEP each attempt to respond within several weeks of receiving a petition.

Criteria for Approval

A. Retroactive Incomplete

Documentation must clearly demonstrate that circumstances beyond the student's control prevented the proper processing of the Incomplete grade. Examples of these include death in the family, illness, or traumatic event. Only those petitions that provide good cause for the request and include the required authorization and documentation may be approved. Incompletes listing reasons without good cause will be denied.

Required forms/documentation: (1) completed *Graduate Student Petition* form; (2) completed *Request to Receive Grade "Incomplete" and Removal of Grade "Incomplete"* form, with the appropriate personal/class information and deadline to submit pending work; (3) memo from the Instructor of Record confirming that the student is in good academic standing in the course and meets the requirements for the Incomplete grade; and (4) official supporting documentation addressing the student's inability to complete the course.

B. Extension of Incomplete

Extensions of Incompletes will be granted when circumstances beyond the student's control prevent the student from completing the work by the deadline established by the instructor and listed on the "Incomplete" form. Students must request the extension prior to the deadline to complete the missing coursework. As with requests for Incompletes, all requests for extensions must be for good cause, such as continuing illness or hardship. Extensions will not be granted for a period lasting more than one academic quarter.

Required forms/documentation: (1) completed *Graduate Student Petition* form; (2) copy of original *Request to Receive Grade "Incomplete" and Removal of Grade "Incomplete"* form listing the proposed extended deadline; (3) official supporting documentation, addressing the student's inability complete the pending work by the deadline.

C. Retroactive Change of Grading Option

Requests may be approved only in cases where: (1) the student clearly attempted to change the course grade option by the deadline but technical problems with TritonLink prevented the proper processing of the request; (2) serious personal circumstances (e.g. hospitalization) prevented the student from completing the change on TritonLink or in person prior to the deadline.

Required forms/documentation: (1) completed *Graduate Student Petition* form; (2) completed *Correction of Grade* form; (3) statement from Student Portal Services confirming technical inability to complete change, or official documentation regarding circumstances that prevented the student from completing the grade option change by the deadline.

D. Retroactive Add or Withdrawal from Course

Requests may be approved only in cases where: (1) the student clearly attempted to add or withdraw from the course by the deadline but technical problems with TritonLink prevented the proper processing of the request; (2) serious personal circumstances (e.g. hospitalization) prevented the student from adding or withdrawing on TritonLink or in person prior to the deadline. Students may not request the "W" grade for "Incompletes" that have lapsed to "Fail" or "Unsatisfactory" grades.

Requests for retroactive drops without a W grade will not be approved. Students may not request a retroactive drop for a course with a W grade.

Required forms/documentation: (1) completed *Graduate Student Petition* form; (2) completed *Correction of Grade* form; (3) statement from Student Portal Services confirming technical inability to complete change, or official documentation of personal circumstances that prevented the student from adding/withdrawing the course by the deadline.

E. Retroactive Withdrawal from Quarter

Requests for retroactive withdrawal from a quarter (all courses) may be approved only in cases where: (1) involuntary absence and/or other serious personal circumstances prevented the student from completing the withdrawal request in person prior to the deadline; or (2) severe problems make the assignment of "Incompletes" inappropriate (medical or psychological hospitalization, death in the immediate family, family crisis, trauma, fire, incarceration, etc). The withdrawal request must be approved by each course instructor; no student may withdraw from a quarter if any course instructor disapproves the student's request to withdraw from his/her course.

Required forms/documentation: (1) completed *Graduate Student Petition* form for each course the student was enrolled in that quarter; (2) completed *Withdrawal request* form; (3) official documentation of personal circumstances.

F. Retroactive Reinstatement of Courses

A student may request a retroactive (after the quarter) reinstatement, if reasons beyond the student's control (e.g. problems with financial aid) prevented the proper processing of the reinstatement request by the Registrar's deadline. The reinstatement request must be approved by the course instructor.

Required forms/documentation: (1) completed *Graduate Student Petition* form; (2) completed *Reinstatement Request* form; (3) Completed *Corrections of Grade* form for each course added (all courses in the student's academic record at the time he or she was dropped) with final grade assigned; (4) official documentation addressing cause of delay.

APPEALS

A student may appeal the decision of the department, Dean of Graduate Studies, or the CEP when new and relevant information & documentation supporting the student's request becomes available. All appeals must be reviewed by the department; department-approved appeals will be forwarded to the Dean. If the Dean supports the student's request, the appeal shall be submitted to the CEP for final review. Appeals denied by the Dean or by the CEP shall be considered final.

Appeals must be received by the Dean of Graduate Studies no later than one quarter following the resolution of the student's initial petition. No appeals may be submitted after this deadline.

NOTE: These procedures may be changed by the CEP at any time.