

Recommendation Regarding Late Submission of Grades

Made by the Policy subcommittee of the Academic Policies Committee

Every semester a large number of student grades (~300) are not submitted on time. Most are finally recorded and submitted to the registrar's office one to two days after the deadline, only after great effort on the part of registrar's office and division/school staff, but often there are still outstanding grade submissions extending past deadlines for scholarship and special program eligibility reviews, and for final degree audits prior to commencement. Given the short time period between the grade submission deadlines and deadlines for degree audits and scholarship eligibility reviews, even a few days' delay can cause problems. At best this results in delays for graduating seniors receiving their diplomas. At worst it results in students not receiving financial aid in time to enroll in the next semester. Data from the registrar's office indicate that the faculty who submit grades late are primarily tenured or tenure track and that it is often the same individuals who repeatedly submit grades late. Given the potential of severe consequences for the students involved, it seems likely that the faculty are simply not aware that their delays can impact students so profoundly. Nevertheless the problem continues. Although this would seem to be a simple personnel issue—these faculty are simply not doing their jobs completely—a purely punitive solution to the problem seems more difficult to implement than one would imagine.

Therefore, by unanimous vote of members present, the APC Policy Subcommittee recommends the following multi-part solution:

1) Ithaca College will no longer distribute diplomas on the day of commencement, but will continue to distribute a symbol of graduation like the current hardcover diploma folders. Diplomas will be mailed to students as soon as possible after their degrees and honors are verified.

Rationale: Given the on-going late grade submission problem and the schedule and logistical constraints imposed by the proximity of Cornell University commencement events, the time between the grade submission deadline and IC commencement is insufficient to complete the required degree audits. Although students and their parents enjoy having their diplomas on the day of commencement, a delay of even a week or two will have no affect on the professional plans of our new alumni, since official transcripts, not diplomas, are the ultimate proof of degree receipt. This would also allow the registrar's office to engrave academic honors permanently on diplomas. Currently those honors must be added after degree audits in the few days prior to commencement. Diplomas are currently mailed to roughly 700 September and December graduates and students who do not claim their diplomas at commencement.

2) Grades will be due to the registrar's office within 72 hours of the last college's final exam period.*

Rationale: The extended period after the fall semester apparently leads to faculty forgetting to submit grades on time. The spring semester and commencement schedule require this tight schedule already for senior grades. Courses that involve a significant project or capstone assignment will simple have to impose due dates a week or two

prior to exam week in order that faculty have sufficient time to evaluate lengthy projects, papers, compositions, etc. before the new grade submission deadlines.

3) In cooperation with the registrar's office, the deans of all schools/divisions will draft a short memo every year to all faculty summarizing the problems caused by late grade submission and insisting on timely submission of all grades.

Rationale: Apparently the repeat offenders do not realize the impact that their inaction has on students and on the academic staff. This memo should clarify that point.

4) The Provost will issue a letter to be included in the faculty members personnel file for habitual offenders of the grade submission deadline rules.

Rationale: Submitting grades on time is a basic part of the job of a professor. Not turning in grades on time indicates that the faculty member is not completely doing his or her job.

*The 72 hour grade submission deadline will NOT work if diplomas are still handed out at commencement.

Routing for Approval

Full APC approval: 10/06/06

Submission to Faculty Council for Review and Response: 10/09/06

Provost/VPAA Approval: 4/19/07

President Approval: 4/19/07

Board of Trustees Approval: N/A