CAP's Final Recommendation on Graduate Non-enrollment Policy

**Background:**

In Spring 2009, GPC proposed a policy entitled "Graduate Non-Enrollment." This policy was intended to help the College gain added perspective in projecting enrollment of continuing (matriculated) graduate students. The policy would do so by placing a specific type of Leave of Absence tag on a student's PAWS account if that student does not enroll for three consecutive fall/spring semesters.

**Charge:**

In Spring semester of 2011, GPC asked for a formal charge about this proposed policy from the Steering Committee. Steering now asks that GPC consider this its formal charge. We would appreciate receiving your recommendation along with a description of how testimony was used in its development in a way that is consistent with the three-step governance process described below.

**Testimony:**

GPC gathered testimony via two open forums (11/20/13 and 11/21/13) and a Qualtrics survey of students and faculty. The testimony from graduate students was positive as they believed that completing an online reinstatement from via PAWS would not be considered onerous. In addition, based on testimony, GPC changed language in its early draft of the policy recommendation to be more specific in a couple of sentences that had the potential to be misread.

Comments from faculty were about the implementation of the policy. Faculty wanted to know how records and registration would inform them when a student has been reinstated. GPC discussed this with the graduate studies office who will ensure that PAWS programmers include an automatic e-mail to program coordinators when someone does re-enroll, with a feedback screen to the student letting them know that they must also communicate their intentions to their program coordinator.

**Policy Recommendation:**

Modeled after the undergraduate policy regarding “unenrollment,” the following policy is recommended in an effort to help the College gain a better understanding of the enrollment patterns of the continuing graduate student population.

A matriculated graduate student unable to enroll for an Fall or Spring semester must file for leave of absence through the Office of Records and Registration by completing the Intent to Withdraw form, being certain to select Leave of Absence and not Withdrawal. (<http://www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/withdrawal/index.html>)

By College policy, a matriculated graduate student is allowed a six-year window to program completion.\* However, if three consecutive semesters (fall/spring/summer but not including the winter term) have elapsed since the last enrollment, then the student is required to complete an online reinstatement form through PAWS to be eligible for registration. All students, especially those in five-year undergraduate/graduate programs, should consult their advisers about the impact of a leave of absence on their program of study.

The Graduate Non-Enrollment Policy does not apply to non-matriculates, summer visitors, global visiting students, students registered in off-campus programs, or professional development students. The policy neither suggests nor requires that the student 1) complete a new application for admission or 2) pay a fee for re-instatement.

\*Taking a leave does not freeze the six-year window for program completion.

**Internal Processing Notes:**

* A PAWS modification would be requested through Records and Registration so that the following process could be followed. This modification might also serve as useful for the undergraduate population as it alleviates added phone calls and potentially creating efficiencies in processing.
* A student who falls into this category would be marked in PAWS through Records and Registration as taking a leave with a Program Action of Leave of Absence and a Reason of “temporary.”
* Upon attempting to return, the student would see a brief reinstatement form appear within PAWS.
* The submitted form would automatically generate e-mail notification to Graduate Studies, Records and Registration, the student’s adviser and, potentially, the department chair.
* Records could lift the leave to allow registration or the modification could potentially include an automated process that would lift the leave and prepare the student’s account for registration.