

# MEMORANDUM

TO: GSC

FROM: Steering Committee

RE: Formulating a Graduate Final Exam-Reading Day Policy

DATE: September 2018

**Background:** According to TCNJ policy (the [Policy Framework](#)), all campus policies should be reviewed every five years. In reviewing [The Final Exam-Reading Day Policy](#), Steering has noted that this policy applies to undergraduates students and there is no policy for graduate courses.

**Charge:** Steering asks GSC to write a recommendations regarding final exams in graduate level classes according to the timeline below. In doing so, GSC should look at the undergraduate final exam policy as a model and include policy and procedures parallel to those in the undergraduate policy (e.g., when a final exam or project is due and percentage of final grade). According to TCNJ policy (the [Policy Framework](#)), all campus policies should be reviewed every five years. [The Final Exam-Reading Day Policy](#) has not been reviewed since 2013 so will be under review by CAP in this academic year. CAP will wait to consider the policy until after it has recommendation regarding graduate classes from GSC. CAP will then write one Final Exam-Reading policy which covers both undergraduate and graduate level courses.

Steering specifically requests GSC to:

- a) make explicit recommendations about final exams in graduate level classes, regardless of the course format;
- b) consult the policy on [Cross Listing Courses](#) so as to consider the situation of simultaneous scheduling of undergraduate and graduate courses. That policy, in part states:

## *II. DEFINITIONS*

*Cross-listed courses - two or more courses that have different course designations (prefix and number) but offer the same course content and student outcomes. The syllabi for these two courses are the same.*

*Simultaneous sections - two or more courses sections, having either the same or different course designations, that are co-located and taught simultaneously, but at*

*least one course cohort has different (unique, additional, or fewer) course content, student assessments, student learning objectives, or student outcomes.*

- c) ensure that the language of the recommendations is clear and unambiguous
- d) send the recommendations to CAP for inclusion in a comprehensive College Final Exam Policy

In writing the recommendations, GSC should seek input from Department Chairs, Deans, graduate students, Records & Registration, and other stakeholders deemed appropriate by GSC.

**Testimony Tier:** Tier II from Faculty, Staff, and Students

The issue requires moderate testimony from the campus community. The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant individuals and groups in developing a preliminary recommendation. The completed preliminary recommendation should then be made available to the relevant stakeholder groups, and testimony should be solicited in the form of written feedback (through a survey and or e-mail).

**Timeline:** GSC should begin work immediately on the charge, with the goal of completing its recommendations by December 2018. The recommendations should be sent to CAP for CAP to incorporate into one unified Final Exam Policy.

### **TCNJ Governance Processes**

*Step 1–Steering issues a charge*

*Step 2–Governance prepares a Preliminary Recommendation*

Once the appropriate standing committee or council has received the charge, it should start by collecting data needed to make a preliminary recommendation. It should receive input from affected individuals and all relevant stakeholder groups prior to making a preliminary recommendation. For issues that have broad implications or that affect a large number of individuals, initial testimony should be solicited from the campus community at large. For some issues, sufficient initial testimony may come from input through committee membership or solicitation from targeted constituent groups. When, in the best judgment of the committee, adequate clarity of the principles contributing to the problem are known, a preliminary recommendation should be drafted and disseminated to the campus community.

*Step 3–The Relevant Stakeholders provide Testimony*

Once a preliminary recommendation has been completed, the standing committee or council should seek testimony from the campus community. The testimony should be gathered in accordance with the Testimony Tier (see below) assigned to the issue by Steering.

For issues that require public testimony from the campus community, the chair of the standing committee or council should approach the president of the appropriate representative bodies to schedule the next available time slot at a meeting of that body.

Testimony should be gathered in a way that allows stakeholders to weigh in fully on the issue. Members of the standing committee or council that wrote the preliminary recommendation should be present to hear and record the testimony.

#### *Step 4–Governance prepares a Final Recommendation*

Once the standing committee or council has received appropriate testimony, it should revise the preliminary recommendation into a final recommendation. Once the final recommendation is complete, the standing committee or council should use sound judgment to determine whether or not more public testimony is required. If, in its feedback to the original preliminary recommendation, a stakeholder representative body requests to review an issue again, the committee or council is bound to bring it back to that body. If a full calendar year has passed since the formal announcement of the preliminary recommendation, the committee must re-submit a preliminary recommendation to the campus community. When the committee or council has completed the final recommendation, it should forward it to the Steering Committee. The final recommendation should be accompanied by a cover memo that summarizes the initial charge, how testimony was gathered and the nature of that testimony, and how the committee responded to that testimony, including a description of how the preliminary recommendation evolved as a result of testimony.

#### *Step 5–Steering considers the Final Recommendation*

#### *Step 6–The Provost and/or President and Board consider the Final Recommendation*

#### *Step 7–Steering notifies the Campus Community Testimony*

*For a complete description of all steps and of the testimony tiers, see Governance Structures and Processes, 2017 Revision, pages 21–24.*