

## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Steering  
FROM: CAP  
RE: Readmission-Conditional Policy  
DATE: April 14, 2020

### **Background & Charge**

According to TCNJ policy (the [Policy Framework](#)), all campus policies should be reviewed every five years. [The Readmission-Conditional Policy](#) was last reviewed in 2011. In September 2018, Steering charged CAP with review of the aforementioned policy.

Based on its initial work reviewing the Readmission-Conditional policy, in a memo dated December 4, 2018, CAP recommended that Steering change the scope of the initial charge to include the creation of a more comprehensive readmission policy that addresses multiple readmission categories to TCNJ.

On February 6, 2019, Steering issued a revised charge to CAP to address the comprehensive nature of the categories of undergraduate applicants. Steering recommended that such a policy should consolidate, clarify, and increase transparency for the campus community. In addition, the Readmission-Conditional Policy should recognize that some schools and programs have their own dismissal and readmission policies, often in response to accreditation or licensure issues.

### **Methods**

In Fall 2019, CAP solicited public forum testimony at Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government meetings. The Qualtrics survey to the entire TCNJ campus garnered 56 responses. CAP representatives visited Academic Leaders, and corresponded on many occasions with Admissions, Dean of Students, Records and Registration, among other stakeholders. The insight collected in these correspondences aided us in addressing the major points of the charge.

1. Seven categories of undergraduate applicants emerged: first year, first year advanced standing, transfer, re-entry, re-admit, nonmatriculated, international.
2. Detailed attention to the definition of and criteria for two of the categories, re-entry and re-admit applicants, are needed. Specifically, stakeholders think it is important that students in these categories meet all degree requirements as described in the Bulletin in place at the time of their return, and all prior coursework should be reviewed for currency within the chosen curriculum to ensure that they meet all degree requirements in place at the time of their return. Previously completed courses that are significantly different or deemed no longer applicable to the current degree will need to be repeated. Prior work must be evaluated by the program chair or coordinator and approved by the

dean.

3. Each category of applicants requires specific principles governing the return of students in terms of time away, changes in curriculum, decision-making authorities, and the resolution of differences in readmission criteria.
4. In merging together various policies, issues with an existing policy became problematic. The Conditional Readmission Policy essentially offered a one-year conditional admission as a trial period to applicants who previously were dismissed from the College for academic reasons and were separated from the College for three or more years. If a student did well during the trial period, then they would be considered for full admission **and** prior coursework would not be included in their overall GPA calculation - essentially a "do-over." CAP members understood the compassionate intent of the policy that allowed students with a very low GPA to have the possibility of earning a degree at TCNJ. CAP carefully considered philosophical issues, fairness to other students, as well as what is in the best interest of the applicant (e.g. does this policy encourage an applicant to delay earning a college degree by staying out of an academic program for three years with the hope of getting back into TCNJ?) Our correspondences with various entities on campus gave us insight into the Conditional Readmission Policy. We learned it has been around for many years, but is very rarely exercised (e.g. maybe 1 or 2 times in the past 15 years or so), and it is not clear that anyone who exercised this option ever attained their degree. After considering that such a policy could harm TCNJ's academic reputation as a significant outlier to common academic practice, the committee recommended to remove the category completely and collected testimony with this point highlighted.

### **Final Recommendation**

The resulting proposed new policy is a revision of the Categories of Undergraduate Applicants Policy combined with the proposed elimination of the Conditional Readmission Policy. It streamlines the categories with which undergraduate students can enter TCNJ, clarifies the definitions and governing principles for each, and provides transparent guidelines for the campus community.