

MEMORANDUM

To: Graduate Student Council through Committee on Academic Programs
From: Steering Committee
Date: October 4, 2023
Re: Replace Graduate Student Full-time Definition policy

Background: TCNJ strives to review policies every five years. The [Graduate Student Full-time Definition policy](#) was last reviewed in 2017 and requires review. However, the policy is outdated and no longer meets the needs of the college. A policy is needed to address both the definition of “graduate student” and graduate student load.

Charge: In light of our diversity of new graduate offerings, including certificates, and that new students/learners will be enrolling in both credit-bearing and non-credit bearing educational offerings, Steering asks GSC/CAP to replace the Graduate Student Full-time Definition Policy with a broader policy that addresses the definition “graduate student” as well as graduate student load. GSC should look at examples from other institutions and consult with Records and Registration and Financial aid staff. GSC should collaborate with CAP to create a preliminary recommendation. Testimony should then be solicited from the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, deans, graduate directors, graduate students, and appropriate library staff.

Testimony Tier: Tier II

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 (through CAP) should make a Final Recommendation to Steering by February 15, 2024.

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, 2019 Revision](#), pages 23–27.

