

MEMORANDUM

To: Committee on Student and Campus Community
From: Steering Committee
Date: October 15, 2025
Re: **Participating in Graduation Policy**

Background: On October 1, 2025, Heba Jahama, Director of Records and Registration, and Lisa Watson-Cotton, Associate Director for Advising Resources, visited the Steering Committee to explain their ongoing concerns about the current [Participating in Graduation policy](#). In particular, they expressed concerns regarding the current policy of allowing students to walk at graduation as long as they have fewer than 3 remaining courses. This current iteration has led to an excessive amount of work for records and registration as they handle student requests for exceptions to participate if they have more than 3 remaining courses.

Charge: Steering asks CSCC to review the Participating in Graduation policy in order to create a policy that is easier for Records and Registration to enforce and one that guarantees equity in enforcement. Specifically, they should consider revising the policy to state that students can participate in spring commencement if they are able to complete their remaining courses by the end of the subsequent fall semester.

If testimony is needed, the testimony tier and timeline are outlined below. In particular, at Step 2, in considering the need for changes to the Participating in Graduation Policy, CSCC should consult with Records and Registration and other relevant stakeholders to create the preliminary recommendation.

Testimony Tier: Tier I, provided no significant changes to the policies are required:

- The issue requires minimal testimony from the campus community.
- The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant stakeholders before preparing the final recommendation, but there is no need for surveys or open fora.

Timeline: CSCC should make a Final Recommendation to Steering by **November 30, 2025**.

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.