

**Proposal to Change Academic Requirements for Commencement
AARC February 18, 2008**

Issue: Currently, seniors who have not completed all degree work by commencement may participate in commencement exercises provided that they have no more than *three* courses or course credits remaining to complete. Of the undergraduate students who attended the May 2007 Commencement Ceremony, only 57% had completed all requirements to graduate (257 out of 505 students). This is a significant increase over the previous 5 years, when the percentage of students attending Commencement who had completed all requirements ranged between about 70% - 72% (see table below).

CLASS	COMM	ON TIME	%	1 YR +	%	2 YR+	%
2002	633	446	70.40	536	84.60	547	86.40
2003	643	461	71.60	573	89.10	594	92.30
2004	599	464	77.40	533	88.90	547	91.30
2005	583	422	72.30	519	89.00	528	90.50
2006	640	462	72.10	528	82.50		
2007	505	288	57.00				
UPDATE				2/4/08			
2007	505	288	57.00	381	75.44		

Background info:

Of the 505 students at the May 2007 Commencement, 247 did not graduate for the following reasons:

Missing credits only (electives)	22
Course with Inc. grade	13
Missing U.D. credits only	10
Course without a grade only	10
Too low major GPA only	2
<u>Missing required courses</u>	<u>190</u>
Total as of 6/15/07	247

After sending notifications to these students, the Registrar was able to graduate an additional 30 students as of 7/1/07.

On 12/1/07, the Registrar's Office tried notifying the remaining 155 students to go over alternatives to complete their remaining requirements.

As of 1/30/08, the Registrar's Office has 124 students left to graduate.

As of 2/4/08, a total of 75.44% of the 2007 class has now graduated.

Proposal:

To encourage degree completion for all seniors while at the same time recognizing the importance to non-graduating seniors of attending the Commencement Ceremony with their class, we propose that in order to attend the Ceremony seniors must have

- (1) no more than *two* courses or course credits remaining to complete, OR
- (2) no more than three courses or course credits remaining to complete their degree requirements and they are registered to take those courses at St. Mary's in the fall semester following the graduation ceremonies they wish to attend; AND
- (3) at the time the Registrar assesses eligibility for participation, a student participating in the graduation ceremonies must be in good academic standing (cumulative and major GPA of 2.0 or better) and have no incompletes.

This proposed change would take effect Fall, 2008 for the incoming freshman class and subsequent classes. It would not affect students currently enrolled.

Current Catalog Language [language to be changed in italics]:

GRADUATION PROCEDURES

At the end of the junior year, each student must complete a petition of candidacy for graduation. These forms are available in the Registrar's Office and online. The Registrar's Office reviews all such petitions, checks the prospective graduate's record of completed coursework, and notifies students of remaining degree requirements. The Registrar's Office orders diplomas on the basis of filed candidacy petitions. Seniors who will not have completed all degree work by commencement may participate in commencement exercises *provided that they have no more than three courses or course credits remaining to complete.* (p. 34, 2007-2008 Catalog)

Proposed Revised Catalog Language [new language in italics]:

GRADUATION PROCEDURES

At the end of the junior year, each student must complete a petition of candidacy for graduation. These forms are available in the Registrar's Office and online. The Registrar's Office reviews all such petitions, checks the prospective graduate's record of completed coursework, and notifies students of remaining degree requirements. The Registrar's Office orders diplomas on the basis of filed candidacy petitions. Seniors who will not have completed all degree work by commencement may participate in commencement exercises *provided that they meet one of the following two conditions:*

- a) they have no more than two courses or course credits remaining to complete their degree requirements; or*
- b) they have no more than three courses or course credits remaining to complete their degree requirements and they are registered to take those courses at St. Mary's in the fall semester following the graduation ceremonies they wish to attend.*

In addition, at the time the Registrar assesses eligibility for participation, a student participating in the graduation ceremonies must be in good academic standing (cumulative and major GPA of 2.0 or better) and have no incompletes.