

## **PeopleSoft Student Administration System (PS SAS): Student Records Topics**

Minutes from Meeting with Associate and Assistant Deans on Friday, January 30, 2004, from 8:00am to 10:00am, in McManus Lounge, Hollister Hall

### **Announcements:**

The web site for the PS SAS (PeopleSoft Student Administration System) is available at <http://pssa.cornell.edu>. A new section with information specifically for the AAD (Associate and Assistant Deans) workgroup may be accessed from the web site's home page, or directly at [http://pssa.cornell.edu/index\\_page0005.html](http://pssa.cornell.edu/index_page0005.html). The minutes from the previous AAD workgroup meeting (1-23-04) are available at [http://pssa.cornell.edu/AAD\\_minutes\\_1-23-04.pdf](http://pssa.cornell.edu/AAD_minutes_1-23-04.pdf). Please note the "parking lot" topics for future meetings, which are listed at the end of the minutes in a table. This is a list of outstanding items this group needs to discuss. A second table, which lists "follow-up" items for the PS SAS project team, is also provided at the end of the minutes.

The next AAD workgroup meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 10, 2004, from 1:30 pm to 3:30pm in McManus Lounge, Hollister Hall. This meeting's topics will be the internal transfer division and the first-year writing seminar process.

### **GPA Calculations:**

Chris Cox reviewed GPA calculation issues. The PS SAS cannot provide exclusionary rules because it looks at GPA as a cumulative evaluation reflected by career. The group discussed the PS SAS team proposal for colleges across the university to report the cumulative GPA only for all students. Chris added that other GPA derivations can continue to be calculated by the colleges as needed using the data available to them from the RDS (Reporting Database Service) or through other means. For more details on this GPA calculation issues, please refer to the "Grade Point Average Calculation" document in the AAD workgroup section on the PS SAS team web site at [pssa.cornell.edu](http://pssa.cornell.edu).

Questions were raised about how to calculate the GPA for professional graduate programs such as the MENG and MILR programs. Chris explained that GPA calculations are done by career: one statistic is generated for the undergraduate degree (career), while another is done for the graduate degree (career). Also, when an undergraduate student takes a graduate-level course or vice versa, the course is "pointed" toward the appropriate degree (career).

Currently, when an undergraduate student takes a graduate-level course, it is counted for credit, but the grade does not count towards his or her GPA.

The PS SAS team recommends colleges do a cumulative GPA calculation by degree (academic career).

Chris explained that data is available for colleges to create their own reporting mechanisms, probably through a BRIO report. The PS SAS will provide more flexibility for reporting when production data is in the system. Mechanisms to build course lists, then to calculate a GPA based on that course list, will be available when degree auditing comes up.

One person asked if the PS SAS only will be able to compute cumulative GPA (and not degree GPA) when we “go live” (into production). Chris answered that the PS SAS team needs to know more about the requirements for GPA calculation alternatives such as the degree GPA before this functionality can be provided through PS SAS. The PS SAS bases its GPA calculation on all courses within the given degree (academic career).

Another person wondered if colleges could use “degree audit” in the new PS SAS to calculate degree GPA. Chris answered that this functionality would not be available on day one. How to implement degree audit will need to be considered after student records “goes live” (into production).

A “degree audit” is an analysis done by computer that enables a student and his or her advisor to assess the student’s academic progress and unfulfilled degree requirements. The current expectation is that one year after the implementation of the student records module of the new PS SAS, colleges who wish to perform degree audit analyses will be able to begin building degree audit rules for the incoming class of their choice. Once an undergraduate college begins building their degree audit rules, it will take four years for that degree audit program to mature into a useful tool.

The Hotel School computes degree GPA based on an internal transfer; students who transfer into the hotel program want the degree GPA based on courses they took after they entered the hotel program only.

Chris explained that most of the exclusionary rules for calculating degree GPA were established in 1983. Since then, the rules have remained static. He asked whether or not these rules were still valuable.

Someone asked if there was a way to decide whether or not to convert a course to be counted as pass/fail (therefore not affecting the cumulative GPA calculation) instead of being counted for a letter grade.

David Yeh asked representatives from the professional graduate programs (such as MENG and MILR) if they knew what exclusionary rules were being used when they looked at admissions candidates who obtained their undergraduate degrees at schools other than Cornell. They answered that there was no way for them to know what exclusionary rules were being used by other institutions. Just as Cornell admissions officers have no way of knowing what exclusionary rules have been used in calculating GPAs at other institutions, outside sources who seek GPA scores on Cornell students have no way of know what exclusionary rules Cornell has used to calculate the GPA they report for a given student. David then proposed that we have transcripts reflect a

cumulative GPA calculation for all work done at Cornell within a given degree program (academic career) because outside sources are expecting us to report a cumulative GPA for students.

Courses numbered as “00” are typically counted as “pass/fail,” and therefore do not influence a student’s GPA. Someone proposed that all “supplementary” courses get numbered as “00” to ensure that they are not included in the cumulative GPA calculation for a student within a given degree program (academic career). All agreed that this would work well, and that each college should now work to identify courses that are not to be counted towards a given degree, and to number them appropriately as beginning with “00.”

All agreed that the cumulative GPA will be calculated within the degree program (academic career) and that the transcript will report the cumulative GPA. The back of the transcript should explain the cumulative GPA calculation in detail, and should report that that alternate calculations (such as the degree GPA) may be done at the college level.

At this point, the AAD workgroup needs to know what rules can be used to replace the old exclusionary rules in the degree program (academic career) calculation. Chris agreed to return to the group with more information on how this could be done.

Letter grades from courses taken at Cornell prior to matriculation will not be included in the GPA calculation and will count the way transfer credits do: for credit only.

GPA calculation issues for students taking courses in the Extramural program and Employee Degree Program (EDP) at Cornell will be saved as a “parking lot” topic for further discussion in a future AAD workgroup meeting.

Questions were raised over what to do to calculate the GPA of students who take courses outside their given degree program. The MENG program, for instance, has students who begin taking their graduate-level courses when they are still undergraduates.

David Yeh pointed out that the current SAS (Student Administration System) only allows a given student to be in one degree program (academic career) at a time.

Chris explained that the new PS SAS will allow one student to have two academic careers at Cornell. When an undergraduate takes a graduate level course, therefore, the course may be counted toward their graduate degree program (academic career), while their undergraduate courses are counted towards their undergraduate degree program (academic career). In short, it means that one student will be able to have two active degree programs (academic careers) simultaneously. Each degree program (academic career) for that student will have its own separate cumulative GPA calculation.

Having two degree programs (academic careers) for one student has consequences for tuition calculation. How does one calculate the GPA for a student enrolled in a five-year or dual degree program? These issues will be addressed later as “parking lot” topics.

## **Faculty Advising and Enrollment Control:**

Chris reviewed faculty advising and enrollment control issues. In order to make advising both more manageable and enforceable, the PS SAS team proposes to eliminate the older “advisor code distribution” system and to implement an “eligible to enroll flag” system, which is similar to the “enrollment permission flag” system used during add/drop today. This feature would continue to be available to advisors through Faculty Advisor and administrative access. This permission flag can be set by college definition each semester. For more details on this topic, please refer to the “Faculty Advising and Enrollment Control” document in the AAD workgroup section on the PS SAS team web site at [psa.cornell.edu](http://psa.cornell.edu).

Chris asked the workgroup whether or not it was necessary to continue to provide the older “advisor code distribution” system, which uses PINs (Personal Identification Numbers).

One person said their college used PINs to hold up students when they needed to get their attention. Chris explained that instead of using the PIN, colleges could put a “hold on enrollment” for a student to get their attention. If the “eligible to enroll” flag is turned on for a particular student, he or she cannot enroll. Advisors may change the status of the flag at any time to get a student’s attention, such as during a time when the student may be having academic difficulties. There are different “hold” mechanisms available for faculty advisors and administrators (e.g. bursar).

Many members expressed concern that if the “eligible to enroll flag” is turned on for a particular student before pre-enrollment, it would force a meeting between the student and his or her faculty advisor, which could be a problem due to the limited availability of faculty members at certain time during the semester. Expecting faculty advisors to be able to meet with all of their advisees prior to pre-enrollment, they warned, could be unrealistic. Students would be irritated if they could not find their advisors. In addition, faculty members with lots of advisees would not want to spend a lot of time turning flags on and off.

Chris explained that faculty advisors will be able to do changes en masse for their advisees.

The group then discussed how the implementation of an “eligible to enroll flag” system would affect timing issues with regard to procedures such as pre-enrollment and add/drop. Requiring advisors to effectively “unlock” a student’s eligibility for enrollment by changing the “eligible to enroll” flag could create a bottleneck during the add/drop period as students are making changes to their course schedules.

One person pointed out that some students will pre-enroll, be dropped by the system from certain courses, return to campus late, then discover that they have to scramble to have

their advisors “unlock” their eligibility for enrollment so that they can reschedule into the courses they need within the add/drop period.

Someone suggested that this problem could be addressed by having the “eligible to enroll flag” turned on (or off) en masse, depending on timing, by college administrators instead of by faculty advisors. Chris confirmed that the flag could be controlled en masse by “career,” and could be implemented differently in each college. He also explained that the flag would be reset by the college each new semester and that flags could be set up for multiple semesters in advance. Specifically, whenever a given term is made available (present or future) in the PS SAS, you can control the flags for it.

To address enrollment timing issues, one person suggested simply setting all “eligible to enroll” flags for all students to “yes” for pre-enrollment and to “no” for add/drop.

The AAD workgroup agreed that it would be good to go ahead and implement the “eligible to enroll flag” system in PS SAS, and that the advisor PIN distribution system could be phased out. This implementation will take place in March of 2005, and will affect pre-enrollment for the Fall 2005 semester.

<b>“Parking Lot” Topics for Future Meetings with Associate and Assistant Deans</b>			
Topic	Owner	Open date	When due
How GPA is calculated for students taking extramural courses and courses within the Employee Degree Program (EDP)?			
Having two degree programs (academic careers) for one student has consequences for tuition calculation.			
How does GPA get calculated in 5-year and dual-degree programs?			

<b>“Follow-Up” Items for PS SAS Team to Complete</b>			
Topic	Owner	Open date	When due
At this point, the AAD workgroup needs to know what rules can be used to replace the old exclusionary rules in the degree program (academic career) calculation. Chris will return to the group with more information on how this could be done.	Chris Cox	1/30/04	
Need to address when “eligible to enroll” flags need to be turned on and off en masse during the semester (pre-enrollment, add/drop), and by whom (faculty advisors, college administrators); need to explain how the holds work within career and by semester; need to explain when a student has to see their advisor based on enrollment time			