Withdrawan 11/15/06

No grade at fully graded date
(Reference #8)

Issue: ADMIN is configured so that the academic standing of a student is determined student-by-student (not by batch process) and is triggered when the system recognizes that the individual student is fully graded. PS, however, delivers an academic standing process as an end-of-term event to be run on the entire semester enrollment population. The academic standing end-of-term process should be run only once to avoid placing multiple academic standing notations on semester enrollment records (all but one of which would have to be manually removed). This process presupposes that all students are fully graded, that is, that no grades are left blank.

Recommended Options:
1. Before running end-of-term batch processes, e.g., academic standing batch process as delivered in PS, insert a "placeholder" grade of "NR" (No Report).
2. Institute a policy to require all instructors to post final grades within 72 hours of final exams and find a method to make that work.

Discussion of Recommended Options:
Advantages -
- Instructors will have web access to grade rosters and will be trained to post grades online, making grade posting convenient.
- Automated assignment of placeholder grades speeds the grade posting process.
- Given the extra work that processing grade changes requires, administrators will encourage instructors to post grades on time.
- Financial Aid submits to Dept. of Education all grades available by 3 days after the Official Close of Semester + 14 calendar days. Grades available by that point affect a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress and eligibility for future financial aid. Timely posting will allow all grades to be included for students' benefit.
- More timely grade posting enhances student retention, and benefits both graduates who need degrees posted (for job possibilities or for progression to a graduate program) and continuing students whose academic standing needs to reflect accurately students' work in the previous semester.
- Placeholder grades will not impact students' academic standing for the semester in which the placeholder is assigned.
- Improving student-friendly culture and student retention rates are high on UH goal list; grading delays negatively impact UH's student-friendly image.
- UH will continue to evaluate academic standing for undergraduates every semester.
- Avoiding delays in completion of grading would impact students going on or coming off probation and suspension; it will be easier to prevent their unauthorized enrollment for future semesters if UH posts grades promptly.

Disadvantages -
- May increase number of grade change requests processed through administrative offices and RAR, thus increasing work load.
- "NR" would be considered an "F" for financial aid purposes; if grade changes are delayed, this would negatively impact a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress and continuing eligibility for financial aid.

Other options considered:
Modify PS Academic Standing process to allow student-by-student processing after delayed grades are posted.

Executive Summary:

8. No grade at fully graded date
Premises:
- UH will continue to evaluate academic standing for undergraduate students every semester.
- Timely grading is essential for satisfactory rewarding of students, for assigning academic standing correctly, and continuing student eligibility for financial aid.
- ADMIN is configured so that the academic standing of a student is determined on the individual student (not by batch process) and is triggered when the system recognizes that the individual student is fully graded.
- PS delivers a batch process as an end-of-term event to be run on the entire semester enrollment population. The academic standing end-of-term process should only be run once to avoid placing multiple academic standing notations on semester enrollment records (all but one of which would have to be manually removed). This process presupposes that all students are fully graded.
- Improving student-friendly culture and student retention rates are high on UH goal list.

Options:
1. Prior to running end of term batch processes, e.g., academic standing batch process as delivered in PS, insert a "placeholder" grade of "NG" (not graded) or "I" (Incomplete lapses to "F" within a calendar year).
2. Institute a policy to require all instructors to post final grades within 72 hours of final exams and find a method to make that work.*
3. Modify PS Academic Standing process to allow one-at-a-time processing after delayed grades are posted.

Recommend Options #1 and #2.

Discussion:
Option #1:
Positive -
- Automated assignment of placeholder grades speeds the grade posting process.
- Instructors will have web access to grade rosters, making posting of grades very easy.
- Given the extra work to process grade changes, administrators will encourage instructors to post grades in a more timely manner.
- Placeholder grades will not impact student's academic standing for the semester in which the placeholder is assigned.
Negative -
- May increase number of grade change requests processed through administrative offices and RAR, thus increasing work load.
- "NG" would be considered an "F" for financial aid purposes and would therefore impact a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress and continuing eligibility for financial aid.

Option #2:
Positive -
- Instructors will have web access to their grade rosters, increasing the probability of complete posting of grades.
- Financial Aid submits to Dept. of Education all grades available by 3 days after the Official Close of Semester + 14 calendar days. Grades available by that point affect a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress and eligibility for future financial aid.
- More timely grade posting can enhance student retention, and benefit both graduates who need degrees posted (for job possibilities or for progression to a graduate program) and continuing students whose academic standing needs to reflect accurately students' work in the previous semester.
Negative -
- No method for improving timely grading has worked to date.
- Grading delays impact students going on or coming off probation and suspension.

- Grading delays negatively impact UH's student-friendly image.

8. No grade at fully graded date (Discussion)

Premises: UH will continue to evaluate academic standing for undergraduate students every semester. Timely grading is essential for satisfactory rewarding of students and continuing student eligibility for financial aid.

Issue: ADMIN is configured so that the academic standing of a student is determined on the individual student (not by batch process) and is triggered when the system recognizes that the individual student is fully graded.

PS delivers a batch process as an end of term event to be run on the entire semester enrollment population. The academic standing end-of-term process should only be run once to avoid placing multiple academic standing notations on semester enrollment records (all but one of which would have to be manually removed). This process presupposes that all students are fully graded.

Options:
4. Prior to running end of term batch processes, e.g., academic standing batch process as delivered in PS, insert a "placeholder" grade of "NG" (not graded) or "I" (Incomplete lapses to "F" within a calendar year).
5. Find a method to make the current policy work (to post grades within 96 hours of final exams) and postpone end of term processing until all grades are posted.*
6. Modify PS Academic Standing batch process.

Recommend Option #1

Discussion:
UH requires that all instructors approve grades for posting within 72 hours of the final exam for a class section. In Spring 2006, 5917 sections were due to be graded; and 234,035 grades were due in RAR by May 15, which was 96 hours after the last day of final exams.
- May 11, last day of finals
- May 12, grades for 3645, or 61.6% of sections had not yet been submitted.
- May 15, 3037 sections, 51.3% were outstanding.
- May 16, 2087 sections, or 35.2%, were outstanding.
- May 17, (6 days after the close of final exams), 1224 sections, or 20.69%, remained outstanding.

Ensuring that all students are fully graded has been problematical at best. Instructors frequently default to grading "incomplete" when unable to determine final grades. When these grades are not changed to a terminal grade within one year, "I" lapses to an "F", which impacts GPA and academic standing. Students who are not fully graded, will not be eligible for final degree eligibility, analysis, scholarship awards, financial aid, etc.

Option #1:

> Negative: may increase number of grade change requests processed through administrative offices and RAR, increase work load. "NG" would be considered an "F" for financial aid purposes and would therefore impact a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress and continuing eligibility for financial aid.
> Positive: Instructors will have web access to their grade rosters, making posting of grades (with training) as seamless as possible AND given the extra work to process grade changes, Instructors will be encouraged by their administrators to post grades in a more timely manner This will not impact student's academic standing for the semester in which the placeholder grade is assigned.

Option #2:

> Negative: no method has worked to date
> Positive: Instructors will have web access to their grade rosters, increasing the probability of complete posting of grades (with training). Also, obliging instructors to submit grades in a timely way benefits students' financial aid status. Financial Aid submits to Dept. of Education all grades available by 3 days after the Official Close of Semester + 14 calendar days. Grades available by that point affect a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress and eligibility for future financial aid.*

Option #3:

> Negative: Impact to other processes dependent upon Academic Standing status, e.g., Graduation Auditing, Financial Aid eligibility, would be too great; students who are not in good standing would retain enrollment, thus negating the effect of probation or suspension
> Positive: Cuts down on the number of grade changes

*Aids to faculty submission of grades on time, as suggested by other Texas universities, include:

- Hounding of faculty until they complete grading; SMU, after a 24-hour grace period, sends an e-mail reminder and escalates each day until finally the Provost's Office calls (85% of grades are posted within 48-hour deadline and 96% are posted within 72 hours, 99% within 96 hours)
- Require faculty to submit individual grade change forms for all grades not submitted by fully graded date
- A department may designate a proxy grader for a class
- After online grading window closes, faculty must hand deliver grades to the Registrar's office; in winter, instructors may even have to walk through the snow to get there (Texas Tech) ☺ ; instructor must sign and date the gradesheets in front of the RAR staff person
- Registrar submits a list of tardy instructors to the provost, who forwards lists by college to the relevant deans; dean places a letter in faculty member's file. Tech has very few repeat offenders. In Spring 2006, only about 500 grades were missing at deadline for the entire student population of 29,000.
- Tech does not auto-populate blank grades. Professor must send documentation to input a grade into a blank space. Grade change forms are counterproductive, for they penalize staff, not faculty.
- Registrar usually accepts grade documentation to populate blanks by email; she prints the email to .pdf and uploads the file directly into imaging software. This procedure is followed the week after the grading deadline, which saves the registrar's office a lot of time.
- Maintain a computer lab w/trainer available to help faculty learn to submit grades online. San Jac had 98% compliance the first semester of web grade entry.