

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA
ACADEMIC SENATE

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

AA-003-212

Changes to Commencement Graduation Ceremonies

Academic Affairs Committee

Date: October 13, 2021

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: November 3, 2021

Academic Senate

Date: November 10, 2021
First Reading

Background**Your Name:** Daniel Parks**Your Email:** daparks@cpp.edu**Title of Referral:** University Registrar**Names and Titles of proponents:** Iris Levine, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Daniel Montplaisir, Vice President for University Advancement
S. Terri Gomez, Associate Provost
Melissa Riordan, Executive Director for Alumni Relations
Salomon Oldak, Faculty Director of Graduate Studies
Cecilia Santiago-Gonzalez, Assistant Vice President for Student Success
Daniel A. Parks- University Registrar**Keywords:** Commencement, Graduate, Grad, Graduation, Ceremony, Ceremonies**Is there a deadline by when this referral needs to be considered by the Academic Senate?:** Yes**Deadline Date:** Sep 15, 2021**Justification for deadline:** Planning and processes associated with next Spring Commencement is contingent on consideration of policy changes requested.**Background:** Background:

Cal Poly Pomona currently has two policies guiding the participation in Commencement/Graduation Ceremonies: Academic Senate Policy 1438 and Academic Senate Referral AS-2567-167-AA. Policy 1438 specifies undergraduate student's participation, where Senate Referral AS-2567-167-AA specifies graduate student's participation in Commencement. Upon review of both policies by the Office of the Provost, Registrar's Office, and University Advancement, the following changes are being proposed to provide clarity, equity, and efficiency in understanding and implementing Commencement planning and the necessary approval processes. These include; 1) a change to Policy 1438 specifying exact terms eligible to participate in Spring Commencement Ceremonies, 2) a change to Policy 1438 updating the eligibility requirements for participation in Spring Commencement Ceremonies, C) a change to Policy 1438 to include graduate students, and thereby D) rendering moot the Referral AS-2567-167-AA early participation for graduate students.

(Full Referral Attached- Senate Referral_Policy1438Change MSWord Document)

Recommended Resources: • In order to finalize this policy, we recommend consultation with:

- o The Office of Student Success
- o University Advancement
- o The Dean of Students
- o The University Registrar
- o Graduate Studies
- o College Deans and Associate Deans

Attachment 1:

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745860/859874816/senater referral_policy1438update_commcementparticipation.docx

Attachment 2:

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745907/859874816/csu_commencement_comparrison.xlsx

Attachment 3:

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745906/859874816/policy_1438_participation_in_graduation_ceremonies_for_undergraduate_students.pdf

Attachment 4:

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745905/859874816/aa006145pre_s.pdf

Discussion**Notes from the Executive Committee****Referral AA-003-212 | Changes to Policy 1438 Governing Participation in Graduation/Commencement Ceremonies**

Daniel A. Parks, University Registrar

Daniel Parks explained the background and possible impacts of referral AA-003-212. The commencement group was trying to resolve the two policies to specify the exact criteria for student participation in commencement. Parks defined and separated the two concepts of graduation and commencement. Graduation is a process of a complete review of the student's file. The Registrar's Office verifies that students have met all requirements of the CSU and Title V policies, the institutional policies and major requirements in order for students to be awarded their degree. Graduation is different from commencement. Commencement celebrates the students' accomplishment but does not specify that the student met the requirements for graduation. The Registrar's Office goals are to clarify the requirements for graduation and commencement.

The current policy reads:

Undergraduate students may apply for graduation and/or participate in the end of spring commencement ceremonies if they have filed a graduation check request, have no more than eight quarter (6 semester) units remaining to fulfill the graduation requirements, have completed their GWT requirement, and are in good academic standing (2.00 GPA for Cal Poly Pomona coursework and 2.00 for all cumulative coursework) at the end of the term prior to that in which the student applies to graduate.

Parks pointed out that the current policy does not have clear terms in who can participate in the commencement ceremonies. The policy is not clear for which term the student will need to qualify to participate in that commencement ceremony. Other CSUs specify the terms, and incorporated terms for students to apply for graduation instead of language addressing the 2.00 GPA requirement as mentioned on the current policy (merging the two concepts). The current policy has old language. The graduation check is overseen by the Registrar's Office and the department to make sure that the students is meeting all the requirements.

The current policy also does not include graduate students. When AS-2567-167-AA is read, the language attempts to allow early commencement for graduate students. There is an inequity issue, because there is an ECP program that allows CPP students to participate in summer. Otherwise, students cannot

participate in summer without the ECP. There also needs to be an exception to allow graduate students to participate in summer. The Registrar's Office want students who apply for graduation will be able to participate in summer, and students who are graduating in the summer can participate in the commencement ceremony.”

Parks read the [proposed policy changes](#) to the Executive Committee for the following recommended policy language change:

Policy Name Change – *Participation in Commencement Ceremonies*

Students may participate in Spring Commencement ceremonies, if they have graduated or applied for graduation for the prior Fall term, current Spring term or applied for graduation for the following Summer term. The process to apply for graduation will be determined by the Registrar's Office.

The Registrar's Office specified terms for students to participate in the commencement ceremonies. In conducting the survey, twenty-one out of twenty-three CSUs all specify the immediate summer as a term for which students can participate in commencement. The exception was CSU Maritime, because they do not have a summer session. Cal Poly Pomona will be the last CSU to allow the Summer term to be a normal term for students to participate in the spring commencement.

The Registrar Office specified the terms for students to participate in commencement. The 2.00 GPA requirement would be removed from the language in the policy. The Registrar's Office conducts thorough checks and verification with the department before awarding the degree. Wording in the document also covers doctoral students graduating in the summer. They will now participate in the spring commencement for those doctoral students graduating in the summer. Parks proposed the retirement of AS-2567-167-AA and revisions to the language in Policy 1438.

The Executive Committee inquired about why Post-bac Credential students are excluded from the commencement ceremonies. Parks will take this back to the commencement committee for discussion on the Post-bac Credential students. Post-bac Credential students currently have private ceremonies which are not as authentic compared to Cal Poly Pomona's Commencement Ceremonies. Post-bac Credential students currently do not have an application for graduation. The Executive Committee supports Post-bac Credential students receiving recognition in obtaining their teaching credentials during the commencement ceremonies.

Commencement planning is pending on timely processing of referral AA-003-212. The Registrar's Office will plan accordingly for students graduating in the summer to participate in spring commencement.

Chair Pacleb mentioned that Dan Montplaisir will present to the Academic Senate on Wednesday, September 29, 2021.

In the referral, the proponents have identified an issue consistently affecting both undergraduate and graduate students' graduation and commencement experience in the past. As indicated in the justifications, there was a lot of confusion among students and faculty advisors on how students should plan and apply for commencement along with graduation applications, especially for those affected by the Early Commencement Program (ECP). The committee agrees that although students' graduation status should determine commencement participation, it can be a separate process to handle. Once students have obtained a graduation status or have applied for graduation, they should be eligible for the upcoming commencement event. The proposal included in this referral has addressed the issue.

The committee also agrees that the policy should also apply to graduate students and thus justify the retirement of the AS-2567-167-AA (Early Participation for Graduate Students).

Questions/Concerns:

1. The referral doesn't address criteria/processes related to the graduation process, will there be another referral or entirely determined by the Registrar's Office internally?
As a general rule, process, is internally determined.
2. Will previous graduates participate in commencement if they didn't do it during the year they graduate for whatever reason? What is the current policy? If yes, will there be a number for years limit on this issue? If not, it would be helpful to make that clear in the policy.
-Yes, students can return and apply to walk in graduation after they have completed coursework.
This is not something that happens, or has happened in anyone's recent memory.

Recommendation:

The committee members are in support of the referral.

The following policy language change is recommended:

Policy Name Change- *Participation in Commencement Ceremonies*

Students may participate in Spring Commencement ceremonies, if they have graduated or applied for graduation for the prior Fall term, current Spring term or applied for graduation for the following Summer term. The process to apply for graduation will be determined by the Registrar's Office.