

## Shared Governance Proposal – Academic Clemency

- I. Date: February 4, 2020
- II. Sponsoring Constituent: Undergraduate Enrollment Management and Academic Policy Committee (UEAPC)
- III. Statement of the Issue:

The UEAPC proposes that the academic clemency policy be revised in the following ways:

- 1) Reduce the required separation from all academic institutions from five years to three years; and,
- 2) Eliminate the requirement that the student forfeit the use of any college or university credit earned prior to the academic separation for degree requirements, and instead give the student the option to specify the semesters for which clemency is requested.

- IV. Rationale for Proposal:

### **1) This modification will shorten time to degree**

Currently, beneficiaries of the academic clemency policy are unable to apply any of the credits earned prior to the academic separation period toward degree requirements, which extends time to degree. In some cases, students have mixed academic performance and do not want to lose all semesters. This modification will allow students to specify the semesters for which clemency is requested and retain the unspecified semesters for use toward degree requirements.

Further, reducing the academic separation period will also contribute toward a shortened time to degree. When the reduced separation period is combined with the ability to retain semesters, it becomes possible for a student to graduate within six years despite a poor academic performance.

The option to overcome prior poor performance and graduate with a stronger academic record may encourage potential dropouts to return to complete their higher education goals.

### **2) This modification will allow beneficiaries of academic clemency to avoid losing the benefits of financial aid and time-limited awards such as athletic eligibility**

Though academic clemency allows a student a chance at academic recovery, those courses still count toward limits on financial aid eligibility and some time-limited awards such as

athletic eligibility. Allowing students to specify the semesters for which academic clemency is requested will give them the chance not to lose the benefits that they received during unspecified semesters by keeping the credits eligible to count toward degree requirements.

### **3) Reducing the required separation from academic institutions makes it more likely that the student will return**

The longer a student is away from the institution the less likely it is that the student will return to pursue a degree. By reducing the separation to three years the likelihood that the student returns increases.

V. Type of review (i.e., expedited, full, or extended)

Full

## **P. 45, Undergraduate Bulletin**

### **ACADEMIC CLEMENCY**

**Academic clemency** is a provision allowing a one-time, irrevocable calculation of grade point average and credit hours toward graduation to be based only upon work done after a prolonged separation from college. This provision is provided for undergraduate students who have gained maturity through extended experience outside higher education institutions, and are currently enrolled at Arkansas State University and have demonstrated acceptable academic performance following their return.

Requirements to be satisfied by a student **prior** to requesting **academic clemency** toward an undergraduate degree are as follows:

1. separation\* from all academic institutions for at least ~~five~~ three years, followed by  
*\*Transcripts showing attempted enrollment ending in withdrawals are not considered to be separation.*
2. completion of a minimum of twelve degree hours of credit courses from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with a 2.0 or better G.P.A, and
3. formal application submitted to the Office of Admissions, Records and Registration wherein the student shall specify the semester(s) for which academic clemency is requested, and
4. fee payment to the A-State Treasurer's Office

Upon approval by the Office of Admissions, Records and Registration, the student will be **granted academic clemency**. The student's permanent record will remain a record of **all** work; however, the student will forfeit the use—for degree purposes at Arkansas State University—of any college or university credit earned for semesters granted clemency regardless of where the credit was earned. ~~prior to the five-years separation indicated above.~~

A-State will honor the Academic Clemency granted by another institution, but will recognize **ONLY** the clemency from that particular institution.

This process will be recorded in the student's permanent record; and will be noted on the transcript. The date of the clemency will coincide with the date of re-entry following the prolonged separation.