

1. Question Submitted by Senator Leila Notash (for the May 26, 2010 Senate meeting)

This year the undergraduate final exams were scheduled up to the end of April. The completion forms for graduate students to be added to the Spring degree list had to be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies by April 30th. That is, the marks for the graduate students were required by April 30th so that the official degree list be approved at the Graduate Executive Council on May 10. This resulted in some difficulty for the instructors and anxiety for the graduate students taking 400-level courses who had planned to graduate this spring. Now, some graduate students will have to wait until the Fall Convocation as their marks were not available by the deadline of April 30. In a few departments, a temporary passing mark of 65% was issued for the graduate students before the finals were marked to meet the deadline of April 30th so that these students could participate at the Spring Convocation.

Could the School of Graduate Studies align its deadline for the marks of graduate students with that for the undergraduate marks, taking into account the undergraduate final exam schedules prepared by the University Registrar's Office?

Response provided by Senator Deakin, Associate Vice-Principal and Dean of Graduate Studies

The degree lists deadlines of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) are informed by the deadlines for submission of our degree list to the Office of the University Registrar (OUR), and the Senate Committee on Academic Planning (SCAP). In order to meet those deadlines, time is required for the SGS to prepare and check the initial draft degree list and for that list to be circulated to departments and programs. Departmental and program review of the graduate degree list is an essential component of the process to ensure its accuracy. Following that review the degree list is approved by the Graduate Studies Executive Council (GSEC) for final submission to OUR and SCAP. Approval of the May 2010 SGS degree list was granted at the GSEC meeting on May 10, 2010. This year, a preliminary degree list was required by OUR on May 12, 2010, and the final, approved degree list was required by SCAP and OUR on May 19, 2010.

Given that most graduate students do not take undergraduate courses to meet graduate degree requirements, the Spring degree list deadline does not often cause a scheduling or operational problem. The SGS makes every effort to ensure that all graduate students who meet their degree requirements are able to graduate in a timely manner. However, if any student's completion is delayed due to any circumstances beyond the student's control, the Dean of SGS has the authority to add the students to the degree list as appropriate. Graduate departments and programs should ensure that the SGS is contacted about any possible late additions.