

Queen's University
Senate Committee on Academic Procedures
November 2010 – Deferred to January 20, 2011

REVISION TO POLICY ON RESCINDING DEGREES

Background

On November 30, 2006, the Senate of Queen's University approved a Policy on Rescinding Degrees, which outlines the circumstances in which rescinding a degree would be considered. The Policy outlines two “general cases”: one, an administrative error and the second, a case of academic misconduct or fraud.

Analysis and Discussion

In the summer of 2010, a student in the School of Nursing was incorrectly included on the School's degree list and awarded the Bachelor of Nursing Science degree in error. The error occurred because the student had dropped a required course early in the Winter term and registered to take the course in the Summer term. A system glitch resulted in the student appearing “in progress” in the Summer term course in April when the degree list was compiled and the student was added to the list. The error was not discovered until after the Convocation ceremony and, although the student did not attend the ceremony, the degree was awarded. The degree was subsequently rescinded.

A situation such as the one above has highlighted the need for minor revisions of the Policy on Rescinding Degrees.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the following revision to section 1 of the Senate Policy on Rescinding Degrees be considered:

*Occasionally, errors are made in compiling the degree lists. In circumstances where the error is of a clerical or administrative nature, (e.g., the same student appears on the faculty degree list for the same degree and the same concentration in more than one convocation period **or the student remains registered completing degree requirements, but was added to the degree list in error**), the University Registrar will report to SCAP the reasons for the error, the steps taken to ensure the error is not repeated in the future, and the consequences and remedies to correct the error. Upon approval of SCAP, the University Registrar will adjust the student record appropriately to correct the error. The Secretary of the Senate will notify the student that the official student record has been corrected.*

*In rare and unusual circumstances, a Faculty may approve a student for the degree list in error, when the student has not met all of the degree requirements and therefore has not earned the degree. **In cases in which the student has completed the required number of credits to earn the degree, but has not met all of the specific courses required for the degree (e.g. calculation errors in dual or concurrent degrees), the degree will not be rescinded.** In these cases, **although** the Faculty should attempt to encourage or persuade the student to complete all of the requirements, **the University will not rescind the degree. There is no recourse to reverse the initial approval because** The student record is updated immediately upon approval of the degree list and this information is made public by way of the convocation program as well as being included on official transcripts. The University must limit changes to official student records in order to protect the integrity of our records and to ensure fairness for our students.*

Summary

The Senate Committee on Academic Procedures considered and approved the following motion at its October 20, 2010 meeting:

Be it resolved that the above-noted amendment to the Senate Policy on Rescinding Degrees be accepted by the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures and forwarded to the Senate for approval.