

February 10, 2012

Apology from J. Morelli to Principal Woolf and Senate:

At the January 24, 2012 meeting of Senate I raised an issue arising from the December 7, 2011 Minutes of the Faculty Board meeting of the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science Item 4.4 concerning a report from the Associate Dean (Academic) about the Faculty's response to a Senate motion approved on November 22, 2011:

L. Clapham reported on letters that have been sent by the Operations Committee to the Senate Committee on Academic Process [Procedures] (SCAP) ... a [Senate] motion was passed which requires each Faculty to report to SCAP on actions being undertaken to ensure that students are not disadvantaged in the transition from marks to GPA. The letter from the Operations Committee specifically addresses students who are on the cusp of honours; these are the students who are sitting just above the line (between 80 & 84 percent) who previously would have received 1st class honours. With the new system she continued, the assigned GPA is 3.5 for these students, which is not 1st class honours. She added that the plan is to identify students in this situation and to then manually re-calculate the GPA based on the old and new system.

...
“The second letter, she [L. Clapham] continued, concerns the Faculty's inability to change a student's GPA on the system. Students in their fourth year, she said with an 83% cumulative average, who clearly have 1st class honors, show a GPA of 3.5. A GPA of 3.5 poses a problem for those students who wish to apply for postgraduate work at many of the better schools in the USA. A GPA of 3.7 or an average of 80% is, she said, a requirement for students to be considered. Unfortunately, she explained that as it stands now, the mathematical calculations do not produce the required GPA. She noted that letters have been sent to the Principal to explain the situation and to request assistance in rectifying this problem. L. Clapham stated that she would be happy to write letters from the Faculty to the Universities that the students are applying to address the issue. However, she continued that at this time she cannot do anything about the calculations.”¹

At the January 24, 2012 Senate meeting, after bringing the above extracts of the Minutes of the December 7, 2011, Faculty Board meeting of the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science to the attention of Senate, I asked Principal Woolf how he had responded to this request from Associate Dean (Academic) Clapham now that one and a half months have gone by.

Upon speaking with Associate Dean (Academic) Clapham, after the January 2012 Senate meeting it was clarified that the letters that were sent to the Principal were in fact sent by students in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, and not by Associate Dean (Academic) Clapham herself.

Therefore I sincerely apologize to Principal Woolf for putting to him a question that was based on an incorrect premise, and I further apologize both to Principal Woolf and to the Senate as a whole for any misconceptions or false perceptions that my question or the Principal's response might have elicited.

¹ http://engineering.queensu.ca/Governance/Faculty-Board/Meetings/Minutes/Minutes_2011-12-07.html