

Great Basin College Faculty Senate
Academic Standards Committee

Written Committee Report

Online Conference: 15 April 2015 – 20 April 2015

Participating: Scott A. Gavorsky (Chair); Mike Elbert; Danny Gonzales; Doug Hogan;
Jan King; Scott Nielsen [quorum]

An online conference was held to discuss the following issues:

1) At the President's Council meeting on 7 April 2015, concerns were raised about the "Graduating with Honors" proposal put forward by Academic Standards on 30 January 2015 and approved by Faculty Senate on 20 February 2015.

The President's Council proposed the following changes to the proposed policy:

1. No Honors distinctions for certificates; degrees only.
2. For Associate's degrees, students would be granted Honors distinctions on completion of 15 credit hours at GBC (25% of the 60-hour minimum)
3. For Bachelor's degrees, students would be granted Honors distinctions on completion of 30 upper-division credit hours at GBC (roughly 25% of the 120-hour minimum).
4. The shift of GPA requirements for the Summa Cum Laude designation and the incorporation of the capstone courses for Bachelor's honors was accepted.

The justification presented by President's Council as communicated to Academic Standards was the expectation that future transfer students would be completing degrees at GBC.

In discussing the proposed changes, the Committee noted the following concerns:

- Denying honors for certificate programs was acceptable, and mirrored some concerns already voiced in the Committee. However, the Committee was later informed that the President's Council recommendation was based on an erroneous assumption that certificates currently do not receive Honors—which they do. The Committee feels the Honors for certificates needs to be discussed further.
- The proposed changes to the Bachelor's degree Honors was acceptable, since 30 credit hours would reflect a minimum of two full semesters' work at GBC.
- Serious concerns were raised about the requirement of only 15 credit hours for Associate degree Honors. Since GPA at previous institutions would not be counted, GBC would be granting Honors on a degree for the equivalent of a single full semester's work. The Committee believes that a minimum of 30 credit hours—again, equivalent to two full semesters' work—would be an acceptable alternative.
- Since the original proposal from Academic Standards did not envision decreasing the hours for Honors status, the Committee has not fully reviewed the impact this may. The Committee feels that given the scale of the changes, a more thorough examination of the matter is warranted.

ACTION: Given the short time frame to submit changes for the 2015-2016 *General Catalog* and the scale of the modifications proposed by the President's Council, the Committee voted to formally withdraw the proposed changes pending a broader review of the proposals from President's Council.

The "Graduation with Honors" section of the catalog will remain unchanged from the current policy.

The Committee Chair communicated this decision to the Faculty Senate Chair to relay to President's Council.

The Committee plans to collect further information and more fully examine the issue, with the plan for having a revised policy in place for the 2016-2017 *General Catalog*.

The Committee will schedule further meetings as required.

Scott A. Gavorsky, Ph.D.
Chair, Academic Standards Committee