

9 November 2022

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Amy Lubitow, Chair, Graduate Council

RE: New Policy Proposal for Graduate Academic Forgiveness

## **New Policy Proposal**

### Graduate Academic Forgiveness

#### **Existing Bulletin language:**

None.

#### **Proposed Bulletin language:**

Graduate Academic Forgiveness allows a PSU student, who returns after an extended absence, to begin a new graduate program with the benefit of excluding previously earned low grades from their PSU cumulative graduate GPA calculation. There must be, at minimum, a three-year break in registration at PSU between the terms considered for Graduate Academic Forgiveness and the student's term of admission to a new graduate program.

If Graduate Academic Forgiveness is approved, courses from the applicable terms will remain on the student's transcript and will be included in attempted hours, but the courses will be excluded from the earned, passed, and GPA hours. A notation on the transcript will identify the courses as excluded from the graduate GPA calculation. A maximum of three terms can be approved for Graduate Academic Forgiveness. Once Graduate Academic Forgiveness is processed and the courses excluded from the graduate GPA calculation, the action is irreversible.

Graduate Academic Forgiveness is applied to all graduate courses in the approved terms, not just those with low grades. Courses approved for Graduate Academic Forgiveness cannot be used toward any current or future graduate degree or certificate requirements at PSU.

A student who has previously been placed on graduate academic probation or disqualification at PSU is not eligible for Graduate Academic Forgiveness for the same program. Graduate Academic Forgiveness cannot be requested after a student has earned a graduate degree or certificate at PSU. A student may receive Graduate Academic Forgiveness only once during their time as a graduate student at PSU, regardless of how many graduate programs they may have participated in.

If Graduate Academic Forgiveness is approved as part of the graduate admission process, the student will be admitted with University Conditional status. After admission, the student must earn a 3.0 graduate GPA or higher in their first 9 letter-graded graduate credits after admission. If the student earns a 3.0 GPA or higher, and has already been approved for Graduate Academic Forgiveness, the approved terms will be excluded from their graduate GPA calculation.

If the need for Graduate Academic Forgiveness is identified post admission, the student must earn a 3.0 graduate GPA or higher in their first 9 letter-graded graduate credits after admission

to their new graduate program before being eligible to apply for Graduate Academic Forgiveness.

**Rationale:**

When a student who previously earned low grades in graduate courses wants to apply to a graduate program, we have the Special Approval process that provides a holistic review of the applicant's academic history and can make allowances for extenuating circumstances, time since the previous graduate coursework, etc. However, if Special Approval is granted, a student who earned the previous low grades at PSU does not enter their graduate program on a level playing field compared to a student who earned their previous grades at another institution. Grades from other institutions are never included in PSU's cumulative graduate GPA calculation, so these students will begin their program with a "clean slate" in terms of their PSU cumulative graduate GPA. However, for a student who earned the low grades at PSU, those previous grades will be included in their cumulative graduate GPA and will have a negative effect on their graduate GPA regardless of new grades earned. This discrepancy is inequitable and is the driving idea behind the creation of this policy.

If approved, the policy will be effective fall 2023.