

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC STANDING OPERATING GUIDELINES

Revised Fall 2024 (9/23/2024)

I. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

A. Purpose of the Committee: "To formulate and administer policy relating to the academic status of students including matters concerning probation, honors, requirements for graduation, acceleration, and leave of absence; to determine the academic status of each student on the basis of the record, reports of instructors, the opinion of the faculty in the major and any other relevant data; and to give any instructions and advice which seem necessary or advisable" (Faculty Handbook).

(Comment: the primary functions of the CAS are to interpret and apply—"administer"—established academic policies. On various occasions, however, the Committee also "formulates" academic policies, either for its own internal operations or to propose to the Faculty as a voting issue. In the past, for example, the CAS has made proposals regarding honors and probation criteria, plus/minus grading, the handling of "incomplete" grades, minimal standards for continuation, and deadlines for adding, dropping, and withdrawing from courses.)

Membership: (revised 5/12) **Membership:** Three faculty members, at least one tenured and none of whom may be a member of the CAFR, appointed to serve three-year terms, one of whom chairs the committee; the Associate Dean of the Faculty (student academic affairs) and/or their designated representative; the Registrar and/or their designated representative; and two students selected by SGA to be appointed each year to serve a one-year term. Additional staff may join the meeting at the request of the Chair, the Associate Dean of the Faculty (student academic affairs), or the Registrar. Such staff may include representatives from the Office of Academic Advising, the Registrar, or Off-Campus Study and Exchanges. This expanded participation in CAS meetings can occur only with the consent of the regular CAS membership.

Those voting on CAS are the three faculty members, the Associate Dean of the Faculty (student academic affairs) or their designated representative, the Registrar or their designated representative, and the two students.

Annual Schedule: Weekly one-hour meetings during the semester; in-person January Academic Review meeting; in-person June Academic Review meeting. Faculty staffing of the June Academic Review meeting will be facilitated by the Chair, ensuring in this order: continuing CAS members, incoming CAS members, faculty members from the most recent CAS selected at random.

C. General Philosophy: The CAS has been given rather broad authority by the Faculty to act for them in the interpretation of policies and deadlines which affect the academic life of students. The CAS attempts to uphold such policies as they were intended by the Faculty, but at the same time attends to unusual circumstances presented by a particular case. When the CAS departs from a particular policy, it tries to recall and anticipate all similar cases and thus attempts, for the sake of fairness, to preserve philosophical continuity in its interpretation of special exceptions.

The guiding principle in CAS decisions is to ensure the integrity and quality of student academic experience, while at the same time taking various student hardships and confusions into account.

Operating Procedures: Requests from students (and in the case of grade changes, from faculty) are submitted to the Committee through the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Academic Advising, the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, the Associate Dean of the Faculty (ADOF), or the Chair of the Committee. The Committee generally asks the ADOF and three administrative offices to act upon routine requests that clearly fall within CAS guidelines and to make available

the results to the Committee upon request (e.g., routine medical or personal leaves, reclassifications, ordinary drop/adds and W requests, off-campus study applications). Petitions which require interpretation are, however, brought before the Committee at meetings held weekly during the academic year. Requests are discussed and judgments are made in accordance with the policies, procedures, and standards set forth in the College Catalog, New Student Advising & Registration Guide, and the Advising Guide, Faculty Edition. The large majority of decisions are reached through discussion and consensus, though some issues may require a vote (for a total of 7 voting memberships as defined by the Faculty Handbook). When additional information is needed before making a decision, the Committee contacts the appropriate student, faculty member, academic department, or, occasionally, other college or institution. Decisions made by the CAS are incorporated into minutes prepared for each meeting by the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Academic Advising, and the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges. Minutes are distributed to the members of the Committee and to other appropriate administrative and academic offices.

Students are notified of decisions in writing by the Office of Academic Advising, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, or occasionally by the ADOF or Chair of the CAS. Copies of the decision letters are maintained by each administrative office and are sent only to those individuals at the College who must take action on the decision (such as faculty advisors, Financial Services, Student Financial Aid, Residential Life, etc.).

Students (or faculty) who have concerns or who need clarification on Committee decisions may direct their questions to the offices of the Registrar, Academic Advising, Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, ADOF, or to the Chair. If the petitioner has a substantially new perspective or piece of evidence to offer for the Committee's further consideration, they may submit an appeal in writing to the Committee.

The Committee on Academic Standing makes every effort to maintain confidentiality in all of its petition, notification, and appeal processes.

II. GUIDELINES FOR CAS DECISIONS

A. Change in Course Registration

1) Early-semester Absences and Administrative Changes to Student Schedules: students who do not attend the first two class sessions of a particular course and who fail to contact the instructor about their intention to remain enrolled may be administratively dropped from the course by the instructor and Registrar. A student may be dropped only after an attempt has been made to contact them. The goal of this action is to open seats to other students before the end of the add/drop period.

(Comment: administrative action cannot result in change of status from full to part-time.)

2) Late Drop or Add: students may add or drop a course with their instructor's approval during the first week of classes. During the second week of classes, adding a course may be approved by the CAS if there is clear evidence, from the instructor, that the student has been a full participant in the course since its beginning or within the established period for adding a course (thus the integrity of the course experience would be preserved). The adding of a course is seldom approved after the second week. Dropping a course after the published drop deadline

may be allowed only if there is strong evidence of understandable student confusion over the drop/add process, or some other serious delay beyond the student's control. Usually, however, the CAS allows a W instead of a drop.

(Comment: the possibility that the student may incur an overload fee has no bearing on the CAS drop/add/W decision and is entirely under the authority of Financial Services. Further, students who are lax about dropping or withdrawing from a course may have prevented another student from enrolling in the course.)

3) Withdrawal and Late Withdrawal (W) from a Course: In May 1999, the CAS proposed, and the faculty approved by vote, a policy of 2 withdrawals only per student during the period of enrollment at the College. The policy's effective start date was Fall 1999 for entering new and transfer students. These 2 withdrawals without grade penalty may be used at the student's discretion with each instructor's approval and in consultation with his or her faculty advisor for a variety of academic, personal, and medical reasons. The final grade is registered as a W on the transcript, and the student's official record does not indicate the reason for a withdrawal.

4) Special Notes on Course Withdrawals (Approved by CAS Nov 2016; updated Fall 2024)

Except in certain situations involving medical or personal crises at the end of the term (see below), the CAS will rarely approve such a radical change in a student's course schedule that it effectively makes him/her a part-time student (for example, from full-time student to a course schedule with one—or possibly two—courses remaining). CAS believes that Skidmore, as an academic institution and residential college, demands full and energetic participation on the part of its matriculated students.

In considering petitions for more than two withdrawals; previous course withdrawals related to the following situations are typically discounted:

- Acute personal difficulty or emergency situations outside the student's control (e.g., death of a parent),
- Medical conditions,
- Summer study at Skidmore, since withdrawals from other (non-Skidmore) programs cannot be assessed,
- Difficulty during the student's first semester at Skidmore, when the student has not yet fully acclimated to the academic environment,
- 1-credit classes.

In the absence of these situations, the CAS may grant additional course withdrawals to address "significant challenges" of an academic, personal, or medical nature. Medical documentation is not required, but students are expected to reflect on the circumstance that generates the withdrawal request.

If a student is petitioning for more than two withdrawals in a single semester due to medical or personal reasons, the OAA or ADOF will recommend in most cases that the student take a medical or personal leave of absence, particularly if the withdrawals will result in the student dropping from full-time to the equivalent of part-time status for most of the term (see section II.C.1 on Medical or Personal Leaves). Multiple and late withdrawals may be considered appropriate towards the end of the term if that action preserves the ability of the student to earn some course credit (despite the necessity, for example, of hospitalization or other off-campus treatment that would otherwise require a leave of absence). Whenever possible, the CAS prefers that the student negotiate Incompletes with course instructors rather than seek late and/or multiple withdrawals. Requests for severely reduced course loads in subsequent semesters as a result of medical issues must be approved prior to the start of a semester (see II.A.5).

The CAS may also entertain a late withdrawal from a course, with strong support from the instructor(s), if the student was experiencing severe emotional or medical distress which significantly delayed or confused the student's ability to exercise responsibility. The receipt of information regarding the student's standing or performance in the course after the withdrawal deadline is rarely considered sufficient cause for a late withdrawal. CAS is more lenient when instructors do not provide graded feedback until after the W deadline.

5) Course Overloads and Underloads: a course schedule overload (over 18 semester hours, to a maximum of 20 semester hours) or an underload (fewer than 12 semester hours) must be approved by the CAS. Students with a 3.00 GPA or above are automatically approved by the Office of the Registrar for an overload. For students whose GPA is lower than 3.00, the CAS may approve an overload if the student record shows sufficient strength, and assuming the quality of the student's academic experience would be preserved. Generally, the CAS is more lenient with overload requests from final-term seniors,¹ unless the overload would likely diminish the quality of the student's culminating academic experience. Overloads will not be approved above 20 semester hours, including credits transferred from other institutions.² Overloads are not available to first-term, first-year students.

Students studying off campus are subject to the same guidelines except in cases where the program's curricular structure requires students to earn an overload.

6) Pre-approved Reduced Course Loads: Students requesting reduced course loads as part of an accommodation for an ongoing medical condition must follow the appropriate procedures for applying for academic accommodations and submit a request to the Coordinator of Student Access Services no later than two weeks prior to the start of each semester. Pre-approved reduced course loads are meant to assist students whose impairment significantly limits their ability to manage a full-time course load. Such requests will be evaluated on the basis of clear and convincing evidence that, due to the impact of a medical condition or disability or the corresponding time demands of associated treatment, a reduced course load would be necessary for the student to participate in the programs and activities of the College.

7) Changes in Course Registration and the College Sexual Misconduct Policy: Situations may arise during the application of the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy which require adjustments to a student's standing in one or more courses. The CAS entrusts the ADOF to determine what course of action best serves a student's interests in such cases, which must be handled with great attention to confidentiality and student privacy. The ADOF will work with the student and faculty whose classes are affected by the student's situation, attending to any potential problems with academic course standing that may arise during the application of the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy as early as possible in order to maximize potential resolutions to such conflicts. Such cases will be brought to CAS for discussion only when it appears that the situation can only be resolved with something other than a late drop and/or addition of a course or a third W.

¹ For example, in spring 2017, the CAS permitted a senior to audit four dance courses (2 credits each), for a total of 25 credits

² Similarly, in spring 2017, the CAS permitted sophomore dance majors to audit three dance courses (2 credits each), for a total of 23 credits.

B. Grades and Grading (Revised and Approved by CAS March 2024)

1) Late Change in Grading Option: after the two-week deadline for changing from grade to S/U or S/U to a grade, the CAS will not approve a change unless there is documentary evidence of the student's confusion in making their choice or evidence of a clerical or procedural error.

2) Change in Final Failing Grade: Requests for a change of a final failing grade must conform to the Policy to Appeal a Final Failing Grade as posted in the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the College Catalog.

If a petition to change a final failing grade is submitted to the CAS as a result of the Policy to Appeal a Final Failing Grade and a faculty member of the CAS feels they have a conflict of interest regarding the petition, the faculty member may recuse themselves from participating in the CAS's deliberations on the petition. In this case, the Chair of the CAS will ask the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) to appoint a replacement to the CAS to serve on the committee's deliberations of the petition. FEC should appoint someone with past service on the CAS.

3) Change of Grade Based on Computational or Clerical Error: Requests for a change of grade based on computational or clerical error must be initiated by the faculty member awarding the grade. "No grade may be changed on the basis of re-examination or supplementary work" (Faculty Handbook). The instructor requesting a change of grade must assure the CAS that they have checked the entire class list for other potential errors.³

4) Change of Grade Based on CAFR Recommendation and Instructor Consent: On rare occasions a grade-change request comes to the CAS as the result of a CAFR decision. The CAS implements these decisions when the faculty member concurs with, or does not oppose, the grade-change request (even under these circumstances, the instructor retains full authority over the grade).

5) Change of Grade Based on Conduct Violation: with the consent of CAS, course grades can be changed as a consequence of a conduct violation discovered and/or adjudicated after grades have been finalized. There is no statute of limitations, but the CAS must be assured that due process was granted to the respondent. A change in grade may result in a late or retroactive change in student status (e.g., to probation or waiver) and could result in the revocation of the degree (e.g., if the student no longer meets graduation requirements) or College or Department/Program Honors (e.g., due to changes in cumulative and/or major GPA).

6) Extension of Grade of Incomplete: a faculty member may request, through the Office of the Registrar, an extension beyond the normal six-week period for completion of Incomplete course work. Many such requests are routine; in other cases, the CAS may consider whether the extension is warranted on academic or other grounds. Sometimes the CAS disallows an

³ In order to protect the integrity of the grading process, the Committee holds firmly to the distinctions made in the Faculty Handbook. Routine grade changes for clerical or computational error are approved by the Office of the Registrar and reported to the Committee.

extension because of a pending "disqualification" or other important question of the student's academic standing.

C. Leaves of Absence (Medical and Personal) (Revised and Approved by CAS November 2013. Revised February 2022)

Duration of Leaves: Students may take a one-semester medical or personal leave of absence. It is possible for students to have more than one leave during their college career. Students may apply for a leave of absence for one or two semesters. Students who apply for a leave for one semester may make a request in writing to have their leave extended for a second semester. The maximum duration of a leave is two sequential semesters. A student with extenuating circumstances (e.g., typically medical reasons) who takes two sequential semester leaves and wishes to take a third may petition the Committee on Academic Standing. Not all petitions are approved. Students with military service obligations are exempt from the limit of three semesters on leave. If students do not return to study in the semester they indicate on their application, they are administratively withdrawn from the College and may apply for readmission.

1) Medical Leaves: Requests for medical leaves are handled by the Office of Academic Advising in collaboration with the CAS and other campus offices. A medical leave is granted when the student is too ill to continue successfully at Skidmore for the express purpose of permitting the student to devote themselves to recovery. Supporting medical documentation is not required at the time students apply to take a medical leave. However, the College requires supporting medical documentation when students apply to return from a medical leave (see "Returning to the College after a Medical Leave")

The Office of Academic Advising and the CAS will make every effort to inform instructors as early as possible in the process when an application for medical or personal leave is initiated, but must also strive to balance the priority of informing faculty with the imperative of student privacy and FERPA. Students who leave school on a medical leave are assigned a grade of L for all of the courses on their transcript for that semester, unless a course grade has been recorded by the Registrar's Office. The deadline to request a medical leave aligns with the last day of classes (not when the semester ends) in accordance with the academic calendar. Requests that are received after the deadline are reviewed by CAS.

a) Medical Leave without Penalty: The committee will not consider the semester of a medical leave as a failure and will not penalize a student because he or she was ill. Students who are approved for a medical leave for a semester will not be disqualified for then failing to meet continuation standards, even when a student was in academic jeopardy before taking the leave. Likewise, a one-semester medical leave that results in grades of L being assigned to all the student's courses for that semester will not be later counted against a student when the CAS is reviewing satisfactory academic progress.

The ADOF or their designated representative approves routine requests for a medical leave on behalf of the CAS.

With some restrictions, students may transfer up to eighteen credits per semester from one or more accredited institutions while on leave.

b) Returning to the College after a Medical Leave: Students seeking to return to the College after medical leave must complete the Return from Medical Leave application, which will be

evaluated by the Office of Academic Advising and the CAS in conjunction with other campus offices, which may include Student Academic Services, Health Services, Residential Life, the Dean of Students' Office, and the Counseling Center. The application requires students to include an academic plan and provide supporting medical documentation. As a demonstration of enacting their academic plan, students must also be registered for the courses that they intend to take before submitting their application.

Supporting Medical Documentation: When applying to return for a medical leave, the College requires a letter of support from a licensed clinician/physician to make recommendations about a student's ability to return to college and be successful. The letter of support must be on office letterhead from a licensed clinician/physician who has treated the student for the symptoms that led to their medical leave. The provider may not be related to the student or their family. The letter must be originated, signed and dated from a licensed mental health or medical provider such as the following:

- Physician (MD)
- Nurse Practitioner (NP)
- Physician Assistant (PA)
- Psychologist (PhD or Psy.D.)
- Social Worker (LMSW, LCSW)
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)
- Licensed Mental Health Clinician (LMHC)

2) Personal Leaves: A student may take a personal leave if they wish. Students who take a personal leave after the drop deadline are assigned a grade of L for all of the courses on their transcript for that semester, unless a course grade has been recorded by the Registrar's Office. The deadline to take a personal leave aligns with the last day of course withdrawals in accordance with the academic calendar. Students who wish to take a personal leave after the deadline must submit a petition to the CAS. Students may also request a personal leave for full-time study at institutions that are not available through Skidmore's established portfolio of approved domestic off-campus study programs (i.e., Washington Semester, Semester in Environmental Science at Woods Hole, etc.).

The ADOF or their designated representative approves routine requests for a personal leave on behalf of the CAS.

With some restrictions, students may transfer up to eighteen credits per semester from one or more accredited institutions while on leave. Except in the special circumstance of international students taking courses from institutions located in their home country, students on leave cannot transfer credit from an international program or institution or from institutions available through Skidmore's established portfolio of approved domestic programs. A personal leave of absence cannot be used to circumvent the CAS eligibility requirements or OCSE's program approval process.

3) Special Considerations for Medical or Personal Leaves: Some requests for leaves may need special consideration by the Committee. The CAS considers requests from students seeking more than one continuous year away from Skidmore. The CAS also reviews applications for personal leaves of absence when requests occur after the withdrawal deadline. A student may not be on "leave" and also enrolled in a Skidmore course or courses.

4) Fall Term First-Year Leaves: First-year students who take a leave of absence during their first fall term at Skidmore need the FYE Director's signature on their application for a leave of absence.

5) Effective Dates for All Leaves of Absence: In keeping with federal policy, the effective date of a leave is when the "student begins the official withdrawal process," which is understood to be the date a completed and signed request form is received. In a few exceptional cases, the CAS may determine an earlier effective date based on the point at which the student actually left campus or stopped attending class.

D. Eligibility Standards for Off-Campus Study (Revised February 2017; February 2022)

1) Background

The Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) is called upon to review and determine the eligibility of students wanting to study off-campus to ensure they meet defined standards and expectations. Because the CAS values information about student applications only known by those in the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges (OCSE), each semester the Chair of the CAS will ask the Director of OCSE to provide a representative from that office to attend the CAS meetings. The OCSE representative will present petitions to the CAS for students who do not meet the established eligibility requirements. The OCSE representative does not vote on the outcome of the petition; rather, OCSE submits the petition for review and informs the discussion as needed.

2) Eligibility Standards and Rationale

The CAS observes certain threshold criteria in determining whether an applicant is sufficiently prepared to succeed in their off-campus study experience; this includes a minimum GPA requirement. To be eligible to study off campus, students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 at the time of applying for their program.

Specific Requirements for All Students: Skidmore requires applicants for off-campus study to present the following evidence of their academic and personal preparedness for success on the host program:

- A minimum 2.750 cumulative GPA.
- Appropriate academic background and performance levels for the program to which the student is applying.
- Completion of appropriate all-College requirements based on the student's year of study and major or an acceptable plan for completing such requirements. The student must have declared a major prior to applying to OCSE.
- A clear academic and social integrity record as determined by the Associate Dean of the Faculty and the Director of Student Conduct who oversee integrity issues.
- Good academic standing. Students who are on academic probation or waiver (and thus not meeting Skidmore's standards for continuation) are not eligible to apply for or participate in off-campus study. Students who have been approved for off-campus study but then go on to earn academic probation or fall below continuation standards will be disqualified from studying off campus and administratively withdrawn from their program (see "Maintaining Standards after the CAS Approval" below).

a) GPA Petition Review: The CAS will consider petitions from students whose cumulative GPA falls between 2.749 and 2.500. Students with below a 2.500 cumulative GPA are allowed to petition the CAS for an exception to the GPA requirement; however, it is extremely rare for the

CAS to grant such an exception. Students should consult with OCSE prior to petitioning to discuss the strength of their petition. Students submit the following to OCSE:

- **Student Transcript:** Strong petitions are based on an academic record that demonstrates either a preponderance of work in the B- range from one semester to the next across various disciplines or an upward trajectory from one semester to the next. CAS understands that one poor semester early in the first year on campus can have a tremendous impact on a student's cumulative GPA. Special attention will be paid to the cumulative GPA in the major.
- **Personal Statement:** Students submit a one (1) page personal statement, written by the student, that explains the reasons for the lower GPA and concrete plans for ensuring a successful term while studying off campus. The statement should also outline the student's academic background and interests as they relate to and support the proposed off-campus study program; articulate the student's academic and personal strengths in relation to the challenges of studying off campus; and describe the student's academic and cultural learning goals as they relate to the proposed off-campus study program.
- **Faculty Recommendations:** Petitions include two letters of support from Skidmore faculty that speak to the student's academic abilities and classroom behavior patterns (e.g., intellectual commitment, diligence, reliability) and offer evidence of the student's ability to succeed while studying off campus. CAS may also request further testimony directly from faculty.

Review Process:

- OCSE has a designated representative who presents student petitions to the CAS; this OCSE representative does not vote on the CAS decision.
- All students wishing to present a petition to CAS must meet with an OCSE advisor to discuss the petition process and their individual petitions. Students are responsible for arranging this meeting.
- The CAS meets once a week during the academic year. The OCSE representative to the CAS presents student GPA petitions to the CAS during these weekly meetings. Petitions are reviewed by the CAS only during those weekly meetings.
- Students must meet deadlines established by OCSE to allow for processing of the application prior to the CAS meeting. If the established deadline is not met, the student's petition will be presented to the CAS the following week.
- Students, faculty, and parents cannot appear in person to present or support the student's petition to the committee at any time.
- OCSE will inform students of the CAS's decision within 3 business days of the CAS decision.

The CAS considers all petitions on an individual basis, and, therefore, may approve a 2.500 and/or deny a 2.700 based on the quality of the student's personal statement and faculty recommendations, as well as a demonstrated improvement in academic record. The CAS also looks for demonstrated maturity and self-discipline indicating that the student is likely to succeed in the face of the additional challenges off-campus study presents.

Other factors that CAS could consider include the student's previous experience with the host culture of the program abroad (or successful experience with other cultures), fluency in the language needed for success in the program abroad, and the academic focus of the program and how it relates to the student's area of academic strength. A student's record of co-curricular and related accomplishments may suggest personal and intellectual qualities that help prepare the student for off-campus study. Such evidence may be considered as a complement to the

academic record but not as a substitute for solid academic achievement or as an explanation for why the academic record is not stronger.

Based upon the consideration of the individual petition there are a few possible outcomes:

1. The student could be approved.
2. The student could be denied.
3. The student could be asked to provide additional information for consideration before a decision is made.

3) Maintaining Standards after the CAS Approval

All students approved for international or domestic off-campus study, whether through petition or not, must maintain good academic and social standing at the College prior to the semester they are studying away. At the end of each semester, the Registrar generates a summary list of term and cumulative GPAs for all students studying off-campus. All students who have a cumulative GPA below 2.749 AND a term GPA between 2.5 and 2.0 or who demonstrate a significant drop in their academic record will be reviewed by the Associate Dean of the Faculty, the Chair of the CAS, and the Director of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges.

Note: The end-of-term GPA review could result in an administrative withdrawal from a previously approved program.

Students who earn academic probation (term or cumulative GPA below 2.000) or otherwise fail to meet continuation standards during the term prior to their approved off-campus study will be automatically withdrawn from their program. The student will be permitted to register for classes at Skidmore or take a leave of absence from Skidmore. When the student is administratively withdrawn from off-campus study due to academic concerns, the student will remain responsible for all financial obligations as determined by Skidmore and the sponsoring program. If the student has already arrived at their off-campus study destination or has already begun their off-campus study program at the time of their administrative withdrawal, the student must depart their program immediately. The student will be responsible for the cost of departing their off-campus program.

4) Students Studying Off-Campus Outside of the Junior Year

Students who will not be juniors at the time they study off campus will be required to submit a one-page statement and a letter of faculty support (for first-year students, preferably from the instructor of the student's Scribner Seminar). The statement should indicate why the student wants to study off-campus outside the junior year; sophomores should demonstrate a level of maturity and ability to successfully manage the challenges of off-campus study, while seniors should focus on their academic plans for the remainder of their time at Skidmore and the impact on their graduation timeline. The purpose of the faculty letter is to indicate that the student has advisor/departmental support and can graduate as planned.

OCSE will request and review a degree audit from the Registrar's Office and will meet with students whose materials raise questions regarding their academic plans or reasons for studying off campus in the proposed semester.

Note: All students with below a 2.750 GPA, regardless of class year, must still submit a petition to the Committee on Academic Standing for an exception to the GPA requirement.

5) Limit to Number of Semesters Abroad with Same Program Provider

Students may not participate in programs offered by the same non-Skidmore program provider for more than two semesters. For example, a student is not allowed to participate in three semester-long IFSA programs during their time at Skidmore. Students who participate in Skidmore programs are not limited to the number of semesters they may participate in any Skidmore program. Note: Skidmore's First-Year Experience in London is a Skidmore program and does not count toward the number of provider programs a student may pursue.

6) Students who Choose to Study Off-Campus without OCSE Approval

Skidmore will not accept any credit for semester- or year-long off-campus study programs that have not gone through the OCSE approval process; a leave of absence cannot be used to circumvent the CAS eligibility requirements or OCSE's program approval process. Except in the special circumstance of international students taking courses from institutions located in their home country, a student cannot take a leave of absence and transfer credit from an international program or institution or from institutions available through Skidmore's established portfolio of approved domestic programs. Students should consult with OCSE regarding the non-approved program petition process if they wish to participate in an international program that is currently not part of OCSE's approved programs list.

E. Acceleration and Reclassification

Acceleration requests are reviewed for their completeness and feasibility by the Office of the Registrar and given to the CAS for approval. The CAS routinely approves accelerations for students with relatively strong records, assuming that the acceleration plan preserves the quality of the student's academic experience. If the plan requires semesters of "overload," the overload criteria (see above II.A.3) come into play. The student is not actually reclassified until they complete the requisite number of semester hours for a particular class year.

Reclassification may be requested by a student or, of necessity, decided by the Office of the Registrar (because the student has fallen too far behind his or her original class year). Most reclassifications are routine and are simply reported in the CAS minutes.

F. Transfer Credits

The large majority of transfer credit decisions are handled directly by the Office of the Registrar, often in consultation with department chairs. There are a few transfer questions which need review by the CAS:

- 1) Elective Credit which may not meet the criteria ordinarily used by the Office of the Registrar;
- 2) Maturity-Level Credit: in an effort to preserve some minimal core of advanced-level Skidmore course work for each student's Skidmore degree, the CAS grants only a limited amount of transfer credit toward the 24 semester hours of Skidmore maturity credit.

For personal or medical leaves of absence the CAS may, at its discretion, under a few compelling circumstances, approve eight or more semester hours of maturity-level credit for study at another institution.⁴ The transfer of credits will necessarily follow the guidelines outlined in

⁴ The Registrar may approve up to 12 maturity-level credits from another institution; petitions for more than 12 are brought before the CAS.

Section II, C, "Leaves of Absence."

CAS does not limit the amount of maturity level credit that may be awarded for transfer for students participating in an approved off-campus study program. Maturity level credit is approved by the department or academic program in consultation with the Registrar.

1) Summer School Transfer Courses: the CAS has approved and published criteria for the acceptance of summer school transfer credit, and these criteria are routinely administered by the Office of the Registrar. Students participating on non-Skidmore study abroad programs during the summer may receive transfer credit for their courses. These students must complete an approval form through the Registrar's office. The course(s) must comply with all the qualifications and policies listed on the Registrar's form. In addition, this form must be signed by the Director of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges prior to submission to the Registrar's office. A maximum of 16 credits can be earned in a summer: 8 in one session + 8 in a second session.⁵ With the exception of Skidmore-approved abroad and domestic programs, students may earn no more than 8 maturity level credits away from Skidmore.

2) Transfer Credits for Other Off-Campus Study: on occasion the CAS may be asked by the Office of Academic Advising, the Office of the Registrar, or the Director of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges to review the possibility of giving transfer credit to programs with which we are unfamiliar or which are not themselves sponsored academically by an accredited college or university (or are accredited by an agency which we don't usually recognize). In such cases, it has been CAS practice to review course descriptions and syllabi, faculty credentials, and the general academic tenor and educational purposes of the sponsoring organization. The CAS is particularly concerned with the academic credibility of the proposed experience and its potential connection to liberal arts and science education.

3) Advanced Standing: a matriculating student can earn credit at Skidmore for a maximum of sixteen semester hours through any combination of Advanced Placement (AP) examinations, the International Baccalaureate Program (IB), other testing programs as indicated below, or college courses transcribed by accredited post-secondary institutions that simultaneously contribute to the high school diploma. Course work will be evaluated using the College's transfer credit policies.

Unless specifically designated by a department (see AP credits below), none of these credits may be used to meet Skidmore all-College, major, or minor requirements. Credits will be used toward graduation requirements and will be awarded as general elective credits.

4) Credit by Examination: four credit hours will be awarded toward graduation to those achieving a grade of 4 or 5 on an Advanced Placement Test of the College Entrance Examination Board. Such credit will count as elective credit toward the degree. Individual departments may award credit toward the major. Inquiries should be directed to the chair of the department in question.

⁵ As of fall 2014, the Registrar's office, on behalf of the CAS, approves or denies petitions for nine credits per session. Petitions should include a detailed work and study schedule.

The college will grant four semester hours of credit for each examination taken at the Advanced ("A") Level of the British General Certificate of Education on which the student received a grade of C or better. Also, four semester hours of credit will be granted for each Higher Level Examination in the International Baccalaureate Program on which a student earned a score of 5, 6, or 7. Four credits will also be awarded for each German Abitur examination on which the student earns a score of 10–15.

A maximum of twelve semester hours of credit may be granted through subject examinations of the College Level Examination Program. All such examinations presented must be taken prior to enrollment at Skidmore.

The college will also grant two semester hours of credit for each examination taken at the Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level of the BGCE on which the student received a grade of C or better.

5) Transfer of Outside College Credits to Skidmore: the College may grant credit toward the degree for work taken at another accredited institution for which a grade of C or better is received, to a maximum of sixty semester hours. The maximum of sixteen credits of advanced standing work described above are included in this sixty hour total. Transcripts from students who are transferring from a non-U.S. institution will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. All transferable courses must generally correspond to courses offered at Skidmore. Matriculated students should receive approval for credit from the Office of the Registrar before registering at another institution. More detailed information regarding transfer credit policies is available on the Registrar's Office web site.

If college course work taken while in high school, presented on an official transcript from an accredited institution, can be verified by the high school guidance counselor as being above and beyond work required to meet high school graduation requirements, Skidmore will evaluate the work as regular transfer credit, and those credits may be used to meet Skidmore all-College, major, or minor requirements as appropriate, following the policies stated on the Registrar's Office web site.

Note: these CAS decisions are distinct from proposed academic "affiliations," which are reviewed by CEPP.

G. Course Accommodations and Substitutions (Revised 10/15)

1) Course Accommodations: Course accommodations will be made according to documented evidence of disability on an interactive case-by-case basis. The Coordinator of Student Access Services (CSAS) will evaluate the request using current and required documentation. If the CSAS determines that learning barriers created by the disability can be removed or mitigated through the implementation of accommodations, the CSAS will provide the relevant department or program with those approved accommodations. The department or program will evaluate the impact of these accommodations on the particular course for which the student would like to register to ensure that the accommodations do not interfere with the essential nature of the course. If significant concerns are raised, the CSAS will work with the department or program and the student to identify alternative and equally effective accommodations.

2) Course Substitutions: When a student requests a course substitution for an all-College requirement or a requirement within the major or minor,⁶ the Coordinator of Student Access Services (CSAS) will evaluate the request in relation to the nature and severity of the disability. This review will occur on an interactive case-by-case basis utilizing current and required documentation. If the CSAS determines that learning barriers created by the disability can be removed or mitigated through the implementation of accommodations, the CSAS will provide the relevant department or program with those approved accommodations (G.1). In cases where the student's disability is so severe that they cannot complete the course with accommodations, the CSAS will forward the request to the CAS. The request will include suggestions for specific course substitutions.

In the case of a substitution request for an all-College requirement, the CAS will evaluate the substitution to assure that it does not fundamentally alter the essential outcomes or competencies addressed by the all-College requirements. In the case of a substitution request for a major or minor requirement, the CAS will consult with the relevant department or program to ensure that the substitution does not fundamentally alter the essential nature of the degree program. Students should be aware that decisions regarding course substitutions made prior to a declaration of major or a change of major will be reviewed and may be rescinded if the CAS concludes that the substituted course is essential to the student's chosen degree program. Final approval of a student's substitution request rests with the CAS.

Students seeking a course substitution must initiate the process with the CSAS no later than two semesters before the requirement is to be fulfilled (students must consult with the CSAS no later than the second semester of their sophomore year; students seeking a substitution for the Language Study requirement⁷ must consult the CSAS no later than the second semester of their junior year). The Registrar's Office handles routine substitution requests (substitutions to the Language Study component of the Foundations requirement) on behalf of the CAS. All other substitution requests are considered by the CAS.

There are a few additional circumstances in which the CAS will consider substituting Skidmore courses. For example, the CAS occasionally receives requests to substitute upper-level courses for the breadth courses designated in the Catalog. If the appropriate department supports the substitution, the CAS usually concurs. In these cases, students may receive maturity credit and credit towards the breadth requirement.

3) Waivers of Course Requirements for the Skidmore Degree: In extraordinary cases and only after considering the potential efficacy of course accommodations and/or substitutions will the

⁶ The usual practice for course substitutions within a major or minor has left the decision to the department chair or program director. In the spring of 2023, in consultation with the Coordinator of Student Access Services, the ADOF, and the chair of Chemistry, the chair of Health & Human Physiological Sciences agreed to a substitution for CH125 due to the students' diagnosed dyscalculia, a learning disability since childhood that prevented the student from certain kinds of information processing and analysis. The student was informed of the potential impact on future employment opportunities as a result of not having studied general principles of chemistry at the college level.

⁷ This was the "Foreign Language" requirement for those students who entered prior to 2000.

CAS consider waiving an all-College course requirement for the Skidmore degree. The CAS does not waive or modify other degree requirements, including specific requirements related to majors or minors, the amount or distribution of credit earned for the baccalaureate degree, or the student's cumulative or major GPA. Course requirements refer specifically to the elements of Skidmore's general education curriculum.

When a student requests a waiver for a course requirement, the Coordinator of Student Access Services will evaluate the request in relation to the nature and severity of the disability. This review will occur on an interactive case-by-case basis utilizing current and required documentation. The Coordinator may request additional documentation from the student and/or consult with appropriate experts in applicable fields, including the student's previous educators, to explore the nature and impacts of the disability and the potential effectiveness of requested accommodation. The Coordinator may also explore accommodations not requested by the student. If the Coordinator determines that learning barriers created by the disability can be removed or mitigated through the implementation of accommodations, the Coordinator will provide the relevant Department or Program with those approved accommodations (see G.1 above). In cases where the student's disability is so severe that s/he cannot complete the required course with accommodations, the Coordinator will determine whether a course substitution may allow the student to complete the degree requirement (see G.2 above). In all cases, the implementation of accommodation—requested by the student or suggested by the Coordinator—will be considered before a waiver request is forwarded to the CAS.

Only in the exceptional case when it is determined that accommodations and/or a course substitution cannot afford the student a demonstrable opportunity to complete the requirement will the CSAS forward the student's waiver request to the CAS. The CSAS will provide a rationale for the waiver request that informs the CAS of the types of accommodations and substitutions that were considered but deemed inappropriate or unlikely to be effective. Final approval of a student's waiver request rests with the CAS.

In general, the CAS prefers to broadly interpret essential learning goals for specific degree requirements and approve course substitutions rather than waive requirements outright. In general, the CAS expects the student to have exhausted all other options for accommodation, which may include a reduced course load and/or an attempted course substitution, prior to seeking a waiver. The CAS does not consider GPA concerns when evaluating a waiver request but the CSAS's assessment of the student's ability to meet the requirement through accommodation and/or substitution.

H. Progress Toward the Degree (revised 5/12)

In addition to the minimal standards for continuation which the CAS establishes (with faculty approval), monitors, and interprets, the CAS reviews the records of students who have not completed all the appropriate all-College requirements by their specified deadlines. Students in this situation are considered during Academic Review in June. In most cases, the CAS will grant a one-semester waiver of minimal standards so that the student may improve his or her academic standing by taking an appropriate course during the next semester of study. During the next semester of study, the student will be "on waiver" and thus ineligible for any opportunities dependent on the student's academic standing (such as study abroad or participation in student government or athletics).

The CAS is particularly concerned about students who fail their Scribner Seminar. The academic record and rationale of students in this situation will be carefully considered by the CAS during Academic Review for evidence that the student can improve his or her standing with another semester of study.

Students may petition the CAS to delay fulfillment of an all-College requirement. Routine petitions are approved by the Office of Academic Advising. Petitions should be presented one semester prior to the deadline for the requirement so that the student may enroll in an appropriate course (prior to the deadline) if the petition is denied.

I. Eligibility for August Graduation

The CAS, guided by the Office of the Registrar, is responsible for approving students for graduation. The CAS, represented by the Registrar, presents the candidates for graduation to the faculty at a special meeting each May. Before that point the CAS reviews the records of students who have not yet met all graduation requirements (both course and GPA requirements) but who might be able to do so by the August after graduation. In deciding whether a student should remain on the May graduation list (with an asterisk indicating August graduation), and thus be allowed to participate in all Commencement exercises, the CAS determines whether it is “mathematically possible and academically feasible” (CAS decision of May 5, 1989) for the student to graduate by August. The completion plan must also possess “educational integrity.” If the student's plan for completing remaining degree requirements does not meet these criteria, the CAS will not approve the student for inclusion on the graduation list (the student is then reclassified for a later time of graduation).

(Comment: the CAS criteria are an effort to preserve the quality of the student's degree and academic experience and to present to the faculty a credible graduation list for their approval. The CAS never approves for graduation in May a student who has not fully met every GPA criterion and course requirement: a departure of this sort, except for “course substitutions” as defined above, would require a vote by the full faculty.)

J. Eligibility for College and Departmental Honors at Graduation

The CAS, with information provided by the Office of Academic Advising and the Office of the Registrar, approves candidates for honors at graduation. Departmental Honors are based on GPA, the student's academic integrity record, and the support of the major department; College Honors (cum laude, etc.) are based solely on cumulative GPA and academic integrity information. There is no departure from the published criteria.

K. Disqualifications and Waivers

1) General Guidelines: The most difficult task of the CAS occurs every January and June as the CAS reviews the records of students who have not met minimum standards for continuation. The Office of the Registrar supplies the data for these considerations, and the individual cases are presented to the CAS by the Office of Academic Advising.

All students who fail to meet minimum standards at the close of the semester are automatically

reviewed by the CAS except in the case of juniors and seniors who have not achieved a 2.000 GPA in the major. In such cases, the student may petition to change his or her major prior to review. Petitions are granted by the CAS based on the student's academic rationale, prior history in the new major, and the feasibility of degree completion. Students who meet minimal standards for continuation upon changing majors will not be reviewed further by the CAS. Students who decline to change their major will be reviewed by the CAS.

The CAS has three options when a student has not met minimal standards:

- a)** The student may be disqualified from continuing studies at Skidmore. All cases are reviewed, first, according to the "minimum standards for continuation" established by the Faculty. Any departures from these criteria are made on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration the decline or improvement in the student's record, the quality of the previous high school record (as a measure of potential and promise), the academic and numerical feasibility of the student's being able to improve the record sufficiently, extenuating problems of a serious medical or personal nature, etc. When an Opportunity Program (HEOP/AOP) student has failed to meet minimal standards, the CAS invites the OP office to provide recommendations to the Committee. The Committee then considers these recommendations in relation to other student records under review.
- b)** The student may be granted a one-semester waiver in order to improve their academic record. Unless otherwise stated, students on waiver are expected to enroll as full-time students and earn 12 or more credits during their waiver semester. If the CAS believes the student should have a second chance of this sort, but that one semester would not be sufficient for the student to meet continuation standards, the CAS may require the waiver student to meet a specified GPA by the conclusion of the next semester of study or to be disqualified at that time. If the student meets the specified mark, then CAS may grant a second waiver with a new stipulation. A student studying at Skidmore on a waiver may be required, at the discretion of the CAS and/or the Office of Academic Advising, to meet regularly with an academic advisor.
- c)** In rare cases, when we know a student has experienced very serious problems that still need to be addressed, the CAS may require the student to take a leave of absence for a semester, followed by a one-semester waiver. The CAS uses this option very sparingly, only when we believe the student needs time away from the College. With the approval of the CAS, the leave/waiver student may be required to take one or two courses at another institution for transfer to Skidmore while the student is on leave.

The OAA communicates decisions on disqualifications and waivers to the students and their families on behalf of the CAS. Appeals from any CAS decision must be based on new and compelling evidence and must be addressed only to the chair of the Committee on Academic Standing or to the ADOF. If either the chair or dean believes that significant new evidence is available, either party may re-convene the CAS for further consideration.

(Comment: it has been the general experience of the CAS that appeals from disqualification decisions are rarely successful. The Committee almost always has sufficient evidence at hand to reach its decisions, and the Committee takes great care to compare the different cases in an equitable way and to take into account all serious extenuating factors. The Committee's decisions are, moreover, made in the context of all other DQ decisions. A subsequent appeal from an individual student may require the CAS to reconsider a number of its previous decisions.)

Summer (or January) academic work completed at Skidmore or elsewhere will not alter a waiver or probation student's academic standing or their eligibility for extra- or co- curricular activities the following semester (e.g., eligibility for participation in athletics, Student Government, etc.).

2) Social Integrity Information and Academic Review (Approved by CAS 12/03)

As of the 2004 January Academic Review meeting, and at CAS's discretion, information about students' social integrity records at the College may be incorporated into the Committee's deliberations. Social integrity information may help guide CAS decision-making in regards to the granting of Waivers of Minimum Standards to students by shedding light on the advisability and feasibility of such decisions as well as the students' potential for academic success. Prior to Academic Review, the ADOF will solicit social integrity and other information from academic advisors; Deans and/or Associate Deans in Admissions, Student Affairs, or Academic Affairs; staff in Student Academic Services; Campus Life; Athletics; and Residential Life for each student undergoing review. Social integrity and other information provided by these offices and individuals will be considered in the context of the student's overall academic and social profile at the College.

In all DQ considerations, the CAS is much more concerned about the quality of the transcript record than about small shortages of earned semester hours. The CAS gives special consideration to first-semester, first-year students, and in most cases gives them a one-term waiver or requires them to take a leave for a semester followed by a one-term waiver rather than disqualify them. Effective June 2004, CAS decided that first-year students enrolled in Skidmore's London Program will be required to meet the same first semester minimal standards as first-year students.

2) Academic Integrity Information and Academic Review (Approved by CAS 1/26/06)

CAS includes academic integrity violation information in Academic Review sessions.

L. Readmission

Application for readmission to the College is made through the Office of Academic Advising. The more routine readmissions (for example, students who wish to return after previously withdrawing from Skidmore for personal, academic, or professional reasons; students who were administratively withdrawn after exceeding the maximum number of consecutive terms on leave) are decided by the Office of Academic Advising and reported to the CAS. The CAS regularly reviews readmission requests in which the student's previous academic record is at issue. Students who were disqualified from Skidmore must usually wait for one year before applying for readmission. In the case of disqualified first-year students, the waiting period has sometimes been reduced to one semester. The CAS bases its readmission decisions primarily on the student's previous Skidmore record, the evidence of a subsequent college record, the likelihood that the student can be academically successful at Skidmore, and the availability of courses in the student's field(s) of interest (CAS memo Nov. 8, 1988). At certain times (especially as we consider the numbers of incoming and returning students for the fall semester), the CAS may be limited in the number of students it can consider for readmission. The number of available slots is determined by the "Numbers Meeting" at the College.

M. Academic Eligibility Standards for Skidmore Student Athletes (Athletic Council & CAS 3/15)

- 1) The Director of Athletics will maintain accurate, up-to-date rosters of all competing athletes according to class year, sport, and semester(s) of sport involvement. These rosters will be disseminated at regular intervals to the Office of Academic Advising, Office of the Registrar, and the Associate Dean of the Faculty. This information will enable the Office of Academic Advising to respond more effectively to any athlete whose academic performance is slipping (just as we do for all students), especially to prompt a discussion with students regarding the balance of time commitments between academics and athletics.
- 2) Information concerning a student athlete's poor academic performance will also be communicated periodically to the Athletic Director who, in turn, will notify the relevant coach who will meet with the student athlete to help the athlete fulfill his or her academic responsibilities. The faculty advisor, the coach, and the Athletic Director all have the same goal – which is to be sure that the student athlete is academically successful and knows about the available academic support services and the academic standards expected of them in order to earn a Skidmore degree.
- 3) According to Division III bylaws, in order “to represent an institution in intercollegiate athletics, a student athlete must be enrolled in at least a minimum full-time program of studies” (Division III Bylaw 14.01.2). At Skidmore this minimum is 12 semester hours each term.
- 4) A student athlete who has failed to meet any of Skidmore's semester-by-semester minimum continuation standards, as determined by the Committee on Academic Standing in its application of faculty-approved progress standards and is thus placed on a one-semester “waiver” from those standards, will not be eligible to practice with or play on the intercollegiate sports teams. However, in extraordinary circumstances, an exemption from the waiver may be granted at the discretion of the Committee on Academic Standing after consultation with the Athletic Director.
- 5) Summer (or January) academic work completed at Skidmore or elsewhere will not alter a waiver student's academic standing or his or her athletic eligibility for the following semester.

N. Disruptive Student Withdrawal Procedure (draft of August 11, 2003; revised 10/31/03, 11/11/03, 11/19/03, 1/24/04, 1/29/04; 9/4/12 approved by CAS, and 1/28/13 approved by CAFR)

1) Overview: Central to Skidmore's philosophy is a commitment to freedom of thought, expression, and behavior. The College is also committed to providing supportive assistance to students who may be experiencing academic or personal difficulties. It is never the intention of the College to stifle debate, to discourage the expression of different and provocative points of view, to prescribe a particular behavior pattern in the classroom, or to exclude students from the educational opportunities provided at Skidmore without serious cause. Any initiative to require a student to withdraw from a classroom must reflect Skidmore's care and concern for its students' well-being and for their rights and freedoms.

The College also takes seriously the responsibility of all members of a learning community to interact in a respectful and civil manner in every area of community life. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior that subverts the efforts of faculty and students to pursue the teaching and learning process cannot be sanctioned. In some extreme cases of disruptive and/or disrespectful student behavior in the classroom, it may be necessary for an instructor to request the withdrawal of a student from a class in order to insure the educational rights of other

students, to protect the personal and pedagogical rights of the instructor, or to protect the personal or academic well-being of an individual student.

If a very serious case needing immediate intervention arises, College officials may draw on policy and procedure already outlined in the Student Handbook, which states that “the College has the right and obligation to act upon conduct not in accord with the informing principles of the Honor Code or codes of conduct. Violations of the Skidmore Honor Code and code of conduct include obstruction or disruption of teaching or other educational activities on the College campus or other property used for educational purposes.” If the instructor confronts an issue requiring swift attention, they should consult immediately with the department chair or program director and the ADOF, who may recommend to the Dean of Student Affairs that the student withdraw from, or be withdrawn from, the class. The Director of Campus Safety may be asked in these situations to interview the student and others who may have witnessed the disruptive behavior. The Director of Campus Safety also has the authority to intervene immediately in any seriously disruptive situation. If the student's withdrawal from the class is the only viable course of action, the student may be allowed to withdraw immediately with a grade of W or WF or be required to do so by the Dean of Student Affairs.

2) Definitions of Disruptive Classroom Behavior:

- a) The student routinely or periodically exhibits language or behavior that makes it difficult for instructional activities to continue.
- b) The student on one or more occasions exhibits language or behavior of such a disturbing, disrespectful, or threatening nature as to make the student's return to class untenable.

3) Procedures

- a) Whenever the situation allows, the College will try to resolve behavioral conflicts through a deliberative process. Thus, in cases of disruptive behavior not requiring immediate intervention from the Dean of Students/Vice President for Student Affairs and/or Campus Safety (as described above), the instructor should speak with the student privately and in a confidential setting; however, if the behavior seems threatening to the instructor, they should ask the department chair or program director and/or the ADOF to join the initial discussion. (Here, too, the Director of Campus Safety may be asked to aid the process.) The conversation should occur soon after the first sign of disruptive behavior, and the instructor should express clearly the difficulties caused by the student's behavior and describe the changes in behavior that need to take place. If appropriate, the instructor may recommend that the student seek help from the Counseling Center. The instructor is advised to give the student a written summary of expectations and should also retain a documented record of the student's disruptive behavior and of all interactions they have with the student regarding the behavior. (Instructor notes should focus entirely on the behavior itself, not speculate regarding motives or underlying causes of the behavior.)
- b) If the disruptive behavior persists after the first conversation, the instructor should seek the advice and intervention of the department chair or program director and the ADOF, both of whom can help the instructor consider alternative classroom strategies, can speak directly with the student about the situation, or can move to the procedure in (d) below. If the consulting group believes that the student behavior might still be ameliorated, the ADOF will prepare a formal letter for the student that outlines the faculty member's expectations regarding

acceptable (and unacceptable) classroom behavior. The Dean will also indicate in the same letter their recommendation in the event there is a recurrence of unacceptable behavior (for example, immediate withdrawal from the course). Copies of this letter will go to the instructor and the department chair.

c) If an involuntary withdrawal seems necessary, the decision-making process will be as follows (except when, as described above, the case has required immediate intervention by Campus Safety and/or the Dean of Students/Vice President for Student Affairs): the instructor, the department chair or program director, and the ADOF will interview the student when possible (if this has not already occurred) and make their recommendation to the Dean of Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Students/Vice President for Student Affairs (a letter from the ADOF may already be on file as a result of action in (b) above). If the department chair or program director is also the instructor of the class, then a tenured, senior member of the department or program will join this deliberation. A recommendation for course withdrawal requires the concurrence of the instructor and one other member of the consulting team (either the department chair, the program director, or the ADOF).

d) The Dean of Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Students/Vice President for Student Affairs will determine whether the student should be withdrawn from the class or whether a different course of action is more appropriate. Under most circumstances the student will receive a grade of “W” (or a “WF” if appropriate). If the deadline has passed, CAS will deliberate on any petitions for change in status.

4) All Off-Campus Study Programs, including Faculty-Led Programs

While all students must be mindful of how their deportment affects their peers’ ability to learn, such consideration of others is particularly important for students enrolled in off-campus study programs. Such programs often require students to work together as a group to ensure both that all students can achieve the program’s learning goals and that all students are safe. This property of off-campus study requires a broader definition of disruptive behavior. Behaviors that can trigger the Disruptive Student Withdrawal Procedure in an off-campus study program are—in addition to those listed in 2) above—the following:

a) A pattern of risky, questionable and/or unstable behavior. This consistent pattern of behavior can create stressors and tensions, disrupting the program and jeopardizing the group’s and the program’s ability to function as designed.

b) Serious or repeated provocative, threatening, or demeaning statements directed toward one or more members of the class, the instructor(s), or the program staff. Statements of this nature create tensions or even divisions within the group that impair the program’s ability to function.

c) Serious or repeated disrespectful treatment of program staff, guides, transportation personnel, or other service providers. Disrespectful conduct contravenes Skidmore College’s values and interferes with the delivery of a successful off-campus study program.

d) Repeated lateness or other failure to fully attend all scheduled curricular and co-curricular activities. Lateness and absenteeism disrupt the program and jeopardize the group’s and the program’s ability to keep its commitments.

A program instructor or staff member who believes that a student's behavior fits into any of the above categories should follow as closely as possible the procedures described in 3) above. If efforts by the program instructor or staff member to persuade the student to cease the behavior are unavailing, then they should consult with the Director of OCSE immediately. The Director of OCSE will consult with the Associate Dean of the Faculty and the Office of Student Conduct as necessary. Possible repercussions for disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, a written warning and, if the incident is egregious enough, removal from the course or the program. These protocols pertain to all off-campus study, whether a Skidmore or non-Skidmore program, a semester-long or short-term faculty-led program. In the case of Skidmore faculty-led programs, the Skidmore faculty member should contact the Director of OCSE who will consult with the ADOF and the Office of Student Conduct and, as appropriate and necessary, relevant department chairs or program directors. In the case of a non-Skidmore program (i.e. a semester-long provider program), the on-site staff will contact the Director of OCSE who will consult with the ADOF and the Office of Student Conduct and will collaborate with the provider to navigate any differences between Skidmore's policies and the provider's policies.

Possible repercussions for disruptive behavior on any off-campus study program include, but are not limited to, a written warning, removal from the relevant course, and, if the incident is egregious enough, removal from the program itself. If removed from the program, students will return to their home city immediately at their own expense. In all cases, the disruptive behavior will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and the incident could be further adjudicated when the student returns to campus.

O. Policies on Leaves, Withdrawals, Failures, Transfers, and First-Year Student Deferrals

(vetted by CAS and CEPP, Fall 2007; Reported to the Faculty, 2008; updated February 2013 and 2016)

1. Introduction: Skidmore requires all incoming first-year students to be enrolled in a Scribner Seminar during the fall semester of their first year. The heavy mentoring component and emphasis on academic transition make these seminars the keystone of the "First-Year Experience." Scribner Seminars are only available in the fall semester, and enrollment is open exclusively to first-year students.

In the event that an international first-year student requiring an F1 visa, despite their best and timely efforts, fails to secure a visa prior to the start of the fall term, the student may petition CAS to begin their studies in the spring semester. The CAS will consult with Student Academic Services and the Office of the First-Year Experience, among other relevant offices, to determine if the student's unique circumstances warrant a spring semester start. In the event that visa hardships beyond the student's control so warrant, the director of the FYE may offer an independent study in the spring semester as a substitute for the fall Scribner Seminar, and the student may be permitted to begin their studies at Skidmore in the spring term.

Some students will be unable to complete their Scribner Seminar due to (i) a personal or medical leave of absence taken during the fall semester, (ii) withdrawal, or (iii) failure. The Director of the First-Year Experience (DFYE) and the CAS have developed the following guidelines to determine if and when it makes sense for a student to repeat a Scribner Seminar or to move on with his or her academic program.

2. Procedures

(a) Leaves of Absence

First-year students may apply to take a leave of absence for one or two semesters. Leaves for one semester are not automatically granted. Applications for a one-semester leave during the student's first term should describe the student's academic progress and challenges during their first semester and provide a detailed academic plan that will maximize their chances for success upon return to the College. The DFYE reviews and approves these applications on behalf of CAS. To prepare for their return, students taking a one-semester leave in the fall term must meet with the DFYE prior to their spring registration.

Students who return in the spring semester following a fall-term leave are not required to enroll in a Scribner Seminar the following fall; the interdisciplinary (Scribner Seminar) requirement of the General Education Curriculum is considered fulfilled for these students upon successful completion of the spring term at Skidmore. Students who do not return for or complete the spring term, are required to enroll in a Scribner Seminar. In some cases, when students have demonstrated academic success by completing coursework at another college while they were on leave, the DFYE may waive the Scribner Seminar requirement upon the student's return.

All Skidmore first-year students start in the Fall term and must enroll in one of Skidmore's signature Scribner Seminars. However, in the event that an international first-year student requiring an F1 visa, despite their best and timely efforts, fails to secure a visa prior to the start of the fall term, the student may petition CAS to begin their studies in the spring semester. The CAS will consult with Student Academic Services and the Office of the First-Year Experience, among other relevant offices, to determine if the student's unique circumstances warrant a spring semester start. In the event that visa hardships beyond the student's control so warrant, the director of the FYE may offer an independent study in the spring semester as a substitute for the fall Scribner Seminar, and the student may be permitted to begin their studies at Skidmore in the spring term.

(b) Withdrawals and Failures

Students who seek to withdraw because they are doing poorly in their Scribner Seminar must consult with their faculty instructor and the DFYE to determine if a withdrawal is appropriate. Withdrawal requests are considered by the DFYE according to criteria published in the FYE's Faculty Handbook. Because Scribner Seminars are a required component of the General Education Curriculum and integral to the First Year Experience, the CAS expects withdrawals to be rarely granted. Even if a withdrawal is approved, the student will be considered for disqualification by the CAS during Academic Review for not meeting minimum standards for continuation. Students who fail their Scribner Seminar are also reviewed by the CAS.

During review, the CAS considers the student's academic record as well as the student's transition to Skidmore and engagement with the college community. The CAS pays particular attention to the student's demonstrated success—and potential for improvement—in academic courses of three or more credits. First-year students who are offered a waiver and who failed or withdrew from their Scribner Seminar are not required to enroll in another Scribner Seminar. However, the CAS may require a first-year student on waiver to enroll in one or more academic courses of at least three credits each so that the student may continue to mature as a learner. The interdisciplinary (Scribner Seminar) requirement of the General Education Curriculum will be considered fulfilled when the student returns to good academic standing.

(c) Transfers

All transfer students who have been matriculated at another institution for at least one full semester (12 credits) will be exempt from the Scribner Seminars. They have already made the first-semester transition to college.

P. Other CAS Decisions:

The CAS may make other decisions, as appropriate, on questions relating to academic standing and standards and may initiate proposals on these issues with the Faculty.

APPENDIX ONE

Off-Campus Study GPA Requirement: History (June 2023)

In fall of 2016, the Director of OCSE proposed that the GPA requirement for off-campus study be reduced. The proposal called for a new eligibility requirement of a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.750; students with cumulative GPAs between 2.749 and 2.500 would be allowed to petition the CAS for an exception to the policy. CAS and CEPP approved this policy in November 2016. OCSE's proposal included the following rationale (taken from the proposal 2016 to CAS): The original requirement of a minimum 3.000 cumulative GPA was put into place in 1991 based on rationales that are no longer valid given the shift in Skidmore's goals around international education and intercultural learning. Since that time, Skidmore has moved from viewing study abroad as a privilege to valuing off-campus study as an integral part of students' education at Skidmore. The former GPA requirement can now be seen as a barrier to access to this vital educational opportunity and was reviewed and revised with this in mind. Specifically, the following shifts in rationales were considered carefully when determining the eligibility threshold for off-campus study:

- Our 3.000 GPA requirement no longer aligns with accepted eligibility requirements in the field of international education or at our peer and aspirant schools. The large majority of our peer and aspirant schools require 2.750 or lower. In addition, strong programs that Skidmore has supported for years have reconsidered the need for a 3.000 and have moved to 2.750 or 2.500 as their eligibility threshold. They have done so in response to national conversations regarding GPA as a barrier to access for students from underrepresented groups. Therefore, a lower GPA no longer prohibits students from finding available programs.
- It remains true that a large majority of Skidmore students have a cumulative GPA of 3.000 or above (~82%). However, Skidmore has embraced the philosophy that international and intercultural education are vital to our students' education. The fact that the majority of students have a 3.000 or above does not justify limiting access to this opportunity to those with a GPA below 3.000. From 2011 to 2016, the CAS has embraced this perspective when reviewing student petitions: 97% of GPA petitions between 2.990 and 2.750 were approved in that time. The new GPA threshold allows greater student access and standardizes the CAS's current practice.
- Data show that a student's cumulative GPA prior to studying off campus is not indicative of their ability to succeed while abroad. Students who have petitioned to study abroad due to lower GPAs are just as successful – in some cases more successful – than their peers who did not have to petition. Therefore, the argument that students with GPAs below 3.000 are at higher risk is no longer valid.
- Given that Skidmore has spent many years building solid partnerships with our program providers, a student's academic achievement prior to studying abroad will not affect our relationship with a program provider or students' future access to a specific program. In fact, OCSE spends much more time working with programs on students' behavioral issues than on academic concerns. The rationale that students with lower GPAs disadvantage Skidmore or other Skidmore students no longer applies.

APPENDIX TWO

CAS Report on Academic Honors and Social Integrity Violations (CAS April, 2008)

Introduction

At the end of the academic year 2006-2007, a question arose as to whether a social integrity violation should prevent a student who has otherwise qualified for academic honors at graduation from being awarded those honors. The CAS became a central part of that conversation in no small part because the committee is charged with generating a list of students who are eligible for academic honors and with forwarding that list on to the various departments and programs in which students have majored and from which they might be awarded honors. In the course of our work this year, the CAS has concluded that it should not, and therefore will not, screen the list of students eligible for academic honors for social integrity violations in the way it does for academic integrity violations.

Rationale

Currently, the Office of Academic Advising (OAA) generates the list of students eligible for academic honors on behalf of the CAS. In addition to reviewing student GPAs, the OAA screens the list for students who have committed academic integrity violations during their Skidmore career. In nearly all cases, students who have an academic integrity violation on their record are removed from the list of students eligible for academic honors before that list is passed on to departments and programs. The only exception to this policy involves any case of a student who had committed one academic integrity violation during his or her first year at Skidmore. In those cases, a formal system of appeal and forgiveness allows a student to be eligible for academic honors at graduation.

The fundamental question that emerged last year, as it pertained to the CAS, was whether the committee should also screen the list of eligible students for social integrity violations.

During the course of this academic year, the CAS has reviewed that question. In working through this issue, Tillman Nechtman, Chair of the CAS, met with Maeve Powlick (the Advisor to the Honor Code Commission), Michael Ennis-McMillan (the Dean of Studies/ADOF and a CAS member), Pat Oles (the Dean of Student Affairs), and Don Hastings (the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and the Director of Residential Life who also oversees judicial matters at Skidmore). As well, the full membership of the CAS has engaged in discussions of this matter and has reviewed and endorsed this report.

In addition to submitting this report to the full faculty, the CAS has transmitted copies of the document to the Chair of CEPP, the Honor Code Commission, the Dean of Student Affairs, and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Director of Residential Life.

There are two reasons behind the CAS' conclusion to not screen the list of students eligible for academic honors for social integrity violations: one jurisdictional and the other ideological. On purely jurisdictional grounds, the CAS is charged by the faculty with oversight of matters relevant to "academic" standing. On that ground alone, the committee feels that it fulfills its obligations to the College and the faculty in screening for academic honors eligibility based on academic requirements like GPA and academic integrity violations. The committee would argue that it would be overstepping its mandate and charge were it to begin screening for matters of social integrity.

At the beginning of this year's work, many members of the committee were ideologically committed to the notion that students who have committed serious social integrity violations should be barred from receiving academic honors. However, upon closer inspection, that position has not proven to be sustainable in an equitable, fair, and consistent manner, and the committee has come to conclude that more harm might be done by screening for social integrity violations than will be done by not doing so.

For instance, were the committee to begin screening for social integrity violations, a rubric for which violations should disqualify a student from academic honors and which should not would have to be drawn up. Should rape and arson disqualify a student from honors? We might all agree that they should. Should a drug violation? We might begin to find dissent. Should an alcohol violation? We might find more still. And what of an alcohol violation in the first semester of the first year as opposed to an alcohol violation just days before graduation? Of the 274 members of the graduating class of 2007 who were eligible for all-College honors (representing 45.6% of the class), 39 students (14.2% of the eligible students) had social integrity violations involving alcohol and other drugs (AOD) in their sophomore, junior, or senior years.

That number jumps to 91 (33.2% of the eligible students) if we take into account the group's first year at Skidmore. The numbers will be higher if we take into account other social integrity violations in addition to AOD incidents.

During the course of conversing about this matter, the suggestion has often been made that we might only deny honors to those whose cases have been so severe that they have been convicted of a crime during their Skidmore career. The population of students in this group is certainly smaller than the population involved in alcohol and drug related incidents. However, using convictions as a rubric does not eliminate all questions. We might ask whether we are talking about convictions of misdemeanors or of felonies or of both. Skidmore only actually knows of student convictions as a matter of routine reporting if they happen in Saratoga County. Students convicted of crimes beyond the county are asked to report their conviction to the College, but there is no mechanism to be certain that this happens. As such, even a rubric that screened for convictions would potentially generate inequalities, especially since we have no consistent way of applying standards across departments and programs.

Perhaps more importantly still, the CAS acknowledges the restorative undercurrents of Skidmore's current system of policing social integrity violations. In that system, those students who are deemed to have committed infractions so egregious as to merit their removal from our community are removed. Others are given steps that they must take to clear their record before they are allowed to return to our community as members in good repute. Once they have done so, however, these students are not asked to carry the attaint of their social integrity infraction. Rather, they have paid their dues and are rewarded with renewed standing at Skidmore. The CAS is concerned by the stance that students who are otherwise considered as restored members of our community would be denied academic honors for previous infractions for which they have made recompense as such a policy would undermine the notion of restorative justice that is currently central to the workings of our community's Integrity Board and Social Integrity system.

To be clear, the CAS is not stating that departments and programs cannot draw linkages between academic honors and social integrity violations. Rather, the CAS is reporting to the faculty that it will not be screening the list of students eligible for academic honors for social integrity

violations, and this includes honors in a major, all-College honors (cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude), induction into an honor society, membership in Honors Forum, and academic prizes and awards at Honors Convocation. We do not feel it is within our jurisdiction to do so, and we do not feel confident that we could speak for the full faculty were we actually empowered to generate a rubric that would spell out what circumstances merited denying academic honors for social integrity reasons.

Furthermore, while departments and programs do have the authority to link academic honors and social integrity violations, the CAS does not encourage such linkages at this time. Because no College-wide policy has been put in place and because no College-wide conversation has taken place to discuss this matter, the CAS feels that for individual departments and programs to undertake to link social integrity and academic honors would be to invite inconsistencies and inequities into the College's system of honoring students at graduation.

The CAS is aware that the Honor Code Commission is currently hosting conversations about how Skidmore does, can, and ought to define "honor," and the CAS is happy to continue to support and be a part of those conversations. We believe that only from a campus-wide conversation will the Skidmore community be able to articulate any sort of clear sense of how social and academic integrity might be linked together and joined to the question of graduation honors. Our report here is not intended to short-circuit those sorts of conversations. Indeed, we expect and anticipate that this report might inspire such a conversation. However, for clarity's sake, the CAS does wish it to be on the record that we do not, at this time, screen the list of students eligible for academic honors for social integrity violations before sending the list on to a department or program or before presenting the list to the faculty.

Endorsed by the CAS, 24 April 2008.

APPENDIX THREE

THE ROLE OF THE FACULTY IN RECOMMENDING STUDENTS FOR SKIDMORE DEGREES (Vetted by CAS/CEPP in April 2010. Approved by the Faculty at the April 30, 2010 Faculty Meeting)

Introduction

At the close of every academic year, at a special faculty meeting in May, the faculty routinely assembles to recommend (by vote) that the Board of Trustees approve the list of students qualified to receive their Skidmore degrees.⁸ On a few occasions in the recent past, the faculty has debated the question of whether integrity infractions of a social (not academic) nature should preclude the awarding of honors, or, indeed, if sufficiently serious, the awarding of the degree itself. The Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) addressed itself to the question of honors for students who had committed social integrity violations and presented to the faculty at the May 2008 meeting their carefully considered conclusion that CAS “should not, and therefore will not, screen the list of students eligible for academic honors for social integrity violations in the way it does for academic integrity violations” (The “CAS Report on Academic Honors and Social Integrity Violations,” 14 May 2008). The CAS report did not, however, settle the question of whether integrity violations should be considered in the faculty vote to recommend qualified students for degrees or, indeed, the meaning and importance of the faculty vote in that process.

This document attempts to clarify the role of the faculty in recommending students for their degrees, offers a series of resolutions for faculty conversation and endorsement, and points to the institutional process for determining matters that extend beyond the purview of Academic Affairs.

Be it resolved that

- the Faculty vote regarding the degree list is related specifically to the affirmation that the students on this list have met all academic requirements for the awarding of the degree. No asterisks should appear if the student has met all academic requirements.
- the documents generated for the Faculty Meeting therefore include a footnote as follows:
The names on the list represent those students who have completed or are expected to complete by August 31 all the academic requirements for the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degrees; names of students who are not expected to complete their academic requirements until August 31 are marked with an asterisk. Students who have not met all other requirements (including financial, academic integrity, and social integrity obligations) may have the diploma withheld.
- the students’ names appear in the Commencement Bulletin in the same manner as they do in the documents for the Faculty Meeting, and that the Commencement Bulletin include a note as above.

Rationale

The faculty’s recommendation (by vote) to the Board of Trustees that the Board grant the Skidmore degree to qualified students is not a pro forma exercise; it is a representation to the Board that the faculty stands behind the academic quality of the Skidmore degree. Should a faculty member rise and point out an error in the list, the Office of the Registrar would then make

⁸ An additional winter conferral recommendation meeting will be included following final Board of Trustees approval for a January degree conferral date.

corrections before the final publication of the Commencement Bulletin. No copy is sent to the printer until after the vote has been completed. The faculty, therefore, carries out a powerful symbolic and practical function in affirming the academic qualifications of the students proposed for Skidmore degrees.

Should the faculty also be satisfied that the students whose degrees they are recommending are in good standing with the College as regards financial and integrity matters? While it is indeed the business of the faculty to be assured that any academic integrity matters have been satisfactorily resolved, the question of financial and social integrity is more complex. The matter of finances (whether debts owing to the College have been discharged) has typically been a private transaction between the student and the Office of Financial Affairs. Social integrity issues are even more complex because faculty members are unlikely to be in possession of all the facts necessary to make an informed and responsible judgment; moreover, in some cases, a necessary investigation has not been completed by the time of the faculty vote.

Nevertheless, it is reasonable for faculty members to seek assurances that, even if they themselves are not able to make a judgment about the good social standing of graduating seniors, a process is in place to preserve the integrity of the institution and the integrity of the Skidmore degree. Naturally, we are most concerned about incidents that occur close to graduation, incidents that might require resolution in the courts as well as in the proceedings of our Skidmore Judicial System. In the Student Handbook, you will find the Honor Code, the Student Code of Conduct, and the process to be followed in disciplinary matters even up to dismissal from the College (Skidmore Judicial System) at the following link.

Implementation

After the faculty vote in December of any given year, students who meet all requirements once final fall grades have been processed will have diplomas and transcripts awarded reflecting a January 31 date. (We are awaiting final Board of Trustees approval for this additional conferral date). Any January candidate who fails to meet academic requirements will be reclassified to the most appropriate next graduation period.

Following the faculty vote in May of any given year, students without an asterisk next to their names will be considered as having completed all academic requirements for the Skidmore degree, and the Registrar's Office will process diplomas and final transcripts with a conferral date of May of that year. For students on the May list who are expected to complete academic requirements in August of the same year, an asterisk is placed next to the name to denote the anticipated August completion date. If students indeed fulfill their academic requirements by August 31, the Registrar's Office will process diplomas and final transcripts for those students with the August 31 st date.

The actual release of the diploma or final transcript to individual students by the Registrar's Office depends on students meeting all other College obligations – financial, academic integrity, and social integrity. A student may have the diploma and transcript held pending the resolution of financial obligations, or the satisfaction of any conditions or obligations that result from the College's judicial processes for academic and social integrity. If a student fails to clear their financial obligations or meet the obligations that result from the College's judicial processes for academic and social integrity, the Registrar's Office can hold the student's diploma and transcript indefinitely.

Process for Discussion of this Resolution

- DOF/VPAA Staff
- President's Cabinet
- CEPP
- CAS
- Student Affairs sub-committee of IPPC
- Review by College Counsel
- Faculty discussion hosted by CEPP and CAS