

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC STANDING OPERATING GUIDELINES

Revised Spring 2010

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.)

B. 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; the Dean of Studies or his or her designee, the Registrar and Director of Institutional Research or his or her designee, and two students selected by SGA, one junior to be appointed each year to serve a two-year term. (Faculty Handbook).

(Comment: in practice, the CAS has approved somewhat broader representation from the Office of the Registrar, the Dean of Studies Office, and the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges [formerly the Office of International Programs], for staff from these areas often have critical pieces of information to contribute and also have to explain the CAS decisions to the students affected by them. This expanded participation in CAS meetings can occur only with the consent of the regular CAS membership. In any case, the balance of voting rights on the CAS remains exactly as described in The Faculty Handbook.)

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 insure the integrity and quality of student academic experience, while at the same time taking various student hardships and confusions into account.

D. 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 Dean of Studies Office, the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, or the Chair of the Committee. The Committee generally asks the three administrative offices to act upon very routine requests that clearly fall within CAS guidelines and to report the results to the Committee (e.g., routine medical or personal leaves, academic leaves from well qualified students, 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* and the *Faculty Edition of the Student Academic Handbook*. 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 the Dean of Studies, 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 Dean of Studies Office, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, or occasionally by the 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 aid, residential life).

Students (or faculty) who have concerns or who need clarification on Committee decisions may direct their questions to the offices of the Registrar, Dean of Studies, Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, or to the Chair. If the petitioner has a substantially new perspective or piece of evidence to offer for the Committee's further consideration, he or she 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) Late Drop or Add: students may add or drop a course with their instructors' 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 during the second week of classes may be approved if the student has a valid reason for submitting the drop request late. A drop after this point 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.)

2) 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.

The CAS may 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. In certain severe cases of medical emergency or emotional distress, particularly when a student is seeking multiple or late withdrawals that put the student over the two W limit outlined above, the Office of Academic Advising, in conjunction with other campus offices such as the Counseling Center or Health Services, will strongly advise a student to pursue a medical or personal leave. Approved medical or personal leaves will result in the student being administratively withdrawn from all courses and assigned the grade of L for all courses on that semester's transcript, unless a course grade has already been recorded by the Registrar's Office (see section II.C.1 on Medical and Personal Leaves).

Special Notes on Course Withdrawals (Approved by CAS February 17, 2005)

- Please see the section of the CAS Guidelines below that address "Preapproved Course Load Reductions" (II.A.5) and "Leaves of Absence" (II.C.1) for course withdrawal policies specifically related to personal and medical leaves.
- 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. All petitions to seriously limit one's academic course load will require a withdrawal form, a letter from the student, and appropriate accompanying documentation (such as a letter from a medical professional supporting the limited course load).

- Withdrawals taken while participating in an off-campus study program will appear on the student's transcript and will count toward the 2 withdrawal limitation.

3) Withdrawal from a course due to a medical condition or personal circumstance

CAS reviews petitions from students requesting to exceed the 2 withdrawal limit due to a medical condition or personal circumstance. Similar to reviewing medical leave applications, the CAS applies an ethic of caring about the well being of the student when considering withdrawal petitions due to medical conditions. The CAS recognizes that medical and personal issues present inherently complicated situations that require the committee to consider competing and conflicting concerns. Specifically, CAS balances the important and conflicting needs in the student's personal life with the concerns the College has about academic achievement and fairness. Because there are numerous issues to consider in any particular case, including the nature of the illness, time of semester, prospects for recovery, and so on, the policy grants CAS and the Dean of Studies broad discretion.

When the committee approves an exception to the 2 withdrawal limit due to a medical condition or personal circumstance, then the final grade is registered as a W on the transcript. In other words, there is no withdrawal that does not count even when the student provides medical documentation to support the withdrawal. If CAS does not approve a student's request to exceed the 2 withdrawal limit during a particular semester, then the student must consider alternative options: (a) finish the registered courses; (b) apply for a medical or personal leave of absence that if approved will result in the student being administratively withdrawn from all courses and assigned the grade of L for all courses on that semester's transcript, unless a course grade has already been recorded by the Registrar's Office (see section II.C.1 on Medical and Personal Leaves); or (c) request a Withdrawal Failing (WF) grade for any course that will not be completed.

a) Individual withdrawals: The CAS may make exceptions to the 2 withdrawal limit only when a documented medical condition or personal situation arises that directly affects a student's ability to complete a particular course. A student requesting an exception to the withdrawal policy must support the request with information that demonstrates a direct connection between a medical condition and the inability to complete coursework for a particular course. For example, a student who has an accident resulting in a broken leg may not be able to complete required work for a dance course, or a student with a previously undiagnosed psychiatric condition may not be able to attend a class at a particular time due to side effects of a new medication.

b) Multiple withdrawals: If a student is petitioning for more than two withdrawals in a single semester due to medical reasons, the Associate Dean of the Faculty for Academic Advising will recommend in most cases that the student take a medical leave or personal leave without penalty, particularly if the withdrawals will result in the student dropping from full-time to the equivalent of

part-time status (see section II.C.1 on Medical on Personal Leaves). 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).

4) 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, unless the overload would likely diminish the quality of the student's culminating academic experience. Overloads are never approved above 20 semester hours and 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. Students may never earn more than 20 semester hours in a semester.

5) Preapproved 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 for Students with Disabilities no later than two weeks prior to the start of each semester. Preapproved reduced course loads are meant to assist students whose impairment significantly limits their ability to manage a full-time course load and 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, it would be unreasonable for a student to manage a full-time course schedule.

B. Grades and Grading: (Revised and Approved by CAS April 2010)

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 his or her 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 he or she has a conflict of interest regarding the petition, the faculty member may recuse himself or herself 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 she/he has checked the entire class list for other potential errors. On rare occasions a grade-change request comes to the CAS as the result of a CAFR, Academic Integrity Board, or Board of Review 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).

(Comment: 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.)

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

C. Leaves of Absence (Personal, Medical, and US-based Academic): (Revised and Approved by CAS April 2010)

1) Medical Leaves: Requests for medical leaves are handled by the Office of Academic Advising in collaboration with the CAS and other campus offices, including Student Academic Services, Health Services, Residence Life, the Dean of Students Office, and the Counseling Center. A medical leave is granted when a consensus has been reached that the student is too ill to continue at school and that it would be wise to suspend the usual expectations we have for the student so that he or she may attend to the illness. Similar to reviewing withdrawal petitions related to medical conditions, the CAS applies an ethic of caring about the well being of the student when considering medical leave requests. 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. The administrative offices involved in the medical leave process require a high threshold of documentation of the illness and grant medical leaves for the express purpose of permitting the student to devote themselves to recovering from the distressing condition. 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.

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.

With appropriate documentation, a second medical leave or an extension of the initial medical leave may be approved by CAS without penalty and will not be taken into account when the CAS evaluates a student's cumulative academic progress. As an institution, we expect students to make timely progress towards their degrees, but we also recognize that some illnesses by their cyclical nature have a likelihood of reoccurrence. Similarly, other illnesses may take a while to diagnose and may have a likelihood of relapse or going off medication, especially when the illness is first diagnosed.

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, Residence Life, the Dean of Students' Office, and the Counseling Center. Students must demonstrate that they are well enough to return to their studies, and must present both documentation from their clinical providers in support of their return to Skidmore and an academic plan that they will follow upon return to the college.

c) Withdrawing from the College after a medical leave: A student who has sequential or multiple leaves and is unable to maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree may be withdrawn from the College without penalty and apply for readmission once the medical condition has been addressed.

d) Longer-term medical leaves: All petitions for a third semester (or more) of medical leave will be reviewed by the CAS on a case-by-case basis, and may be rejected without sufficient documentation supporting the need for the third semester (or more) of medical leave. In those cases, the CAS may recommend that the student withdraw from the College and apply for readmission once the medical condition has been addressed.

2) Personal Leaves: A student may apply for a personal leave if he or she experiences unforeseen circumstances not relating to his or her health that prevent the student from remaining at the college. Students who are granted a personal 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

3) Special considerations: Some requests for leaves may need special consideration by the Committee: a) when the student's request would be for more than one continuous year (rarely granted); b) when the student is in academic jeopardy; c) when the request is of an emergency nature and also requires late drops or withdrawals from courses. A student may not be on "leave" and also enrolled in a Skidmore course or courses.

4) Academic Leaves (US-based): for students with upper-division standing and 3.00 GPA or better, academic leaves are routinely approved by the Office of the Dean of Studies and reported to the CAS. Academic leaves are granted only for study at institutions that are not available to students through Skidmore's established portfolio of approved domestic off-campus study programs (i.e. National Student Exchange, Washington Semester, etc.). The CAS does review academic leave requests from first-year students and sophomores, however, and from students with a GPA below 3.00. First-year students and sophomores who have not completed the first two years of all-college requirements may be denied a leave until they complete the "Foundation" component of the curriculum.

The GPA expectations are much more flexible when the student will be participating in a traditional academic program at another college in the U.S. The CAS assumes that other college programs in the U.S. will operate by standards similar to Skidmore's and supply similar degrees of guidance and support to the student.

5) Guidelines for Earning Transfer Credits During US-based Academic Study While on Medical or Personal Leave (Revised Policy approved April 2004)

The CAS policy for transfer credits for domestic off-campus study when a student is on a personal or medical leave mirrors that utilized for international off-campus study. Students may not earn credits for a personal or medical leave when studying at U.S. institutions that are available to students through Skidmore's established portfolio of approved domestic off-campus study programs (i.e. National Student Exchange, Washington Semester, etc.). Students may petition CAS for an exception to this policy. Exceptions will be considered by the CAS based on the nature of the leave and the rationale presented by the student.

CAS uses its discretion to pre-approve up to and including as many as eleven credits for students studying at a U.S. institution that is not available through Skidmore's approved domestic off-campus study programs. Any student on a personal or medical leave who wishes to study full time (12 credits or more), will be required to complete an academic leave application and will be subject to the limitations in place for credits earned on an academic leave (see Section II, C, 2 of these guidelines). (4/04) Credits must be pre-approved by the Office of the Registrar.

6) Effective Dates for All Leaves of Absence (Personal, Medical, Academic)

Effective dates of approved leaves: the large majority of leaves are "effective" as of the date they were approved by the CAS. In a few cases of personal and medical leaves, we may determine an earlier effective date based on the point at which the student actually left campus. This effective date is recorded in the CAS minutes and communicated to Financial Services so that Financial Services can determine whether the student is eligible for a refund.

D. Eligibility Standards for Off-Campus Study (Revised and Approved March 2, 2010)

1) Background

Off-campus study is an important educational opportunity, one whose success requires that the student applicant meet defined standards and expectations. The Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) observes certain threshold criteria in determining whether an applicant is sufficiently prepared to succeed in his/her off-campus study experience. Experience has shown that a student's record of academic performance and personal qualities are important for the following reasons:

- When studying off campus the student typically needs to rely on self-discipline and self-direction in planning and carrying through with a course of study to a much greater degree than s/he might need while on campus. In addition, international off-campus study typically requires more academic ability to work independently on papers and preparation for exams than is true in the educational system in the US.
- Self-reliance is also of telling importance as the student encounters the myriad distractions of studying off campus, becomes his or her own guide through many new academic, cultural, and social situations, and seeks support among resources that are usually much less abundant than at Skidmore. Thus personal maturity, resourcefulness, and flexibility of mind are required as one encounters the cultural patterns of the host institution and culture.
- When Skidmore approves an off-campus study application, the College is not merely permitting a student to study off campus but must actually recommend the student to a particular program or institution. The College's ongoing credibility with its partners, and thus the successful admission of subsequent Skidmore students, are a matter of some concern.

2) Eligibility Standards and Evidence

a) In keeping with the challenges outlined above, 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 3.00 GPA that also demonstrates solid academic performance from one semester to the next across the various disciplines—or, a more modest cumulative GPA but with 3.00 work during the two most recent semesters of study. (Note that nearly two-thirds of Skidmore sophomores and juniors attain a 3.00 or better GPA; thus the 3.00 criterion does not present a narrow window of opportunity.)
- It must also be clear that the student has the academic background and performance levels appropriate for the program to which he or she is applying.
- The student must have met all-college requirements appropriate to his or her year of study or present an acceptable plan for completing such requirements, and the student must have declared a major *prior* to applying to the CAS..
- The student must have a clear academic and social integrity record as determined by the Dean of Studies and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs who oversee integrity issues.
- Students who are on academic probation are not eligible to study off-campus. If a student is previously approved and s/he then drops below a 2.00, s/he will be administratively withdrawn from their off-campus study program and there will be no opportunity for appeal.

b) The CAS will also consider students who are below the 3.00 requirements described above but whose academic records show a preponderance of B-level work from one semester to the next *or* recent 3.00 performance that convincingly demonstrates growth in academic ability and diligence since earlier difficulties. Such students must present for review:

- Two letters of support from Skidmore faculty that assess the student's academic abilities and classroom behavior patterns (e.g., intellectual commitment, diligence, reliability). The CAS may also request further testimony directly from faculty.
- An off-campus study plan from the student that outlines his or her broad academic interests and ambitions, assesses his or her academic and personal strengths in relation to the challenges of studying off campus, and describes his or her academic and cultural learning goals as they relate to the proposed off-campus experience.
- It must also be clear that the student has the academic background and performance levels appropriate for the program to which he or she is applying.
- The student must have met all-college requirements appropriate to his or her year of study or present an acceptable plan for completing such requirements, and the student must have declared a major *prior* to applying to the CAS..

- The student must have a clear academic and social integrity record as determined by the Dean of Studies and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs who oversee integrity issues.
- Students petitioning to study off-campus should refer to “Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) Policies & Procedures for Off-Campus Study GPA Petitions.” Appendix A.

3) Other Eligibility Considerations for *all* Student Applicants

- Other factors that may contribute to the CAS approval of off-campus study 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 on the student’s area of special academic strength (for both U.S. programs and those abroad). These factors may enhance the strength of the application; however, they cannot replace the need for a record of solid academic achievement.
- 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 why the academic record is not stronger.

4) Maintaining Standards After the CAS Approval

The student must sustain the pattern of academic performance and the integrity record upon which the off-campus study application was approved by the CAS or risk having his or her approval rescinded. If the CAS (or the Director of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and the Dean of Studies at times when the CAS is not available for a further review) cancels the student’s participation in an off-campus program, the student will remain responsible for all financial and other obligations as determined by Skidmore and by the sponsoring program. The student whose off-campus study participation has been rescinded (because of inferior academic performance, failure to meet CAS conditions, an integrity violation, or failure to be in good financial standing with the College) is expected either to register for classes at Skidmore (if the timeframe allows) or to apply for a personal leave of absence from Skidmore. (Note: at the end of each semester the Registrar will generate a summary list of term and cumulative GPAs for students studying off campus; any significant drop in an academic record will prompt a closer look by the DOS Office and Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and may result in an administrative withdrawal from a previously approved program.)

The Committee on Academic Standing, in consultation with the Director of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and the Dean of Studies, holds final authority over all applications for off-campus study. In meeting its obligations to represent the faculty on such matters,

the CAS considers each application on its own merits and in relation to other applications of similar quality.

5) Students Studying Off Campus Outside of the Junior Year (Approved by CAS March 10, 2005)

Students who will not be juniors at the time they study off campus will be required to attend a mandatory advising session with an advisor in the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges (OCSE). This advising session will serve as an unofficial interview in which the OCSE advisor will work with the student to determine the student's ability to succeed and also the feasibility of studying off campus during the desired semester. OCSE will use this opportunity to advise students regarding academic issues and regarding program selection. After this initial advising session, students will submit a letter of faculty support (for first-year students, preferably from the instructor of the appropriate Scribner Seminar) and a one page letter explaining why they want to study off campus outside of the junior year. Students will also need to indicate in the letter what their academic plans are for the remainder of their time at Skidmore. OCSE will request a graduation audit from the Registrar's Office. The OCSE will review the materials and meet with students whose materials raise questions regarding students' academic plans or reasons for needing to study off campus in the proposed semester.

All students with below a 3.0 GPA, regardless of class year, must still petition to the Committee on Academic Standing

6) Countries with Department of State Warnings (Approved by CAS April 5, 2010)

Skidmore does not endorse or approve study abroad to countries where there is an active Department of State warning. There is no petition process for students seeking to study through Skidmore's OCSE in a country where there is an active Department of State warning. Students who choose to take a personal leave from Skidmore College in order to study abroad in a country where there is an active Department of State warning do so with the understanding that there is no pre-approval process for the potential transfer of credits earned on such a program. Such credit transfers are evaluated on a case by case basis by the Registrar's Office and CAS upon the student's return to Skidmore College. In any case, students may not transfer more than 11 credits back to Skidmore from study abroad undertaken in a country with an active Department of State Warning while on leave. In the event that the Registrar's Office and CAS agree to accept credits from such program, this action shall not be interpreted to hold Skidmore College liable in any way for activities undertaken while the student was on personal leave.

7) Students who choose to study off-campus without OCSE approval (while on personal leave) Students who take a personal leave from Skidmore to study abroad on a non-approved program in a country without a Department of State Warning will receive no transfer credits upon their return.

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 he/she completes 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) requests for **non-Western or Cultural Diversity credit** for a transfer course;
- 2) **elective credit** which may not meet the criteria ordinarily used by the Office of the Registrar;
- 3) credit for other **all-college requirements** which do not fall under the authority of another department or committee (the Foreign Language Department is consulted on FL transfer requests; the English Department is consulted on writing-course credit);
- 4) **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, medical or academic leaves of absence the CAS may, at its discretion, under a few compelling circumstances, approve as many as eight semester hours of maturity-level credit for study at another institution—a maximum of one course for up to four maturity credits for each semester spent at the other institution. The transfer of credits will necessarily follow the guidelines outlined in 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.

- 5) **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. The CAS holds strongly to the view that summer sessions must cover, minimally, a four-week period to be eligible for transfer

credit (and, of course, meet N.Y. State Education Department standards for contact hours). 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. All courses must be a minimum of four weeks in length. One course may be taken in a four-week session. Two courses (maximum of 8 credits) may be taken in a five-week (or longer) session. All courses must meet for at least 36 hours of class time. Studio art, dance, and theater courses must meet for at least 72 hours of class time. A grade of "C" or better is required for transfer credit. A maximum of 16 credits, including four maturity level credits, may be transferred each summer. The only exception sometimes granted by the CAS is for intensive study of a foreign language during a summer session of at least three weeks duration.

6) Transfer credits for Other Off-Campus Study: on occasion the CAS may be asked by the Office of the Dean of Studies, 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.

7) Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Credits (CAS approved October 2005)

Skidmore College will grant a total of up to 16 credit hours toward graduation to those achieving a grade of 4 or 5 on an **Advanced Placement Test** of the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB). The College will grant 4 credits per exam grade of 4 or 5. In most cases AP credits will count only as elective credit toward the degree and, with few exceptions, will not replace specific all-college or major requirements. For class years 2007 and beyond, AP credits do not exclude students from the Foreign Language Requirement. Academic departments and programs will determine how, if at all, AP exam grades of 4 or 5 will apply to the major.

The College will grant four semester hours of credit for each examination taken at the **Advanced ("A") Level of the British 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. A maximum of 16 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.

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

G. Course Substitutions for All-College Requirements:

1) General guidelines: Under no circumstances does the CAS waive a course requirement for the Skidmore degree. (Note that chairs of departments, in consultation with the Office of the Registrar, do have authority to make various course substitutions for established major or minor requirements.) There are a few circumstances, however, in which the CAS will consider substituting Skidmore courses for those specifically designated in the Catalog as meeting a particular degree requirement. For example, the CAS occasionally receives requests to substitute upper-level lab science courses for the courses designated in the Catalog. If the appropriate department supports the substitution, the CAS usually concurs.

2) Substitution Request Based on a Documented Learning Disability

The only other substitution requests, thus far, are based on documented evidence of a learning disability. Through a carefully established process, students with a severe learning disability may file a petition with the Office of the Dean of Studies, requesting course substitutions for a particular all-college requirement. The Dean of Studies Office then seeks a recommendation from the academic department most closely linked with the requirement (e.g., the Foreign Language Department for a substitution in the FL requirement, or the English Department for a substitution in the Writing requirement).

Department recommendations for approval or denial of the petition are forwarded to the CAS. CAS makes the final determination for approval or denial of the petition.

3) Foreign Language Requirement Substitution Petitions (approved by CAS and added to Guidelines 12/03)

Core requirements are never waived at Skidmore. However, on rare occasion, a student with an appropriately documented disability (who is also "registered" with the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities in the Office of Student Academic Services) may seek a substitution of course work in lieu of the College Foreign Language Requirement. The Coordinator for Students with Disabilities will assist the student in completing the petition. A subcommittee of the Foreign Language Department will meet twice each year (in the fall prior to October 1, and in spring prior to March 1), to examine such requests. The FL subcommittee will then make a recommendation in writing to the CAS who will, in turn, decide to approve or deny the petition. In most cases, the CAS will require the successful student petitioner to take one pre-approved culture course in lieu of a course in a foreign language. Petitions to CAS regarding the FL Requirement must be submitted to the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities in the Office of Student Academic Services no later than the end of the junior year. Again, CAS is responsible for the final decision.

4) Culture-Centered Inquiry Requirement (approved by CAS following consultation with and approval by CEPP, January 2007)

The Culture-Centered Inquiry requirement requires both a foreign language as well as one course that is designated as either a non-Western course or a Cultural Diversity course. No student is exempt from taking a foreign language course, even if they have already studied or speak a foreign language. CAS will not entertain petitions from students requesting a substitution for this requirement.

H. Progress Toward the Degree:

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 "Foundation" and "Interdisciplinary Study" requirements by the end of the sophomore year. The Registrar orchestrates the review process. The student is asked to "show cause," so to speak, why she or he has not completed these all-college requirements. The Registrar brings the explanations to the CAS, which fairly routinely hears of legitimate reasons for delay (for example, closed courses, a medical or personal leave, a heavy schedule of pre-med courses). The CAS sometimes requires a student to complete the first-year/sophomore requirements within some specified period of time. While the CAS does have the right to disqualify a student based on the student's inadequate progress in completing the all-college requirements, the CAS has not yet done so.

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 the Dean of Studies and the Office of the Registrar, approves candidates for honors at graduation. Departmental Honors are based on GPA plus the support of the major department; College Honors (cum laude, etc.) are based solely on cumulative GPA. 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 minimal 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 the Dean of Studies. 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 "minimal 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 a HEOP/AOP student has failed to meet minimal standards, the CAS invites the HEOP/AOP 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 her or his academic record and to meet the next minimal standard. 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 the next minimal standard, 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 the Dean of Studies, to meet regularly with an academic counselor.

c) In rare cases, when we know a student has experienced very serious personal or medical 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 permitted to take one or two courses at another institution for transfer to Skidmore while the student is on leave.

The Office of the Dean of Studies communicates the CAS decisions on disqualifications and waivers to the students and their families. 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 Dean of Studies. 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.)

2) Social Integrity Information and Academic Review (approved by CAS and added to Guidelines 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 Minimal Standards to students by shedding light on the advisability and feasibility of such decisions as well as the students' potential for academic success. Information provided by the Dean of Student Affairs will be considered in the context of a student's overall academic and social profile at the College. The process for soliciting social integrity information will be as follows: (1) the Dean of Studies Office will provide the Dean of Student Affairs with a list of all students to be reviewed prior to the Review meeting, and (2) the Dean of Student Affairs will attend the Review meeting and supply information about only those student cases he deems most serious.

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 at the home campus: i.e., complete 6 (six) semester hours and earn a GPA of 1.67 or higher. Semester hour credits and/or GPA credits earned by a student prior to the first semester (such as AP credits, Skidmore summer programs, HEOP/AOP summer program, etc.) do not factor into Academic Review decisions for these students.

3) Academic Integrity Information and Academic Review (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 the Dean of Studies. The more routine readmissions (for example, for in absentia completion of a few degree requirements, or to reverse a financial withdrawal during the summer) are decided by the Office of the Dean of Studies 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 a 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 Data Group at the College.

Candidates for readmission who originally entered Skidmore prior to Fall 1985, and who have earned fewer than 90 semester hours of Skidmore credit, will be expected to fulfill all-College requirements in effect at the point of readmission.

M. UWW Admission and Previously Disqualified Students (CAS approved October 2006 following consultation with the Director of UWW)

Occasionally a student formerly enrolled in the residential college but disqualified by CAS will subsequently apply for admission to Skidmore's University Without Walls. UWW and CAS have agreed that UWW will forward applications of all students who have been previously academically disqualified for CAS review. In such cases, CAS must grant its approval before UWW takes action on the applicant's admission to UWW (see memo from UWW Acting Director to CAS Chair, Aug. 17, 2006).

The Director of UWW will forward to the Office of the Dean of Studies, for transmittal to CAS, a previously disqualified student's full academic record (Skidmore and all other official transcripts), along with UWW's assessment of the likelihood that the student can be academically successful in the UWW program. CAS bases its decision to approve or disapprove primarily on this information.

N. Academic Eligibility Standards for Skidmore Student Athletes
(Athletic Council and CAS 12/02)

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 Dean of Studies Office, Office of the Registrar, and the Dean of the Faculty. This information will enable the Dean of Studies Office 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 (through joint meetings between the AD and the DOS) 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 him or her 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) No student who has failed to meet any of Skidmore's semester-by-semester minimal 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 be eligible to practice with or play on the intercollegiate sports teams.

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.

O. 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; APPROVED by the Committee on Academic Standing and the Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights)

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" (page 6). If the instructor confronts an issue requiring swift attention, he or she should consult immediately with the department chair and the Dean of Studies, 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 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, she or he should ask the chair of the department and/or the Dean of Studies 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 he/she has 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 and the Dean of Studies, 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 Dean of Studies 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 his/her 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 Student Affairs): the instructor, the department chair, and the Dean of Studies will interview the student when possible (if this has not already occurred) and make their recommendation to the Dean of Student Affairs (a letter from the Dean of Studies may already be on file as a result of action in (b) above). If the chair is also the instructor of the class, then a tenured, senior member of the department 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 chair or the Dean of Studies).

d) If the consulting team makes a recommendation to the Dean of Student Affairs, the Dean 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.

P. Policies on Withdrawals, Failures, Transfers, and First-Year Student Deferrals (Vetted by CAS and CEPP, Fall 2007, and Reported to the Faculty, 29 February 2008)

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." For a number of reasons, some students will be unable either to complete their Scribner Seminar or to enroll in the fall. This small group includes, (a) withdrawals (due to illness, injury, or medical or personal leave), (b) failures (students who fail the course), (c) transfers, and (d) first-year students for whom the spring semester is their first semester.

The Director of the First-Year Experience (DFYE) in conjunction with the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) have developed the following guidelines to determine if and when it makes sense for that student to repeat a Scribner Seminar, to find a substitution for the course, or to move on with the student's academic program.

2. Procedures

a) Withdrawals: Students who withdraw from all of their first-semester classes and take a full year medical/personal leave are required to enroll in a Scribner Seminar upon their return the following fall. Students in this situation have no credits on their academic transcript and are still considered first-year students.

For students who return in the spring, the CAS, in conjunction with the DFYE, will determine whether the student has experienced enough of the Scribner Seminar to move on or whether a substitution is appropriate.

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 1) if a withdrawal is appropriate, and 2) what action should be taken, if any, to substitute the SSP on the student's academic transcript. In such cases, the DFYE will make a recommendation to CAS, and the committee will make a final determination on the matter.

b) Failures: CAS recognizes that students receive failing grades for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, students attempt to do the work but fail to meet the expectations for success. Other times, they do not complete the work, either because they stopped attending a class or because they failed to hand in assignments. In still other instances, failing grades may result because of academic integrity violations. In all such instances, the CAS and the DFYE will consider failing grades on a case-by-case basis to decide if the student in question should be required to repeat the seminar, find a substitution for it, or be permitted to move on without re-taking a Scribner Seminar. CAS will make a final determination on the matter.

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.

The small number of January transfer students who have fewer than 12 credits will take the Scribner Seminar the following fall.

First-year students for whom the spring semester is their first semester of college will take the Scribner Seminar the following fall.

Q. 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.

Revised and updated Academic Year 2006-2007

Last revision: April 24, 2008

APPROVED by the Committee on Academic Standing

APPENDIX ONE

Committee on Academic Standing (CAS)

Policies & Procedures for Off-Campus Study GPA Petitions

The Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) is comprised of three faculty members, representatives from the Dean of Studies office, the Registrar's office, and two students nominated by SGA. The office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges has a designated Program Manager who presents student petitions to the CAS; this Program Manager does not vote on the CAS decision. The CAS meets once a week during the academic year. Petitions are reviewed by CAS during those weekly meetings.

To study off campus, Skidmore requires that a student have a GPA of at least 3.0. Nearly two-thirds of the students in the sophomore and junior classes achieve a 3.0 or better, so this requirement is certainly attainable. The CAS considers petitions for students that do not meet this requirement on a case-by-case basis. The CAS will not review any petitions below a 2.7.

All students wishing to present a petition to the CAS must meet with the OCSE Program Manager who works with the CAS to discuss their individual petitions and the CAS process. This document serves as a reference tool for students wishing to petition to the CAS.

Below is a list of information that must be included in order for a petition to be considered by the Committee:

- ☐ A one (1) page personal statement written by the student outlining the following:
 1. The student's academic performance to date and why her/his GPA is currently below 3.0.
 2. Academic reasons and motivations for choosing specific off-campus study program and how it corresponds to major requirements.
 3. Explanation of why studying off campus now is most appropriate, rather than opting for a later semester or summer study.
 4. Explanation of how s/he plans to improve current GPA and how off-campus study supports the student's overall academic goals.
- ☐ Two letters of recommendation from faculty members explaining why they support the student's application to study abroad, preferably one from within the student's major, or from the student's academic advisor.

The committee considers all petitions on an individual basis, and therefore may approve a 2.75 and/or deny a 2.9 based on the quality of personal statement and faculty recommendations, as well as a demonstrated improvement in academic record. CAS representatives require at least two semesters of above 3.0 level work and a high level of academic achievement within the major. The CAS also requires an upward academic trajectory, understanding that one poor semester early in the first year on campus can have a tremendous impact on a

student's cumulative GPA.

Finally, the CAS looks for demonstrated maturity and self-discipline indicating that the student is likely to be a

positive representative of Skidmore College on the student's program of choice. If a student is approved, OCSE and

CAS expect that s/he will take this role as a global citizen and Skidmore representative seriously.

CAS & OCSE

reserves the right to withdraw a student if s/he does not meet the stipulations or conditions placed upon her/his conditionally approved application.

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

1. The student could be denied.
2. The student could be approved without any condition.
3. The student could be approved on the condition that s/he achieves a 3.0 this semester.
4. The student could be asked to re-petition for a different semester or apply for summer study.

The OCSE Program Manager who works with the CAS will present students' petitions on their behalf and will notify

students of the committee decision within three days of the committee meeting. There are no opportunities to

appeal the CAS decision at any time. Students cannot appear in person to present their petition to the committee at any time.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any further questions or concerns.

Reviewed and Approved by the CAS February 2010.

APPENDIX TWO

CAS Report on Academic Honors and Social Integrity Violations

Introduction

At the end of the academic year 2006-2007, a question arose as to whether or not 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 the Dean of Studies (DOS) generates the list of students eligible for academic honors on behalf of the CAS. In addition to reviewing student GPA's, the DOS 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 or not 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 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 the 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 attainment 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.¹ 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

¹ An additional winter conferral recommendation meeting will be included following final Board of Trustees approval for a January degree conferral date.

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 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 links:

http://cms.skidmore.edu/student_handbook/honor-code.cfm

http://cms.skidmore.edu/student_handbook/judicial-system.cfm

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 31st 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 his or her 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:

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