

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 9, 2010

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads, and Advisors

FROM: Andrew Carnie, Chair, Graduate Council (GC)
Jake Harwood, Interim Chair, Undergraduate
Council (UGC)
Celeste F. Pardee, Curriculum Associate, Academic Affairs

RE: Grade Replacement Opportunity (GRO) Policy Amendments

New restrictions will be added to the Grade Replacement Opportunity (GRO) Policy, effective with the Fall 2011 filing dates for GRO. The change affecting graduate students was approved by GC in May 2009, and the one impacting undergraduates was approved by UGC in December 2009. Both amendments were passed by the Faculty Senate on 3/1/2010. The amended policy will apply to all undergraduate and graduate students, regardless of their catalog year.

Amendments to the GRO Policy-in the 2010-11 General Catalog, #2 and #3 have been added, <http://catalog.arizona.edu/2010-11/policies/gro2.htm>:

1. Undergraduates who have not received a bachelor's degree from this University may repeat under the Grade Replacement Opportunity (GRO), only once, certain courses in which they received grades [<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2009-10/policies/grade.htm>](http://catalog.arizona.edu/2009-10/policies/grade.htm) of C, D, or E.
2. All undergraduates who have attempted fewer than 60 University Credits (i.e., units in residence at the UA) at the time of application for GRO are eligible. Students with 60 or more attempted University Credits may retake courses in accordance with the Course Repeat Policy [link to policy] but without use of the GRO.
3. Graduate students are not eligible for GRO.

Justification:

Reducing the scope of the GRO Policy is one of several initiatives taken by UGC to address the issue of limited seat availability in high-demand courses. The rationale is broad-based:

- * Faculty believe that a grade forgiveness policy should only be available to first-time freshmen and transfer students (those who have attempted fewer than 60 UA units) who may stumble during their first year but find their academic footing during their second year.
- * While this restriction won't affect the majority of undergraduates who use GRO, data suggest that it will have a positive impact on seat availability: an average of 1650 seats were used for GRO between F05-F07; 59% of students who used GRO were juniors/seniors in S07-F08; 77% of classes GROed were lower division in S07-F08; if freshman/sophomore behavior stays the same, and a small number of junior/senior transfer students use GRO, an estimated 500-975 seats might be saved per semester in over-enrolled courses (59% of 1650 seats, minus transfer students).
- * A review of grade forgiveness policies at public research institutions revealed that the UA's policy is among the most liberal. Tightening the GRO policy, along with UA admission criteria, would indicate that the faculty has higher expectations of UA students, and it would bring academic standards into alignment with those at UA peer institutions.
- * GC determined that a more appropriate forgiveness option for graduate students would be Academic Renewal (approved by Faculty Senate, 5/04/09), so the faculty removed GRO at the graduate level.

Management of the Policy:

- * Students will be notified about the GRO Policy amendments in an e-mail from the Registrar's Office, alerting them that they have a full year (Summer 2010 - Summer 2011) to repeat courses under the current GRO Policy.
- * During registration for Fall 2010 and Spring 2011, graduate students and undergraduates who will have attempted 60 or more units as of Fall 2011 should be advised to GRO any courses that they had planned to repeat using this option.
- * When the amendments go into effect in Fall 2011, exceptions (if any) for undergraduates will be considered through the General Petition process; any for graduate students will be considered through the Graduate College Petition process.

Questions about the undergraduate restriction may be addressed to Celeste Pardee, Curriculum Associate, at 621-5375, or at cpardee@u.arizona.edu.
 Questions about the graduate student restriction may be addressed to Dianne Horgan, Associate Dean, Graduate College, at 621-9223, or at dhorgan@grad.arizona.edu