

WALKING/GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT

The WHP Program has investigated the practice of “walking” at Commencement prior to a student meeting all degree course requirements and has found the following:

1. The policy at Oakland University about whether to permit “walking” when up to 8 degree credits are outstanding rests with the individual programs/majors. Some majors on campus permit the practice and others do not.
2. It appears that students are under the impression that it is “routine” to approve such requests to “walk.” This is erroneous. The WHP Program has adopted the view that permission to “walk” is exclusively reserved for individuals who have a strong rationale for requesting such e.g. about to be deployed to a military conflict zone and unable to attend the later Commencement ceremony; or, have a job offer in another country, making it onerous to return for graduation.
3. From reports by the SHS Advisors it would appear that this privilege to “walk” is being abused.
4. “Walking” is not synonymous with “graduation;” yet the act of obtaining public recognition may provide a false impression that a student has met all degree requirements and has therefore “graduated” with a diploma in hand.
5. Given that this false impression may have potentially serious implications the WHP Program has decided to strongly discourage the practice of applying to “walk” before all degree requirements have been met for graduation.
6. The WHP Program adopts the view that a student should only obtain public recognition for a degree once all of the requirements for the award of the degree have been fully met.

FUTURE WHP POLICY

Consequently, the Spring Commencement on May 5, 2007 is the last Commencement where the WHP Program will permit “walking” without a significant and justified written rationale.

WHP MAJORS SHOULD NOTE THAT FUTURE STUDENT REQUESTS TO “WALK” WILL NO LONGER BE ROUTINELY APPROVED AND EACH STUDENT SHOULD PLAN THEIR COURSE OF STUDY ACCORDINGLY.

In future, no application to “walk” should be submitted through the SHS Advisors unless the application meets a significant threshold for approval.

IF A STUDENT CONSIDERS THAT A SIGNIFICANT THRESHOLD FOR APPROVAL EXISTS AN APPLICATION MAY BE SUBMITTED. ALL SUCH APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH A WRITTEN RATIONALE AND DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE HARDSHIP THAT WOULD OCCUR IF THE STUDENT HAD TO RETURN TO CAMPUS FOR A LATER COMMENCEMENT/GRADUATION.

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