**6 Sigma Project Charter**

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**Date:** March 30, 2007  
**Project Name:** Petition to Graduate Timeline and Fees  
**Deployment Champion:** Dr. Vicky Stewart  
**Project Sponsor:** Dr. John Avendano  
**Process Owner:** Guy Goodman  
**FREP:** Kim Malcolm  
**Green Belt:** Emily Peterson  
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<table>
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<th>Team Members</th>
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<tr>
<td>BIS – Sharon Gilbert</td>
<td>Marketing – Shirley Bowe</td>
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<td>Bookstore – Carla Greer</td>
<td>Advisor – Peg Shepherd</td>
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**Opportunity (Purpose or Primary Reason for Project):** Commencement registration and the petition to graduate are tied together with a common deadline, although not all students choose to participate in the graduation ceremony. For example, in Spring of 2005, of 772 graduation petitions, only 265 requested participation in the commencement ceremony, but all were required to petition by the same deadline. Students who do not intend to participate in the commencement exercise sometimes miss the deadline (do we know how many that is?) for graduation certification and their official graduation date is delayed until the next semester. If it is a critical issue for the student, student services will generally make an exception. The attached income/expense analysis suggests that income currently exceeds expenses if staff time is not accounted for. An analysis of staff time will help clarify how closely the current fee structure matches expenses and an investigation of the process will identify improvement possibilities with respect to cost reduction and petition deadlines.

**Business Case (Budget Information):** Excluding staff time, current program expense is approximately $27,000, and program income is approximately $36,000. It is anticipated that including staff time in program costs will reduce or eliminate the current margin. Improvements in the process may reduce staff time and identify ways to reduce program expenses, as well as streamline the process for increased student satisfaction.

**Goal (Expected Outcomes, Deliverables, and/or Results):** The goal of the project is to improve the process for increased student satisfaction, improve communication to students and a reduction in program costs and/or staff time required to implement.

**Scope (Constraints, Boundaries, and/or Key Risks):** The project would consider all petitions to graduate and participation in commencement. Total petitions are outlined on the attached sheet.

**Timeline (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control):** Changes to the process would need to be implemented by Sept. 1, 2007 for Spring 2008 graduation. Students for the Summer/Fall 07 graduation have already begun filing petitions.

**Primary Measures:** Income/expense statement for program, number of students who petition to graduate, number of students whose official graduation date is delayed, number of unsuccessful petitions for the term which the student files for (a measure of the number of students who thought they were prepared to graduate, but were not). There is the potential that the number of certified graduates will increase, if some are opting not to petition if they miss the deadline.

**Other (Additional Resources Needed, Critical Considerations, and/or Initial Concerns):** If the petition to graduate is an academic planning tool (substitute for advisement) and the date is changed to reduce the number of students who miss filing, an unintended consequence would be an increase in the number of students who are unable to add last minute classes to graduate on time. Another risk is that an increase in the fee schedule might discourage students from filing, but conversely, a reduction in the fee and improved process could encourage students to petition. Additionally, an increase in petitions is possible if students who miss the deadline opt not to petition.