

Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2024

Voting Members Present: Karin Nolan, Ally Roof, Dereka Rushbrook, Christopher Sanderson, Amanda Sokan, Travis Spence, Joost Van Haren, Jeremy Vetter

Non-voting Members Present: Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Cassidy Bartlett, Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

Guests Present: Shelley McGrath

Voting Members Absent: Amber Rice, Caleb Simmons

Chair Joost Van Haren called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. A quorum was established with 8 voting members.

I. Discussion Items

A. Transfer Credit Policies

Presenters: Abbie Sorg, Shelley McGrath

Last year, the Curriculum and Policies subcommittee discussed the removal of the limit on transfer credit from community colleges. Because ABOR removed this policy during the summer, the University can follow suit and eliminate the Transfer Credits from Community Colleges policy. As a result, transfer students from community colleges would be treated the same as transfer students from 4-year institutions, needing at least 30 units in residence to earn a degree from the University.

The Credits from Community Colleges policy also restricts community college coursework from transferring as upper division credit. Because many Arizona Community Colleges are in the process of becoming accredited to offer 4-year degrees (and some already are accredited), removing this language will allow those students to maximize their transfer credits.

Concurrent with the elimination of this policy, the offices of the Registrar and Transfer Credit and Articulation are interested in streamlining the other policies concerning transfer credit. There are currently several policies on transfer credit and they are not easy for students or advisors to navigate.

Discussion began:

- Currently, for students to transfer more than 64 credits from a community college, programs need an ABOR-approved exception. Removing the policy wouldn't automatically grant students 90 credits of transfer credit, but would simplify cases where the program feels that credits beyond 64 units are applicable.

- Students who attended community colleges currently have fewer options, which is not the goal of the policy. The policy may have been created to help students avoid the excess unit surcharge. The institution could rely on the 30 units of residence credit requirement and the faculty reviewing the transfer coursework.
 - Another reason for the policy may have been to help students meet the 42 upper-division unit minimum requirement, since historically community colleges did not offer upper division coursework (or it couldn't transfer as upper-division).
 - It was questioned whether another reason for the policy was simply to encourage students to take coursework at the University instead of another institution.
- The Averaging of Grade for a Final Non-University Credit Course allows students to transfer the grade of a course from another institution to their graduation GPA at the University of Arizona. This is complicated to perform administratively, and the only scenario where students can transfer in GPA. Though it has potential value in bringing up a student's GPA, it relies on the student, advisor, and graduation services advisor to be aware of the option, and there is interest in eliminating the policy.
 - The subcommittee requested more information on the original intent of this policy at the next meeting.
 - The policy may be helpful for students who reside out of state, though students in several programs also have extensive online offerings.
 - Previously, a student's final term had to be in residence at the University, but this was changed to a requirement of 18 upper-division units in residence. This means that students still have the option to take coursework outside of the University, even in their final term – they just wouldn't be able to transfer the grade if this policy was eliminated.
- From the remaining transfer credit policies (excluding prior learning credit, military credit, and credit by exam), procedural information can be consolidated, related information from separate policies can be grouped, and information overall can be streamlined.

The subcommittee will wait to vote on the inactivation of Transfer Credits from Community Colleges and Averaging of Grade for a Final Non-University Course, so that the remaining transfer credit policy proposals may be reviewed simultaneously by the subsequent committees. The Office of the Registrar and Transfer Credit and Articulation will prepare policy benchmarking and proposals based off of subcommittee feedback and research the origin of the Averaging of Grade for Final Non-University Credit. Discussion will resume at the September subcommittee meeting.

B. Bachelor's Degree Requirements, Multiple Majors and Degrees

Presenter: Alex Underwood

Last year, the subcommittee discussed streamlining the information on second bachelor's degrees and adding in information on multiple majors (currently housed in the Change of Major policy). The difference in requirements for the concurrent and sequential degrees was questioned – a sequential degree requires an additional 30 units – though no decisions were made as far as reducing the requirements for sequential degrees or increasing the requirements for concurrent degrees.

Discussion began:

- The University's additional unit requirement for sequential degrees is aligned with other institutional policies that were benchmarked.
- The current policy on concurrent degrees benefits students who can afford to continue attending school compared to those who need to graduate. Time to degree is likely impacted by the students who are delaying degree conferral by 1+ term to earn concurrent degrees (and avoid the additional 30 units required for a sequential degree).
- One representative from a college with many students pursuing second bachelor's degrees felt that the goal should be to discourage students from delaying graduation, even if that meant removing the additional 30 units from the sequential degree. Graduation metrics such as time to degree completion are affected by the students who delay graduation.
- Students pursuing a sequential degree also may not complete more than half of their second degree before conferral of the first, which is additional incentive to delay graduation for a concurrent degree.
- The Office of the Registrar will obtain data on how many total units students with two Bachelor's degrees earn to help the subcommittee gauge how attainable the additional 30 units are.
- Because the institution has 37 different Bachelor's degree types, there may be more instances for students to earn second degrees, whereas institutions with fewer degrees would mainly offer multiple majors within those degree types.
 - The university can reduce the likelihood of creating additional, unintentional degrees by better distinguishing between new majors and new degrees on program forms.
 - The Office of the Registrar will prepare information on how many majors are available under each degree type.
- Removing requirements from the sequential degree would be a simpler adjustment and would improve graduation rates. Adding a requirement(s) to the concurrent degree would likely be more involved.
- The current multiple majors policy specifies that each major requires a minimum of 18 units of university credit. This is similar to some benchmarked institutions that require 18 unique units to distinguish the second degree.

- It is likely the University does not specify this because the assumption is that different degree types would require at least this many unique credits. However, with the high number of undergraduate degree types at the University, adding in language like this may be a viable option (especially if other restrictions are removed).
- While a second major can replace a required minor, it is less likely that a second degree could waive a minor requirement from the first degree (Note: not all bachelor's-level majors require a minor, but many do).

The subcommittee members will speak with their departments and review benchmarking information. The Office of the Registrar will gather information on the amount of majors for each degree type, how many students pursue a second Bachelor's degree, and how many surplus credits those students graduate with. Discussion will resume at the September subcommittee meeting.

C. 2024-2025 Policy Roadmap

Presenter: Joost Van Haren

The subcommittee reviewed a list of potential policies to review during the 2024-2025 academic year, including General Education Foundations, Repeating a Course and Grade Replacement, Undergraduate Certificates, Academic Petitions, Academic Amnesty, and potential new policies that define the differences between professional and graduate programs and define developmental courses.

Discussion began:

- The Writing program has requested review of the GE Foundations Writing policy.
- A task force is being formed to discuss updates to the GE Foundations Second Language policy.
- Repeating a Course and Grade Replacement will be reviewed considering some recommendations from the advising community.
- Currently, undergraduate certificates cannot apply towards majors or minors. The Office of Undergraduate Education is interested in changing this policy to allow certificates to stack towards a degree, similar to the graduate policy. There is work being done to make undergraduate certificates stackable, making this another policy to review.
- The Course Types policy is pending review from the professional colleges before it will resume its route to subsequent committees.

Members who have feedback about the policy roadmap – whether they wish to review additional policies or remove some from consideration – are encouraged to notify the subcommittee chair and the Office of the Registrar.

The meeting was officially adjourned at 4:56 PM. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on September 24, 2024.

Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Bartlett, 09/19/2024