

Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2022

Voting Members Present: Michelle Berry, Joan Curry, Moe Momayez, Amber Rice, Caleb Simmons, Chair Claudia Stanescu, Richard Vaillancourt

Non-voting Members Present: Cassidy Bartlett, Molly Bolger, Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

Voting Members Absent: Leslie Dennis, Jim Hunt, Jordan-Isaiah Toyos, Joost Van Haren

Chair Claudia Stanescu called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. A quorum was established with 6 voting members. 1 additional member arrived after the minutes were approved.

I. Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 2/22/22

Amber Rice moved to accept the meeting minutes from 2/22/22 as submitted. Caleb Simmons seconded the motion. The motion was passed with 6 votes in favor.

II. Continued Discussion Items

A. Proposal to Combine and Update the GRO and Course Repeat Policies

Based on the feedback provided at the February subcommittee meeting, a reformatted version of the policy text was provided and reviewed. The reformatted policy combines GRO and Course Repeat policies, removes the 60-unit limit pertaining to GRO as requested by the advising community, and restructures the language for clarity.

Discussion continued:

- Committee members agreed that it is redundant to list Success Courses as being ineligible for GRO since the policy previously states Success courses may not be repeated.
- Due to temporary COVID protocol, students were permitted to take any course for a pass/fail grade during the Spring 2020 term. Because of this increased occurrence of students taking pass/fail courses, committee members expressed it was important to include the stipulation that courses taken for pass/fail grades are not GRO eligible.
- Committee members considered that students unfamiliar with Pass/Fail courses might think pass/fail simply refers to grades A-D (pass) and grade E (fail). Requested updating this sentence to “courses taken for pass/fail grades”.
- Committee members expressed concern for how the new policy will affect general petitions, as students make compelling cases each year that they did not intend to take a course as pass/fail.
- Committee members expressed that the GRO policy should emphasize its pertinence to undergraduate students only. Furthermore, it should be clarified that the level of the course also matters; it should be clear to students enrolled in the Accelerated Master’s Program (AMP) that they cannot GRO graduate-level courses.
- The committee agreed upon the following amendments to the proposal language:

- Replace “Grade Replacement Opportunity” heading with the following: “Undergraduate Grade Replacement Opportunity”.
- Replace “Undergraduate students who have not received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Arizona may use the Grade Replacement Opportunity (GRO) when repeating certain courses; graduate students are not eligible” with the following: “Undergraduate students who have not received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Arizona may use the Grade Replacement Opportunity (GRO) when repeating certain undergraduate courses; graduate students and graduate-level courses are not eligible.
- Replace “The following course types are not eligible for GRO: Credit by Exam, Grade by Exam, Individual Studies courses (i.e., Preceptorship, Directed Research, Internship, Practicum, and Independent Study), Success courses, Developmental courses (i.e., those with AX/BX after the course number), and Pass/Fail courses” with the following: “The following course types are not eligible for GRO: Credit by Exam, Grade by Exam, Individual Studies courses (i.e., Preceptorship, Directed Research, Internship, Practicum, an Independent Study), Developmental Courses, (i.e., those with AX/BX after the course number), and courses taken for Pass/Fail grades.”

Caleb Simmons moved to approve the updated policy with the addition of 3 amendments as described above, and Michelle Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 7 votes in favor.

B. Proposal to Eliminate the W Grade Unit Maximum Policy

Continuing the discussion started during the January and February meetings, the subcommittee was provided with data regarding student use of W grades.

Of students who have completed their sophomore year at the University of Arizona, less than 1% have reached the W maximum of 18 units. Further data regarding junior and senior students is still forthcoming.

Discussion continued:

- Committee members expressed that the limit was likely created to handle seat availability, which is no longer a significant issue. Students find workarounds such as filing petitions, drop forms, and auditing classes.
- Committee members discussed that few petitions are filed regarding the 18 unit maximum.
- Regarding the data presented, committee members felt that it is possible so few students reach the limit simply because the limit exists and they are careful to stay within it. Additionally, the subcommittee felt that withdrawal rates may be higher among junior and senior students as the coursework is more demanding.
- Committee members expressed that the 18-unit limit may exist because any more courses taken for a W grade could affect student financial aid. If the limit is removed, students should be fairly warned that too many W grades could impact their aid.

- Committee members discussed advisors' concerns about the need to manually count the total W credits for their students. While this process is already automated, exceptions made due to temporary COVID protocol created challenges. However, it should be possible to account for those exceptions in the automated process. Committee members agreed this should not be a deciding factor in whether the maximum remains or is eliminated.
- Committee members were divided, with some supporting the removal of the W maximum and others expressing that the limit should remain but could be raised to a new amount.
- The subcommittee requested more data to better understand the issue:
 - What percentage of juniors and seniors reach their W grade limit?
 - What additional concerns do advisors have regarding the policy?
 - What alternate steps do students currently take when they have reached their W limit? Are they more likely to do a Complete Withdrawal after reaching the limit? Are they likely to receive more "E" grades after reaching the limit?

The subcommittee will continue to discuss this issue with their college colleagues, and the Office of the Registrar will provide more data from the UA for further discussion at the first Fall meeting.

III. Discussion: AY 2022-2023 committee assignments, meeting dates/times and location/s

The three-year term for most subcommittee members ends this year. Committee members discussed renewing or speaking to their college leadership to determine a new subcommittee member.

Committee members voiced differing opinions regarding a meeting location in the Fall. Some members feel strongly about in-person meetings as they encourage more discussion than virtual meetings. Other members advocated for the flexibility of virtual meetings, saying that virtual attendance should remain an option. Committee members expressed that full committees (as opposed to subcommittees) may be better suited in-person, as increased attendance creates more room for technological issues, people speaking over one another, etc. This topic will be discussed at the next full council meeting.

Claudia adjourned the meeting at 4:47 p.m. The next subcommittee meeting will be held in Fall 2022.

Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Bartlett, 4/22/22