

## **Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

### **February 25, 2025**

**Voting Members Present:** John Leafgren, Karin Nolan, Ally Roof, Dereka Rushbrook, Christopher Sanderson, Caleb Simmons, Amanda Soka, Travis Spence, Joost Van Haren, Jeremy Vetter

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

**Guests Present:** Susan Miller-Cochran

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UGC Chair Joost Van Haren called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. A quorum was established with 7 voting members; three additional members joined after the meeting was called to order.

**I. Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 1/28/2025**

Karin Nolan motioned to accept the meeting minutes from 1/28/2025. Amanda Soka seconded the motion. The motion passed with 7 votes in favor.

**II. Discussion Items**

**A. Repeating a Course & Grade Replacement**

**Presenters:** Abbie Sorg

Feedback from the frontline advising community regarding potential updates to the policy was shared with the subcommittee:

- There was a mixed response to whether WC should count as a course attempt, but the majority of advisors felt that students typically use a complete withdrawal when they are experiencing extenuating circumstances, and it would be unfair to penalize students for something outside of their control.
  - Complete withdrawal has separate financial aid and institutional policies, as well as college-level rules. It would be helpful for students for this information to align.
- To anticipate the impact of this policy change on different student groups, the following offices should be consulted: the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OSFA), Military-Connected Benefits & Certifications (MCBC), and International Student Services (ISS).
- All advisors were in favor of GRO utilizing the highest attempt rather than the most recent attempt.
- Communication regarding the updated Course Repeat policy would be very important to ensure students understand how many attempts they're allowed and how the grades on their attempts will be treated.
- Strategies should be developed for advising to reach out to students that are repeating too many courses without improved grades.
  - An analytics report could be created in the advising central dashboard to help colleges identify students that are repeatedly retaking courses without making progress.

- Enrollment restrictions for course repeats should be considered; it could be problematic if seats are being taken by students repeating the course and leaving insufficient seats for the students who have not yet taken the course. To prevent this, registration for repeated courses could take place after open enrollment.

Discussion continued:

- One member volunteered to have a conversation with OSFA to determine how changes to GRO and course repeat would affect Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and renewal of scholarships. A representative from OSFA will be invited to the April subcommittee meeting.
  - The same subcommittee member will reach out to MCBC and ISS to learn how military and international students could be impacted.
- Enrollment is not currently restricted for students repeating a course, nor is there a structure in place to do so. It would require coordination with UITS to determine if this would be viable.
  - Some members weren't convinced that this method was worth pursuing.
  - Under the current policy, one member reported the opposite issue: students typically repeat a course the following term, but they often don't know that they did poorly and need to repeat the course until after priority registration is over. In some cases, there are no seats remaining at this point.
  - If students repeating a course must enroll after students attempting a course for the first time, the course may reach capacity before they get a chance to enroll, and the improved GRO policy wouldn't benefit the student after all.
  - The discussed updates to the policy shouldn't drive enrollment up enough to cause issue, but it should still be monitored and revisited if proven otherwise.
- For this policy update to be implemented in fall 2026, it would need to be approved by the subcommittee at the following April 1 meeting.
- When asked about frontline advising being split on whether grade replacement should be unlimited, it was clarified that advising was trying to anticipate any potential problems. For long-term advisors, it could be difficult to imagine the removal of GRO, even though it doesn't exist as a concept at other institutions.
- Advising did specify that if GRO was removed, the repeat policy would need to be adjusted accordingly so that all attempts are not averaged.
  - The policy draft in progress does make significant changes to how repeating a course in general is described, in light of GRO being removed.
- The current policy allows for two attempts of the same course, while the system set-up allows for three attempts. It might be most appropriate to change the policy to match the set-up, allowing for three attempts. This would mean that

students that receive a poor grade for one attempt, and need to withdraw for unforeseen circumstances in another attempt, will still get to take a course a third time for an improved grade.

- At the request of the subcommittee, the Office of the Registrar will follow up with the notice a student receives when they register for a course they've already attempted and/or used all attempts for already.
  - Courses repeatable for credit are treated differently in the system and do not trigger this notice; there is logic built in that indicates how many times the course is repeatable for credit.
- At the last subcommittee meeting, the majority of members agreed that WC should count as an attempt. Otherwise, students might be incentivized to pursue a complete withdrawal (instead of withdrawing from a single course), effectively losing any passing grades they had earned. Since students don't need proof of extenuating circumstances for a complete withdrawal, they could easily make that decision without consulting their advisor and lose credit they would otherwise earn.
  - It was clarified that students pursuing retroactive withdrawal are required to provide reasoning for the complete withdrawal.
- If W and WC are being treated the same, should they have the same deadline?
  - Because these deadlines have been in place for some time, it will require some research to determine why they were originally given distinct deadlines. The difference may be because a W grade is commonplace while a WC grade is typically used for a more dramatic life circumstance.
- Could the W deadline be pushed back to match up with the complete withdrawal?
  - It was speculated that if students could wait until the last minute to file for a W grade, it would pose a greater concern for grade manipulation. The earlier deadline is likely to prevent this.
- Will it ultimately be up to the student and whether they'd rather have a W/WC grade or an E grade?
  - Some students may be more inclined to pursue a W/WC; while the policy can't be written to prevent that outright, removing the GRO limit would still increase the likelihood that students take an E grade over W/WC.
- The current disconnect between policy and practice was created in 2011; advising was concerned that students needed to be allowed 3 course attempts. The system was updated on a trial basis, but the topic was never revisited as planned.
  - Allowing for three attempts would help balance out a WC grade being considered a course attempt.

**The advising representative will reach out to OSFA, MCBC, and ISS for feedback. The Office of the Registrar will update the policy proposal based on discussion, meet with**

**UITS about the potential for regulating when enrollment takes place for repeated courses, and provide information to the subcommittee about the notice students receive once they've exceeded their course repeats. Discussion will resume at the April subcommittee meeting.**

## **B. Second Language Foundations**

**Presenter:** Susan Miller-Cochran, Abbie Sorg

Though the second language taskforce is still weighing in on the final policy language, the subcommittee was given an overview of the recommendations being made:

- The second language requirements would be split into two policies: one for a general education foundations requirement that applies to all Bachelor's degrees, and one policy specific to Bachelor of Arts degrees.
- Having consistent policy across degree programs means that general education requirements won't change just because a student changes their major.
- Second-semester proficiency, the general education requirement, could be met with two years of high school coursework.
- Bachelor of Arts degrees would still require four semester of a second language, but at the program's discretion, students would now have the option of completing two semesters each of two different languages.

Discussion began:

- It was clarified that a maximum of two semesters of language could be waived by high school coursework; BA students would not be able to waive their degree requirement with four years of high school coursework.
  - Currently, the College of Engineering is the only college that allows students to transfer in language coursework from high school. The policy change would open up this opportunity to all colleges/programs.
- Allowing BA students to fulfill the requirement with two separate languages would allow students with limited languages to choose from in high school to select from far more options for their additional second language. Any students who wanted to continue the same language would still be eligible to take a proficiency exam to confirm what they learned in high school and continue on at the University.
- Options for students to meet proficiency would be expanded and elaborated on, such as through study abroad or multilingual experiences (i.e., students in the Indigenous Teacher Education Program that teach on a Navajo reservation could use that experience to satisfy the requirement).
- How would an adult, returning student fit into this new model? Their language experience may not align, but would it be evaluated?
  - Members wondered about alternative ways to meet the requirement not specified in policy. For example, some active-duty or former military

students have gained cultural competency from living abroad in small towns (rather than a military base).

- Students with a long gap between their high school experience and entering University may not be able to pass a proficiency exam, but would still have gained the cultural exchange benefits of studying the language.
- Why is there only an additional requirement for BA degrees, and not the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (BIS) or other degrees?
  - Because the current policy only has additional requirements for BA degrees, higher requirements for other degrees were not discussed.
  - One member noted that the BIS would be identical to the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies if it also required four semesters of second language.
- If specific, non-BA programs wanted to require additional second language proficiency beyond 2 years, this policy update would not prevent that. Additional language could still be required at the program level.
  - One member wanted to confirm the language requirement for the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree; if it was a fourth-semester proficiency, the second language taskforce would be made aware.
- Recommendations for the other foundations policies have not yet been finalized, but the goal will be to review all foundation policies simultaneously, if possible.

**Discussion will resume at the April subcommittee meeting. A draft of the proposed policy with finalized recommendations from the taskforce will be presented at that time.**

The meeting was officially adjourned at 4:49 PM. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on April 1, 2025.

*Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Salazar, 3/20/2025*