

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: 6.N

DATE: February 18, 2010

Subject: Ready Adult Academic Policy Review

Representatives on the academic affairs group for the Ready Adult project held a conference call during the end of the Fall 2009 semester and noted a number potential policy issues that warrant further review and consideration by the members of AAC. Primarily, three specific academic policy issues have been identified including: 1) Credits Toward Graduation; 2) Academic Amnesty; and 3) Transfer of Credit.

BOR Policy 2.29 – Definition of Credits and Related Institutional Requirements

Section 1.C of Board policy 2:29 specifies the minimum credit hour requirements for baccalaureate and associate degree programs in the Regental system. As other states have recruited ready adult students it has been noted that a sizable number will seek out a degree at institutions where they are just short of meeting program requirements. Requiring 32 credit hours for baccalaureate and 16 credit hours for associate degree students may serve as a barrier to our efforts here for targeting this particular student population. AAC is asked to discuss the historical underpinnings for this policy and suggest alternatives if warranted. As a member of the academic affairs group, Mary Kay Helling has provided information from a number of peer institutions as background for institutional approaches to this particular issue (see Appendix I).

C. Institutional Credit Requirements for Degree-Seeking Students

- 1. Minimum number of credit hours that must be earned from the institution granting the degree:
 - Baccalaureate 32 hours
 - Associate 16 hours
- 2. Number of the last credit hours earned preceding completion of the degree that must be earned from the institution granting the degree:
 - Baccalaureate 16 of the last 32 hours
 - Associate 8 of the last 16 hours

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Discussion and Recommendation.

3. Minimum number of credit hours specified in the major or minor requirements that must be completed at the degree granting institution: 50 percent. However, this requirement may be waived for students enrolled in the set of majors offered at the system's Centers which include in the established programs of study common courses offered by one of the other Regental universities. In addition, the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost may make exceptions to this requirement for individuals based on the student's prior learning experiences.
4. Degree seeking students may complete requirements for a minor at any Regental university that has been approved to grant that minor. This minor will be recorded on the transcript in conjunction with a degree/major at that university or a degree/major at any other Regental university. A minor will only be recorded on the transcript in conjunction with a degree and major.

BOR Policy 2:10 - Grades and Use of Grade Point Averages (GPA)

Although Board policy 2:10 provides guidance on academic amnesty, concern has been raised that the policy in its current form focuses more on traditional students. Section 5.2 and 5.3 in particular, presents specific timeframe requirements that are worthy of AAC discussion. Regardless of the policy, it is apparent that broader student recognition of this particular policy appears necessary as recruitment efforts are undertaken.

5. Academic Amnesty

The goal of academic amnesty is to respond to the academic needs of matured individuals as they develop newly identified potential. Through the application of academic amnesty, the student's prior academic record can be excluded from current work under certain conditions. To be eligible, the student must:

- 1) be an undergraduate, full-time or part-time, degree-seeking student at one of the universities in the South Dakota Regental system.
- 2) not have been enrolled in any postsecondary institution for a minimum of three calendar years (9 consecutive terms including Fall, Spring, and Summer) prior to the most recent admission to the home institution. Exceptions may be granted in rare cases only by the Board of Regents Vice President for Academic Affairs upon recommendation by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- 3) have completed a minimum of 24 graded credit hours taken at any Regental university with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 for the 24 credit hours after the most recent admission to the home institution.
- 4) not have earned a baccalaureate degree from any university.
- 5) not have been granted any prior academic amnesty at any Regental university.
- 6) submit a formal Academic Amnesty Petition to their home university following the procedures established by that university.

Conditions:

- 1) Academic amnesty does not apply to individual courses. Academic amnesty may be requested for:

- a. all previous postsecondary education courses, or
 - b. all previous postsecondary education courses at a specific postsecondary institution, or
 - c. a specified time period not to exceed one academic year (Fall/Spring) completed at any postsecondary institution(s).
- 2) Academic amnesty, if granted, shall not be rescinded.
 - 3) Courses for which academic amnesty is granted will:
 - a. remain on the student's permanent record.
 - b. be recorded on the student's undergraduate transcript with the original grade followed by an asterisk (*).
 - c. not be included in the calculation of the student's grade point average because no credit is given.
 - d. not be used to satisfy any of the graduation requirements of the current degree program.
 - 4) Academic amnesty decisions will be made by the student's home institution, will be honored by all programs within the home institution, and will be honored by all other institutions within the South Dakota Regental system.
 - 5) Universities outside of the South Dakota Regental system are not bound by the academic amnesty decisions made by the South Dakota Regental system.
 - 6) Regental graduate programs and graduate professional schools may consider all previous undergraduate course work when making admission decisions.

BOR Policy 2:5 – Transfer of Credit

Considerable discussion has occurred focusing on transfer of credit for those ready adults who may be located in South Dakota, but have not yet taken courses in the Regental system. Much of the focus here has been on the timeline for reviewing student transfer coursework, yet two issues in section 3 and 10 of Board policy 2:5 are worthy of discussion. Section 3 notes that life experience is not a transcriptable option, yet prior learning assessments are becoming more commonplace for nontraditional students being recruited around the country. Additionally, section 10 places a threshold on the number of credit hours that can be obtained via validation methods which is a policy worth reconsidering in light of this initiative.

3. Undergraduate transfer academic courses received from United States colleges and universities accredited by United States regional accrediting associations
 - A. All undergraduate transfer courses and all transfer grades (whether the grades are passing or not passing) must be recorded and an equivalency specified by the Regental university, calculated into grade point averages according to the Regental grade scheme, and recorded on the student's academic transcript.
 - B. Remedial courses (as identified on the sending institution's transcript) received in transfer are recorded, transcribed, and assigned an equivalency at the receiving university but do not calculate into grade point averages.

- C. Transfer grades not existing in the Regental grading scheme will be equated to the Regental grading system. (Refer to BOR 2:10, Use of Grade Point Averages).
- D. D. In any subsequent evaluation, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses will not be changed. Equivalencies for unique courses may be changed. In subsequent evaluations, grades previously recorded cannot be changed.
- E. The university-specific degree requirements determine if the courses transferred are applicable to the student's degree program at that university and if they meet the minimum grade criteria.
- F. Orientation, Life Experience, General Educational Development Tests, and high school level courses are not recorded in Colleague as transfer credit nor are they granted equivalent credit.
 - 1) High school courses for which students received college credit will not be entered as transfer credit, or given equivalent credit, unless validated by an Advanced Placement or CLEP score that meets Board of Regents guidelines for acceptance of credit or the college credit is granted by a university with which the Board has a dual credit agreement. This requirement is effective for high school courses taken after Spring term 2002.

10. Credit Received Through Validation Methods

- A. Credit earned through validation methods other than nationally recognized examinations is limited to a maximum of 32 hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and 16 hours of credit for associate degrees.
 - 1) Validation of Military credit is limited to an additional 32 hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and an additional 16 hours of credit for associate degrees.
- B. Credit for college level courses granted through nationally recognized examinations such as CLEP, AP, DANTES, etc., will be evaluated and accepted for transfer if equivalent to Regental courses and the scores are consistent with Regental policies.
 - 1) If credit received through validation is applied as elective credit, it may only be applied at the 100 or 200 level.
 - 2) Credit received through validation may apply to System General Education Requirements and Institutional Graduation Requirements.
 - 3) Credit received through validation may not apply to globalization and writing intensive requirements.

Peer Institutional Policies Related to Credits Toward Graduation

Oklahoma State

FOR STUDENTS WITH TRANSFER CREDIT

- At least sixty credit hours must be taken at an accredited 4-year university (Academic Regulation 1.2).
- One-half of the upper division requirements in the student's major are to be completed in residence at OSU (Academic Regulation 1.2 and 7.2)
- The student must have earned at least twenty-four hours of residence credit at OSU including the last eighteen hours of credit (Academic Regulation 7.2).
- Credits earned in junior college cannot exceed a total of sixty-five hours toward a B.S. degree (Academic Regulation 1.2).
- Concurrent enrollment at another institution and at OSU, must be approved in advance by the Undergraduate Program Advisor and the Dean of Engineering, Architecture and Technology (Academic Regulation 5.5).
- A maximum of eight hours of extension credit and eight hours of correspondence credit earned at another institution may be applied toward degree requirements at OSU (Academic Regulation 4.2).

University of Montana

- **Requirements for College of Technology Certificate of Completion and Associate of Applied Science Degree**
 - A minimum of 51% of the required number of credits must be earned from The University of Montana-Missoula
- **Requirements for the Associate of Arts Degree**
 - A minimum of 30 credits of the required number must be earned from The University of Montana-Missoula.
- **Requirements for the First Bachelor Degree**
 - A first bachelor degree is defined as any bachelor degree earned by a student who has not previously earned a bachelor degree from The University of Montana-Missoula. Thus, the requirements below also apply to any student who previously earned a bachelor degree at another institution and now is seeking a bachelor degree from The University of Montana-Missoula.
 - A minimum of 30 credits of the required number must be earned from The University of Montana-Missoula. b) A minimum of 30 credits of the required number must be earned in study on The University of Montana-Missoula campus.
 - Of the last 45 credits required for the degree, at least 30 of these must be earned from The University of Montana- Missoula. Students attending elsewhere on a University approved exchange may be exempt from this requirement with the prior written approval of their major department chair or dean.
- **Requirements for the Second Bachelor Degree**
 - In regard to residency requirements, a second bachelor degree is defined as any bachelor degree earned by a student who previously had earned a bachelor degree from The University of Montana-Missoula.
 - A minimum of 20 credits of the required 30 credits must be earned in study on The University of Montana-Missoula campus.

University of Wyoming

University Requirements

1. A cumulative grade point average of 2.000 or better from the University of Wyoming.
2. Satisfactory completion of the prescribed curriculum in which the degree is sought, including fulfillment of the entrance requirements in the college concerned.

3. Students must complete a minimum of 48 upper division (junior/senior) or graduate-level semester credit hours, 30 of which must be earned from the University of Wyoming. Credit by examination does not count towards the required 30 hours of residency credit.
4. Not more than 24 semester hours of flexible enrollment courses (correspondence credit) may be used toward fulfilling requirements for a bachelor's degree.
5. Not more than 4 semester hours of credit in physical activity courses can count toward a baccalaureate degree.
6. The last credit applicable to degree requirements must be earned from the University of Wyoming with the following exception: students of senior standing may complete degree requirements elsewhere by obtaining special permission of the department head, adviser, and college dean, and declaring an anticipated graduation date with the Office of the Registrar.
7. Native language credit: students are not allowed university credit for language courses below the 4000-level in their native language.

University of Utah

- Candidates for a bachelor's degree must complete at least 30 credits at USU's Logan campus or designated centers, or through classes offered by Regional Campuses and Distance Education through USU.
- A minimum of 20 of these credits must be completed in upper-division courses, of which at least 10 credits must be completed in courses required by the student's major.
- Candidates for an associate degree must complete at least 20 credits at USU's Logan campus or designated centers, or through classes offered by Regional Campuses and Distance Education through USU.

Southern Illinois

Baccalaureate Degrees

- a. Must complete at least 120 semester hours of credit, which can include credit for work experience, College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement Program (AP), military credit, and proficiency examination credit, with at least 60 semester hours (or equivalent number of quarter hours) earned at or awarded through proficiency examination from an accredited senior-level institution;
- b. Meet the requirements of the academic unit, the major, and, when appropriate, the minor;
- c. Achieve at least a C average for all work taken at SIUC, and at least a C average for all major work taken at SIUC, with the exceptions granted by the forgiveness policy and the repeated grade policy.
 1. Students who do not meet the overall C average requirement may be graduated if he or she satisfies either of the following methods of computing their average:
 - a. by excluding from calculation of the grade point average a maximum of ten semester hours of D or F grade earned outside the major which was taken prior to the last 60 semester hours of completed work at the university; or
 - b. by earning a grade point average of 2.10 or higher for the last 60 semester hours of work completed at the university.
 2. The repeat grade policy allows for only the last grade of a subsequently repeated course to be counted in the grade point average as approved by the chancellor, effective with courses taken Summer 1996 and beyond.
- d. Complete the last 30 semester hours or a total of 90 semester hours, in residence at SIUC. Residence credit is awarded for those courses for which the student has registered and earned a satisfactory grade at SIUC. Students enrolled in programs offered for the military will have completed the residence requirement for the university upon completion of all courses required by the program;