Academic Unit Authority over the Curriculum and Major: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester

Responsible University Officer(s):
- Executive Vice President and Provost

Policy Owner(s):
- Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education
- Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education

Policy contact(s):
- Jessica Kuecker Grotjohn, Toni Abts~~Karen Starry~~

Date Revised:
Jun 2, 2016
Effective Date:
Apr 8, 2009

Policy Statement

Departments, colleges, and campuses have the authority to establish, change, and discontinue academic plans and sub-plans that appear on official University transcripts, subject to appropriate consultation with other units and subject to the final approval of the Board of Regents. (See Administrative Policy: *Adding, Changing or Discontinuing Academic Plans*).

Establishing and changing academic plan requirements

1. Academic units (departments, colleges, and campuses) have the authority to establish their curricula and the requirements, including prerequisite courses, for academic plans, subject to the final authority of the Board of Regents. Academic plans include:
    - undergraduate degrees,
    - graduate degrees;
    - professional degrees;
    - majors;
    - minors;
    - undergraduate certificates; and

   o post-baccalaureate certificates.

2. Academic units have the authority to add to or remove courses, including prerequisite courses, from academic plans. The additions or deletions of courses from the academic plan requirements must be in accordance with Board of Regents policies and in compliance with rules established by the college and campus.
3. Changes to academic plans must have an effective date, based on the start of an academic term (e.g., fall semester 2018). Changes to requirements may not be made in the middle of an academic term. Changes to academic plans should be announced far enough in advance so that students, including continuing students and prospective first-year and prospective transfer students, can plan accordingly.
4. Students must follow the requirements of the academic plan in effect during the term in which they entered the plan. Academic units may offer the choice of moving to the new requirements to currently enrolled students who have already been admitted to an existing academic plan. However, the academic unit cannot mandate a new requirement of students who are currently enrolled in the plan without having sought and received prior approval of the dean of the college or the appropriate official on a campus.
5. Academic units must clearly communicate their policies and decisions regarding new or revised requirements for academic plans to prospective and current students. This includes changes to a major, minor, or certificate program, including changes in required prerequisites.

Expiration of old credits

To ensure that students receiving a degree or certificate will be up-to-date in the discipline, an academic unit (a department or comparable unit) may decide not to accept course work towards satisfying requirements for the major, minor, or certificate if the course was taken too long ago.

Students returning from an approved leave of absence are subject to the specific conditions/requirements identified in Administrative Policy: *Leave of Absence and Readmission for Undergraduates: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rocheste*r or Leave of Absence and Reinstatement from a Leave: Graduate Students

Exclusions

This policy is not applicable to the Duluth campus.

Reason for Policy

Departments, colleges and campuses are best suited to determine curricula and requirements for majors and minors, for graduate and professional degrees, and to add or remove course offerings. It is in students' best interests if changes in requirements do not occur frequently or arbitrarily, and students are provided with advance notice of such changes.

This policy implements criteria and requirements for accreditation established by the Higher Learning Commission.

Procedures

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

Forms/Instructions

There are no forms associated with this policy.

Appendices

There are no appendices associated with this policy.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is a change in major requirements?**

   The academic department(s) responsible for a major may add, delete, or modify the published degree requirements for a major in that department. As examples, required courses may be added or deleted, or changed; admissions requirements for a major may be changed.

2. **What are some examples of the levels of academic unit authority**?

A department, or a group of departments working collaboratively, has the authority to establish the course requirements for a major, minor, or certificate program, including prerequisite requirements; for example, the particular courses required to receive an M.A. degree in History.

A college has the authority to establish college-wide requirements for particular types of academic programs, for example, a second language requirement for a B.A. degree granted within that college.

A campus has the authority to establish campus-wide requirements for groups of academic programs. Some examples are a first-year writing requirement for all undergraduate degrees, the minimum number of credits required for a baccalaureate degree, and a minimum GPA requirement for the award of an undergraduate degree graduation.

3. **How does expiration of old credits show on a student's transcript?**

"Expiration of old credit" refers to coursework a student has completed too long ago for that subject matter to be current in the discipline. The academic unit may determine that the student must take additional, current coursework in that subject matter in order to fulfill the requirements for an academic program. The prior credits are not removed from the student's transcript; however, they do not count toward satisfying requirements for the particular undergraduate major, minor, or certificate.

Contacts

Subject	Contact	Phone	Email
Primary Contact(s)	*Jessica Kuecker Grotjohn* Toni Abts~~Karen Starry~~	612-624-1328 612-625-2815	jkuecker@umn.edu gspolicy~~starry~~@umn.edu
Crookston Campus	*Jason Tangquist*	218-281-8424	jtangqui@crk.umn.edu
Morris Campus	Peh Ng~~Janet Ericksen~~	320-589-6015	pehng~~ericksja~~@morris.umn.edu

Rochester Campus	*Diane Douglas*	507-258-8008	douglasd@r.umn.edu

Definitions

Academic Program
Undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees, majors, minors, and certificates that appear on official University transcripts.

Academic Major
A student's main field of specialization during the student's undergraduate or graduate studies. The major is recorded on the student's transcript.

Academic Minor
A student's declared secondary field of study or specialization during the student's undergraduate or graduate studies. A minor typically consists of a set of courses that meet specified guidelines and is designed to allow a sub-major concentration in an academic discipline or in a specific area in or across disciplines. The minor is recorded on the student's transcript.

Certificate
A particular set of courses or coursework that typically addresses new knowledge or practice areas emerging from technological, social, or economic changes to which particular professions or occupations must adjust. The certificate is recorded on the student's transcript.

Curriculum
The set of courses offered by a unit.

Responsibilities

Academic Department(s) Responsible for the Academic Program

- Maintain complete, up-to-date descriptions of the requirements for its academic programs, including all prerequisite courses
- Determine requirements for admission to particular academic programs/plans.
- Maintain up-to-date curricular offerings, regularly scheduled, in order to allow students to make timely progress toward completing an academic program.

- Provide full and timely information regarding course content and scheduling.
- Clear students for graduation, certifying that they have met the requirements for the major, minor, or certificate.
- Review and provide final approval for requests for waivers of particular requirements for the major, minor, or certificate.

College/Campus

- Maintain up-to-date descriptions of the collegiate and campus requirements for academic programs within that college and campus.
- Review and provide final approval for requests for waivers of particular academic program requirements at the college/campus level.

Executive Vice President and Provost

- Review and recommend approval of academic proposals for Board of Regents consideration and final action.

Board of Regents

- Review and provide final approval of proposals for new, changed, or discontinued academic programs/plans.

Related Information

- Administrative Policy: *Adding, Changing or Discontinuing Academic Plans*
- Administrative Policy: *Leave of Absence and Readmission for Undergraduates: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester*

- *Leave of Absence and Reinstatement from a Leave: Graduate Students*

- *Higher Learning Commission, Criteria and Requirements for Accreditation*

History

Amended:

June 2016 - Comprehensive Review, Major Revision: 1. Defines "academic plan" to include majors, minors, and certificates (i.e., to include all academic plans that are documented on the transcript). Certificates were not included in the past, as their requirements were not formally documented in PCAS until two years ago. 2. Provides examples of levels of academic units authority in FAQ #5, to clarify for advisors and faculty who has authority over a particular requirement. 3. Includes a definition of a certificate, consistent with the definitions in other policies 4. Outlines the responsibilities at the department/program level, college/campus level, SVPP level, and Regents level. 5. Aligns with Administrative Policy: Adding, Changing or Discontinuing Academic Plans.

Amended:

September 2014 - Clarifications related to Higher Learning Commission accreditation requirements.

Amended:

August 2010 - Added questions 2-4 to Frequently Asked Questions.

Amended:

December 2009 - Policy now applies to Crookston.

Effective:

April 2009