

## Report of the Academic Quality Committee to the Senate Executive Committee

October 8, 2012

The Academic Quality Committee met on Thursday, September 13, 2012 and voted on two matters:

1. **Recommendation in regard to “Proposed Catalog Changes Related to Pursuit of Concurrent Baccalaureate Degrees,” dated August 21, 2012:**

The committee endorses the Provost's plan to allow students to earn concurrent degrees. This change will enable ambitious students that want to combine majors across disciplines to do so without the requirement that one of their two majors be listed within a degree type that does not correspond with what is normally awarded in that field. It will also foster more creative combinations of majors across disciplines *and across degree types* that will allow our students more flexibility to customize their undergraduate programs to their needs. As such, concurrent degrees earned by WKU students will more accurately reflect the work that they have carried out on campus. They will provide increased flexibility and competitiveness for our graduates when they apply for jobs, fellowships, and for admission to graduate programs.

While the committee understood the rationale behind a given student's desire to concurrently earn two different degree types (a B.A. and a B.S., for example), we would like the Provost to clarify what he believes the university's policy should be regarding the awarding of concurrent degrees of the *\*same\** type (such as two B.A.s). There may be reasons why, for instance, students may want to earn two separate, concurrent B.A. degrees instead of a double major within a single B.A., but we prefer that whatever decision is made in regard to this particular issue within the new policy fall in line with what other KY colleges and universities allow.

In regard to the specific issues that the Provost asked us to consider regarding the proposed policy change, we offer the following responses:

a. *“The need (or lack thereof) for an ancillary minor or additional major for the second degree”*

In spirit and substance, the committee believes that a dual degree should be treated like a double-major. As such, there is no possibility of a student's program falling short of the existing minimum credit hour requirements under option Option III on page 51 of the current undergraduate catalog.

b. *“Do we wish to allow any overlap of courses between the two degrees? In other words, what should “XX” and “YY” be in the suggested language? A student can currently use courses in partial fulfillment of both majors in a double-major degree; should this privilege be extended to second degrees?”*

The committee has no problem with extending this to second degrees. Because these degrees will normally be of different types, the amount of course overlap will be lower than double-major combinations within the same degree type under the existing policy. In a case where a dual degree is of the same type, the overlap will be the same as it would be if a student were a double-major under the current policy.

2. **Information Item re: "An Increased Emphasis on Bi-Term Courses at WKU?"**  
**Dated August, 2012:**

The committee supports proceeding with a further analysis of the Provost's bi-term plan with the stipulation that our decision to examine it should not be mistaken as any form of tacit endorsement.