

Proposal to Revise an Academic Policy (Action Item)

Contact Person: Michelle Hollis, michelle.hollis@wku.edu, 745-4321

- 1. Identification of proposed policy revision:** Revise the residency requirements for graduation honors for baccalaureate degree recipients.

- 2. Catalog statement of existing policy:**

Students who maintain superior cumulative grade point averages are recognized at graduation according to the following designations:

With Distinction—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.4 - 3.69 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

With High Distinction—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.7 - 4.0 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

Cum Laude—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.40 - 3.59 and a minimum of 54 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

Magna Cum Laude—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.60 - 3.79 and a minimum of 54 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

Summa Cum Laude—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.80 - 4.00 and a minimum of 54 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

- 3. Catalog statement of proposed policy:**

Students who maintain superior cumulative grade point averages are recognized at graduation according to the following designations:

With Distinction—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.4 - 3.69 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

With High Distinction—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their associate degree with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.7 - 4.0 and a minimum of 27 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

Cum Laude—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.40 - 3.59 and a minimum of 45 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

Magna Cum Laude—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.60 - 3.79 and a minimum of 45 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

Summa Cum Laude—The graduation honor given to students who have completed their baccalaureate study with both cumulative overall and cumulative WKU grade point averages of 3.80 - 4.00 and a minimum of 45 semester hours earned in residence at WKU.

- 4. Rationale for proposed policy revision:** During the past few years, WKU has developed articulation agreements and joint admissions agreements with several institutions to assist students in transferring coursework to fulfill requirements for a baccalaureate degree. In addition, recent state legislation (HB 160) has been passed to enhance students' transfer experience. With this increased focus on transferability of credit, it is proposed that the number of residence hours to receive graduation honors be reduced from 54 to 45 for baccalaureate degrees. This intent of this proposal is to avoid penalizing transfer students with excellent grades.

Students can earn a baccalaureate degree with a minimum of 25% of the degree program earned in residence hours (essentially 30 hours or two semesters). The proposed number of residence hours for graduation honors would exceed the minimum number of hours to earn a baccalaureate degree by 15 hours, respectively. Four of the public universities in Kentucky require 45 hours for residency or less.

Three of our Benchmark Institutions allow students who have completed 45 credits in residency to graduate with honors (California State University – Fresno, Florida Atlantic University – Boca Raton and Northern Arizona University). Five of our Benchmark Institutions allow transfer students who meet the GPA requirements to graduate with honors with no stipulation on the minimum number of credit hours earned in residency.

- 5. Impact of proposed policy revision on existing academic or non-academic policies:**
None

- 6. Proposed term for implementation:** 2014 Spring Semester

- 7. Dates of prior committee approvals:**

CAD Endorsement January 22, 2014

UCC Academic Policy Subcommittee February 7, 2014

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee February 27, 2014

University Senate _____

Proposal Date: January 21, 2014

University College
Dean's Office
Proposal to Revise an Academic Policy
(Action Item)

Contact Person: Merrall Price, merrall.price@wku.edu, x5-4200.

Identification of proposed policy revision: General Education Requirements for Associate Degrees

1. Catalog statement of existing policy:

General Education Requirements for Associate Degrees

Students in Associate Degree programs must take a minimum of 15 hours of General Education courses as outlined below:

- **Category A1: Organization and Communication of Ideas.....3 hours**
ENG 100/ENGL 100C Freshman English
- **Category B: Humanities.....3 hours**
Any class from section I or section II (Electives)
- **Category C: Social and Behavioral Sciences.....6 hours**
Any two classes
- **Category D: Natural Sciences-Mathematics.....3 hours**
Any class from section I (Science) or section II (Mathematics)

2. Catalog statement of proposed policy:

General Education Requirements for Associate Degrees

Students in Associate Degree programs must take a minimum of 15 hours of General Education courses as outlined below:

- **College Composition (WC) 3 hours**
- **Arts and Humanities (AH) 3 hours**
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (SB) 3 hours**
- **Quantitative Reasoning (QR) or Natural and Physical Sciences (NS) 3 hours**
- **One other class from the Foundations OR Explorations categories: 3 hours**

3. Rationale for proposed policy revision:

Although the change to the Colonnade Program for students seeking baccalaureate degrees is well underway, corresponding change has not been made to the general education requirements for an associate's degree. As a result, without this proposed change, the catalog would still have to retain references to outdated general education categories, but more importantly, students who complete an associate's degree program and continue on to a baccalaureate would not be able to move smoothly from one to the other. For example, several courses that were approved as general education courses under the old system have not been approved as Colonnade classes, and the "Foundations" part of the Colonnade program focuses more heavily on the humanities than on social and behavioral sciences. Even the "Explorations" part of the program asks for only three credit hours in social and behavioral sciences, whereas the associate's degree currently asks for six. This means that, without this change, students may complete their general education requirements for a WKU associate's degree to find that one or more of their courses do not count toward a WKU baccalaureate.

This proposal revises the general education requirements for an associate's degree to more closely mirror those of the Colonnade Program, while still retaining the basic categories required by SACS, namely:

"In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession."

Please note that this proposal covers the generic minimums only, replacing the text currently on page 41 of the catalog; individual associate degree programs will revise their own programs as necessary, and, as before, will be allowed to specify that their students take particular courses that fit these categories.

4. Impact of proposed policy revision on existing academic or non-academic policies:

4.1 Impact on policies:

Will make policies consistent at different degree levels.

4.2 Impact on populations that may be affected:

Will lessen the risk that students moving from one degree to another will have to take delay graduation and take additional unnecessary classes.

5. Proposed term for implementation: Fall 2014.

6. Dates of prior committee approvals:

Department/ Unit _____	<u>N/A</u> _____
_____ College Curriculum Committee	<u>N/A</u> _____
UCC Academic Policy Subcommittee (if applicable)	_____
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee	<u>February 27, 2014</u> _____
University Senate	_____