

5-3-2004

2.5 GPA Requirement for Entrance into a Major

The College at Brockport, College Senate

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SUNY BROCKPORT

Faculty Senate
State University of New York
College at Brockport
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Brockport, NY 14420-2925
(585) 395-2586 (Fax) 395-2246

Resolution # 41
2003-2004
FACULTY SENATE

TO: Dr. Paul Yu, College President

FROM: The Faculty Senate Meeting on: **May 3, 2004**

RE: ⇨ I. Formal Resolution (*Act of Determination*)
II. Recommendation (*Urging the Fitness of*)
III. Other, For Your Information (*Notice, Request, Report, etc.*)

SUBJ: **2.5 GPA Requirement**

Signed:  Date: 5/12/04
(Dr. Kenneth O'Brien, 2002-2004 Faculty Senate President)

TO: The Faculty Senate

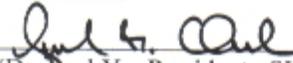
FROM: 
Dr. Paul Yu, College President

RE: ⇨ I. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution (circle)
a. Accepted Effective Date: 7/6/04
b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on ___/___/___
c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation
II, III. Response to Recommendation or Other/FYI
a. Received and acknowledged
b. Comment:

DISTRIBUTED TO: President's Staff
Dean's Council

O: Originator, Academic
advisement, Registrar

Distribution Date: _____

Signed:  Date: 7-6-04
(Dr. Paul Yu, President, SUNY College at Brockport)
Dr. John B. Clark, Interim President

**FACULTY SENATE OFFICE
RESOLUTION PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: MARCH 1 - Proposals received after March 1 may not be reviewed until next semester.

Submit all proposals to the Faculty Senate President electronically or on a disk with a hard copy.

Please provide cover page information requested.

facprez@brockport.edu, fSenate@brockport.edu

Faculty Senate Office, 426 Allen Building

NUMBER TO BE ASSIGNED BY SENATE OFFICE

ROUTING NUMBER*	#1 03-04 UC
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1. PROPOSAL TITLE:

Please be somewhat descriptive, for example, *Graduate Probation/Dismissal Proposal* rather than *Graduate Proposal*.

2.5 GPA Restrictions for Entrance into a Major

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

Entrance into majors should not be restricted by an overall GPA. Departments, however, can establish a GPA requirement for continuation in or satisfactory completion of the major.

3. SUBMISSION & REVISION DATES: PLEASE DATE ALL UPDATED DOCUMENTS and resubmit to the Senate Office electronically prior to Senate review and vote at fSenate@brockport.edu.

First Submission	Updated on	Updated on	Updated on
May 30, 2003	4/1/04		

4. SUBMITTED BY: (contact person)

Name	Department	Phone	Email
David Brannigan	Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on GPA Restrictions for Major	5759	dbrannig@brockport.edu

5. COMMITTEES TO COPY: (Senate office use only)

Committee	Forwarded To	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget	Committee Chair	6/9/03
<input type="checkbox"/> College Environment	Executive Committee	9/15/03, 3/29/04
<input type="checkbox"/> Enrollment Policies	Senate Floor	4/19/04
<input type="checkbox"/> General Education	College President	
<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Curriculum		
<input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Policies		
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Policies		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Curriculum		

*(ROUTING NUMBER WILL BE COMMITTEE INITIALS FOLLOWED BY A CHRONOLOGICAL NUMBER SEQUENCE)

POLICY RECOMMENDATION ON G.P.A. RESTRICTIONS TO CONTROL ENTRANCE INTO A MAJOR

(Revised 4/1/04)

Introduction:

The Ad Hoc 2.5 G.P.A. Committee was charged by Faculty Senate President Ken O'Brien during the spring semester of 2003 to formulate a policy to govern the use of a 2.5 overall G.P.A. for entrance into a major. To this end the Committee looked at G.P.A. restrictions at Brockport and four regional SUNY colleges and briefly the results are as follows.

At Brockport four departments (BUS, CRJ, NUR and SWO) either require a 2.5 G.P.A. for entrance into the major or that students attain A 2.5 G.P.A. in selected courses (4-8 courses). At the other SUNY colleges, Oswego has a similar pattern, while the other schools tend to require only the maintenance of a 2.0 G.P.A. in courses within the major.

Regarding reasons for the restrictions among the Brockport departments, the sole reason cited was that either during accreditation processes or in response to agencies that took Brockport students for internships or clinical training, the respective departments were told that in order to either achieve accreditation or being allowed to place students in agencies, the departments had to increase the quality of their students. The affected departments interpreted this as meaning that they should use a G.P.A. level for regulating the acceptance of students into their majors. CRJ computes this G.P.A. on 24 credits of course work at Brockport. The other three departments define 4-8 corequisite or prerequisite courses that are used to compute the G.P.A.

Subsequently the Senate Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UGCC) reviewed the recommendations; and although, the UGCC essentially accepted the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation some minor revisions were made.

RECOMMENDATION:

In order to ensure that new students obtain faculty advisement as soon as possible, we are recommending that all students who have met the college entrance or transfer requirements should be allowed to either declare a major or to file an intent to major form in any discipline. From this it follows that departments will not have a standard for admission into their major that is higher than that for the college, unless, mandated by accreditation standards. Departments, however, can establish a G.P.A. requirement for continuation in or satisfactory completion of the major. Similarly departments, such as those in the arts, may establish competency in certain skills as the basis for continuation in or satisfactory completion of the major

To: Dena Levy, Chair Senate Undergraduate Curriculum
From: Ad Hoc Committee on 2.5 G.P.A. requirement for majors,
D. Brannigan, J. Davis, D. Jewell, S. Novinger, B. Thompson
Date: June 9, 2003

2.5 OVERALL G.P.A. FOR ENTRANCE INTO A MAJOR POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Introduction:

The Ad Hoc 2.5 G.P.A. Committee was charged by Faculty Senate President Ken O'Brien to formulate a policy to govern the use of a 2.5 overall G.P.A. for entrance into a major. To this end the Committee looked at G.P.A. restrictions at Brockport and four regional SUNY colleges and briefly the results are as follows.

At Brockport four departments (BUS, CRJ, NUR and SWO) either require the GPA for entrance into the major or attain that GPA in selected courses (4-8 courses). At the other SUNY colleges, Oswego has a similar pattern, while the other schools tend to require only the maintenance of a 2.0 GPA in courses within the major.

Regarding reasons for the restrictions among the Brockport departments, the sole reason cited was that either during accreditation processes or in response to agencies that took Brockport students for internships or clinical training, (see Appendix 1) the respective departments were told that in order to either achieve accreditation or being allowed to place students in agencies, the departments had to increase the quality of their students, (see Appendix 2&3) The affected departments interpreted this as meaning they should use a GPA level for regulating the acceptance of students into their majors. CRJ computes this GPA on 24 credits of course work at Brockport. The other three departments define 4-8 courses to compute the G.P.A.

Recommendation

Beyond the College required 2.0 GPA and a 2.30 for admission of transfer students, entrance into majors should not be restricted by an overall GPA. Departments, however, can establish a GPA requirement for continuation in or satisfactory completion of the major. Similarly departments, such as those in the arts, may establish competency in certain skills as the basis for continuation in or satisfactory completion of the major

Rationale

This proposed policy has two intentions:

1. To ensure that students who meet Brockport's entrance requirement can establish affiliation with a department and obtain appropriate advisement
2. To ensure that departments can maintain control over the quality of their major.

The Business department served as model for our recommendation. Any admitted student can submit an *Intent to Major* form with the Business department and then have a Business faculty advisor assigned to them. The student then must attain the 2.5 GPA in required Business courses (see Appendix 4** for mechanism used to select the screening courses) in order to attain full Business major status via the *Declaration of Major* form. Establishing a relationship with a department has been shown by our Retention Committee to foster a more serious approach to studies and thereby enhancing student success.

At this point, the selection for major status by the NUR and SWO departments in addition to BUS follow procedures in line with our proposal, i.e., all students can elect INTENT TO MAJOR status and thus have access to departmental advising; but they must attain a 2.0 or greater in specified courses before they can file a DECLARATION OF MAJOR form and thereby continue in the major. In the case of CRJ the blanket overall 2.5 GPA requirement effectively prevents first year students from obtaining advisement from CRJ faculty and such a practice would be proscribed by our policy. It should be noted that the CRJ department is currently understaffed and they have stated that their current mechanism for restricting their numbers of majors enables them to teach, conduct research and teach more effectively.

Our recommendation would be for CRJ to carry out the type of regression analysis done by BUS to create a more defensible selection process. To this end the CRJ should be given a period of three years in which to phase in a new major selection procedure. In terms of maintaining a reasonable advisement load this is a resource issue that the Administration should address since the impetus for this policy seems to have originated from the Administration's desire to make the major selection process and departmental loading more equitable.

APPENDIX 1

From Sheila Myers- Chair Department of Nursing

>===== Original Message From Sheila Myer <smyer@brockport.edu> =====

> >Dave,

> >

> >I don't recall being asked anything at all about why we have an entrance

> >requirement or how it is operationalized in our department. Was I asked and

> >have forgotten? It is somewhat maddening to me to have a committee make such a decision without any input from me (unless someone else from nursing is

> >discussing this with you and I am unaware of it).

> >

> >Students interested in nursing declare an Intent to Major in nursing. There

> >are no GPA requirements associated with this. They are assigned an advisor in

> >our department. They submit a formal application to our department in the

> >semester before they intend to become a nursing major. To be accepted, an applicant must achieve a grade of "C" in all prerequisite courses and attain an overall GPA of 2.5. All students

> >must have a minimum of 54 credits before starting the major. They have until the start of the fall semester to attain this.

> >I believe this allows a student to establish a relationship with our department

> >as soon as they set foot on campus, unless they are a direct transfer into

> >our program as a junior. Many of those applicants have benefited from phone or mail advisement. We believe that our advisement strategies are one of our

> >department's strengths.

> >

> >We do not want students starting our program as juniors with less than a 2.5

> >GPA. We have too many weak students as it is. They need to pass a national

> >licensure exam upon graduation and years of experience has shown us that even with the GPA requirement, many are unsuccessful on their first try. We'd

> >like to increase this requirement if anything.

> >

> >Please let me know if I can answer any questions to prevent this

> >recommendation

> >from affecting the nursing department.

> >

> >Sheila

Appendix 2

From Steve Breslawski, Chair Department of Business
Hi David,

Many moons ago, I believe the requirement of 2.0 was put in to restrict the number of majors. However, the decision to increase the number to 2.5 was never intended to restrict majors. In fact, it was implemented at a time of decreasing enrollments and we were concerned that we might loose up to 20% of our majors!

Our accreditation standards include standards about student qualifications, but they are not precise, i.e., AACSB does not tell us to use a 2.5 cutoff. It is simply up to the business school to demonstrate that whatever admissions standards they use are consistent with the objective of producing high-quality graduates, running high quality courses, and using resources wisely.

The magic number of 2.5 was motivated by the following:

- 1) A competitive benchmarking study of other AACSB accredited schools, SUNY Peers, and aspiration schools.
- 2) A belief among our faculty (that had to face similar requirements as undergraduates) that the students would take the prerequisite courses more seriously if they needed a 2.5.
- **2) Statistical analysis that indicated the following:

- 80% of the grades below C-, given by our faculty, went to students that had below 2.5 in the prerequisite courses. (We were also raising the minimum grade requirement from D- to C- for courses in the major).

- A regression analysis showed a very high R squared (0.89) for prerequisite GPA as a predictor of final GPA. The resulting regression equation suggested that 2.7 was about the right number, but we thought we would lose to many students, so we settled on 2.5.

Hope this helps. If you have other questions, please ask.

steve b.

Appendix 3

Hi David. With some help from Dick Frey, here is what you requested. Hope it helps. Larry

Our SUNY competitors (Buff State and Albany) had standards beyond open admissions which meant that inevitably we would increasingly become the dumping ground for the lower tier. Even though we have no accrediting agency out there, we can't be perceived by the CRJ field or potential students as the program for below average students. I think in the traditional liberal arts areas there isn't the same connection to a professional audience that can affect a reputation.

Quality education depends, in part, on sufficient resources to produce it. When student interest (as measured by requests to major in CRJ) increases, so must resources (assuming resource utilization was maximized before the increased requests). If resources cannot increase, the alternative is to reduce the number of students allowed into the major. By restricting those allowed into the major to those better prepared, we have a greater possibility of producing a higher quality graduate while servicing high numbers of students at the same time.

In our case a number of things happened. We raised the admission requirement, we received a modest increase in resources, and the number of majors continued to grow.

>===== Original Message From dbrannig <dbrannig@brockport.edu> =====
>Larry the Committee I'm on is charged to write a policy for 2.5 GPA
>restrictions to a major and historically CRJ has the longest standing policy.
>When you have time (ha!) could you summarize in a few lines the rationale for
>your department's policy. thanks db
>

Hi David,

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Hope this helps. If you have other questions, please ask.

steve b.

Appendix 5

Additional comments obtained after initial proposal was sent to potentially affected departments

Response from CRJ Faculty:

April 23, 2003

We understand the focus of this inquiry is to seek relief for those departments who do not have GPA entrance requirements from becoming the dumping ground for students who do not meet other department requirements.

The three possibilities provided are all similar in that the first sentence of each states... "should not be restricted..." a condition that is unacceptable by Criminal Justice. What is presented and much too narrow in its scope, does not consider that we should not all be considered of the same cloth. The "one size fits all" model is not the way to go. Institutions of higher education should not adopt the community college model nor should we try to fix one problem by creating others. Academic disciplines have individual needs, requirements, expectations, visions, goals, learning outcomes, expectations from the field of practice and other items that identify their uniqueness and structure. SUNY Brockport's criminal justice program has been here for thirty plus years. It is structured on that history and evolutionary changes that make it the credible program that it is. To change this with a blanket policy change is not responsible.

The administrative impact would be impossible to manage. We have 400+ majors, a half-time secretary and a shared secretary with Social Work. At full staffing of faculty positions, we are generally overwhelmed with work. The absolute nightmare (as experienced by Social Work now) is finding out students did not meet the GPA requirement at semester's end, learning after-the-fact that students are already registered for classes the next semester and then having to get them out, and finding new courses or alternatives. This is a huge problem at this time for them and they are less than half of our student majors.

The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences program evaluation criteria supports our current position and speaks to the need for program quality, challenge, workload balance, etc. Additionally, our criminal justice program competitors in New York State have similar requirements and to lose that requirement at Brockport would open floodgates we are not prepared to address. We are seeking to reduce the size of our program as it is, given the lack of resource support needed to teach and advise our students.

While we/I understand the plight of some departments, they need to find solutions without harming others. Do not remove what is working for those of us with foresight and understanding of our program needs, creating something that is administratively impossible. We do not have the resources and do not foresee any relief for the noticeable future. We do not need to lessen our department's ability to function, to meet our standards, and

provide a quality program any more than we currently experience. What happens is faculty and staff are punished (workload increases) for students who are not serious about their studies, who are not fully engaged as adults should be. We cannot cure all problems, especially when holes have been plugged from past experience.

Our vote is no, do not change what is in place as it creates new problems and issues that are of gigantic proportions.

Richard

Richard C. Lumb, Ph.D., Chair
Department of Criminal Justice

2) RESPONSE FROM SWO
TO David,

We cannot support any of the suggested policies.

We could **not** do away with the GPA requirement for admission to our professional preparation courses without jeopardizing our accreditation. Since the core courses of our curriculum are sequenced over four semesters in the junior and senior year it is imperative that students have the prerequisite GPA requirement at the beginning of the junior year (when they start the professional core). In actuality, we admit students without the 2.5 GPA to our major as "social work intents" (they are members of our department, have social work faculty assigned as advisors, participate in the Student Social Work Organization, etc.). If the college were to adopt any of the proposed policies, we would have to change the name of our admission process to involve "admission to the professional core course of study" at the beginning of one's junior year.

Transfer students pose another concern. Experience has shown that without the 2.5 transfer GPA students cannot succeed in the professional courses. Thus were it not for the GPA requirement, we would be filling class seats with the arguably unethical knowledge that these students would be forced to select a different major at the end of their first semester at Brockport.

We do not have the faculty resources to supervise field placements (not to mention securing educationally sound field placements in this tight economy) nor meet Instructor/student ratios required by our accrediting body with out limiting the number of students admitted to our upper division courses (required core 42 credit hours). GPA is the logical variable.

Let me know if you have any questions about our position.

Diane Dwyer, SWO

3) RESPONSE FROM NUR

Yes, it does. I still don't know which wording covers our concerns though. Could you add the words "i.e. intents to major" somewhere? E.g. "Entrance into majors, i.e. intents to major, should not be restricted by an overall GPA.

Sheila