

Academic Governing Council
Decision Form

This form is to be used when the Academic Governing Council makes a decision on an issue. This form is sent to the Provost.

Graduation Requirements

Decision: AGC voted to approve the 3 elements of the Graduation Requirements Team's proposed changes to the College's Graduation Requirements. The voting results follow:

1) PS 110 to be removed as a graduation requirement

47 in support
14 against
0 abstained

2) The Wellness credit requirement to be removed as a graduation requirement:

39 in support
22 against
0 abstained

3) Graduation will require 6 credits of English composition or 3 credits of English composition and 3 credits of an MTA aligned communication course:

42 in support
20 against
0 abstained

As such, the College's Graduation Requirements were approved as follows:

- Have completed at least 60 credits of course work.
- Have completed at least 15 credits of course work at GRCC.
- Have completed the coursework outlined in the GRCC catalog for the program in which they are enrolled.
- Have earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 in all course work completed at GRCC.
- Have earned at least 6 credits of English composition or at least 3 credits of English composition and 3 credits in a MTA aligned communication course for all Associate degrees.
- Have earned credit for the appropriate general education Group Distribution Requirements for the degree they are seeking.

-No courses below 100 level will be used toward graduation requirements, including the minimum number of credits that need to be completed.

-A maximum of two Wellness credits may be applied toward graduation unless they are specified as a program requirement.

Rationale

The Graduation Requirements Team was formed to:

- respond to end-of-year feedback provided by AGC membership
- better align GRCC graduation requirements with the new MTA requirements and the Curriculum Model
- ensure that the requirements are clear and meet the needs of all students
- evaluate the necessity and purpose of individual graduation elements

The Team was guided by the following principles when developing the proposal:

- align with transfer institution requirements
- align with MTA requirements
- give students and programs flexibility
- align with program accreditation requirements
- support GRCC ILOs and Values
- allow for efficiency and enhance graduation rates

Supporting Data

Community College Benchmarking

The Team compiled Graduation Requirements information for 16 Michigan Community Colleges and FSU's AA programs. The results (based mainly on 2014/2015 catalogs) follow:

- 6 have wellness or PE requirements (3 require 2 credits)
- 6 require a government type course
- 3 require 1 semester of composition, 12 require 2 semesters of composition, and 2 have adopted the MTA requirements
- 6 require a communication course and 4 require a computer literacy course
- All require 60-63 credits and a minimum GPA of 2.0
- Most have a minimal institutional credit policy, but these varied
- 5 have adopted the MTA requirements for social sciences, humanities, math, and natural sciences as graduation requirements

Transfer Institution Benchmarking

The following transfer institutions were benchmarked: FSU, GVSU, CMU, WMU, EMU, and MSU for graduation requirements. The results of this benchmarking showed that none of the aforementioned institutions required a specific government type course for graduation and that only WMU required 2 credits of an activity based wellness course. Three institutions, FSU, CMU and EMU, require a communication course to graduate. The English composition requirements were more complex, but most favored evidenced based writing with further writing requirements within their majors.

Graduation and Transfer Data

During the 2011 fall semester, 2,251 first-time, full-time, certificate or degree-seeking undergraduate students entered Grand Rapids Community College and after 3 years (as of August 31, 2014,) 13% (292) of these students had been granted a degree or certificate from our institution and 24.0% (531) had transferred to other institutions of higher education.

Reverse transfer rates as of 10/17/2014 showed that 343 applications were received. Of these applications, 165 were denied with 27 missing only a Wellness class and 11 missing only PS 110. Four students were missing only EN 102. In all, 47 degrees were not conferred based on these course graduation requirements.

The Team requested the following student data:

- Enrolled in either S14, F14 and/or W15
- Cumulative GPA 2.0 or higher
- Cumulative credits of 45 or higher
- Does not already have a degree
- Has not applied for a degree
- Is not enrolled for Fall 2015

The data shows that of 2,154 students who met these criteria, 962 students (44.7%) had no letter grade (A through D-) in a WE course and 676 students (31.4%) had no letter grade in PS 110. This data shows that a significant percent of students meeting these criteria leave GRCC without taking these courses.

Implications for Action

The following are implication factors:

- Making appropriate changes to the catalog to reflect updated Graduation Requirements
- Identifying programs and pre-majors to be updated and making these updates in *Curriculum/Catalog*
- Seeking transfer institution approval for changes to articulated pre-majors
- Managing sections of affected courses by adjusting the *Fall Schedule of Courses*
- Updating *PeopleSoft* and *Degree Works* to reflect changes

Date of Decision by AGC: November 10, 2015

Sections to be completed by the Provost:

Evaluation Plan

A report on the progress of implementing the new graduation requirements will be prepared by the Dean of Instructional Support and the Dean of Arts and Sciences and shared with the Provost and AGC in November 2016.

The next formal review of the Graduation Requirements by the AGC will occur during the 2021-22 academic year.

Faculty or staff who would propose an earlier review of the policy may do so through an Issue Paper, which the AGC membership would vote to accept or decline.

Response from Provost:

I support the AGC vote. The new graduation requirements are approved. They will become effective Fall Semester 2017.

Laurie Chesley

11-23-15