

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.

Decision: Multiple Associate Degrees

Proposed Policy:

The College recognizes that there are instances where students may require additional degrees for employment or for personal growth and satisfaction. This policy applies to any Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) student who has received a degree from GRCC or any other accredited institution of higher education in a similar program.

Students may be awarded a second associate degree subject to the following stipulations:

1. Students may earn only one transfer degree (Associate in Arts or Associate in Science).
2. The Associate in General Studies degree may not be earned as an additional degree.
3. Subsequent associate degree(s) must each include a minimum of an additional 15 unique semester credit hours earned at GRCC.
4. Degree and program requirements for the additional degree will be based on the catalog that is in effect when the student officially elects the new degree and/or program.
5. No additional degree will be granted in the same program or curriculum in which the first degree was earned.

Proposed effective date for all new students is Fall 2013; *proposed* full implementation for all students is Fall 2015.

Rationale:

- We currently have a practice but not an institutional policy.
- In the absence of a policy about the number of degrees a student can earn at an institution and, more importantly, what substantial differences should exist between different degrees, we face several risks:
 - We are not in the spirit of compliance with the following HLC Core Component: “The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.”
 - It appears that we are allowing students to “double dip” credits (with little proof of additional learning).
 - Earning a second, very similar associate degree uses up more Financial Aid for students, potentially leaving them without enough money for a different, more valuable (perhaps bachelor’s) degree.

- Additional, highly similar associate degrees do not always increase employability or offer significantly new learning.

Supporting Data:

- This policy was developed using a team approach, with input from Registrar's Office, Counseling, School of Arts and Sciences, school of Workforce Development, and the Provost's Office
- The team benchmarked other Michigan community colleges and our major university transfer institutions

Implications for Action:

- Students electing to pursue a second degree will be responsible for the program requirements as they are in the current catalog at the time they declare the second degree.
- If programs have less than 15 credits hours difference, students will not be able to receive degrees in both. Departments will need to review existing programs.

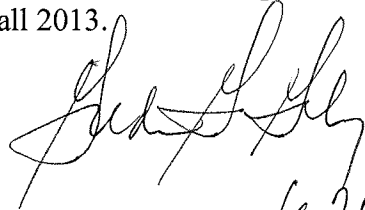
Evaluation Plan:

This academic policy should be reviewed again in 2017-2018.

Date of Decision by AGC: April 9, 2013

Response from Provost:

The Provost endorses the Multiple Associate Degrees policy as approved by the AGC effective Fall 2013.



6.20.13