

Background for Senate meeting of Sept. 22, 2009

Foreign Language –

The motion on the floor, as amended, is to retain the Foreign Language proficiency requirement as a Graduation requirement for all programs which currently require such proficiency. Note: this will mean that all students, including those who transfer from a NJ community college with an AA or AS degree, will meet this requirement.

Reduction to 120 credit hours by eliminating the 3 Upper Level GE courses –

This item originally came to the Senate last year from the Undergraduate Council as a part of their resolution to reduce the undergraduate graduation requirement to a minimum of 120 credits. In the meeting of May 7, 2009, the question was split and a vote taken only on the overall reduction in credits. Now, we must consider the other part of the question, i.e. how to accomplish that.

When the Upper Level Elective courses were added to the curriculum, it was thought that students received sufficient breadth in the GE program which crossed multiple disciplines, but they lacked any depth as they only took courses at the 100 level/without pre-requisites. These ULE's gave students that depth.

The proposed change will be compatible with both of the to-be-recommended curriculae from the GE Council. Those new GE programs have upper level courses that will provide the same sort of depth, building upon prior knowledge. That would make the current ULE's redundant.

Notes:

1. An item that was on the agenda for the Sept. 8 meeting is not included on this week's agenda. The USP variant of the new GE program originally included a 3 credit course that combined the elements of our current First Year Seminar (FYS) with academic content. In anticipation of that, the Undergraduate Council recommended a pilot test of such a 3 credit course and we were going to consider that on 9/8. Now, neither GE proposal has a 3 credit FYS element, so a pilot test would be moot and this recommendation will not come to the Senate.
2. Due to the great interest in discussing the GE curricula and the anticipated enthusiasm of that discussion, Robert's Rules will be followed more closely than usual. This will mean that (a) Senators have priority in discussion over non-Senators, (b) no one will be recognized by the Chair to talk for a second time until everyone has had an opportunity to participate in the discussion once, and (c) comments will be directed at the Chair and not at another individual.