

MEMORANDUM

TO: James Mower, Senate Chair
FROM: Havidán Rodríguez, President
DATE: May 20, 2019
SUBJECT: Senate Bill Approval

I am pleased to approve the following Senate Bill, which was recommended following approval by the University Senate at its meeting of May 6, 2019:

Senate Bill 1819-21: PROPOSAL TO AMEND POLICY PERTAINING TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ENROLLING IN GRADUATE COURSES

Approved: _____



Havidán Rodríguez, President

UNIVERSITY SENATE
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduced by: Graduate Academic Council
Undergraduate Academic Council
University Planning & Policy Council

Date: April 27, 2019

**PROPOSAL TO AMEND POLICY PERTAINING TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
ENROLLING IN GRADUATE COURSES**

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the University Senate approves the attached policy proposal as approved by the Graduate Academic Council (4/7/19), University Planning & Policy Council (3/27/19) and the Undergraduate Academic Council (4/25/19).
2. That this proposal be forwarded to the President for approval.

Policy Proposal

Supplemental to existing campus registration policies providing advanced undergraduate students enrollment access to graduate courses (see addendum), the following is proposed:

Advanced and qualified undergraduate students may normally take up to a maximum of 12 credits of graduate course work while in undergraduate status. Undergraduates seeking to enroll in more than 12 credits of graduate course work will need to secure support on academic grounds from the student's academic advisor and acknowledge in advance that such enrollment beyond 12 graduate credits will be subject to tuition/fee charges at the graduate level and may not necessarily be undergraduate financial aid eligible unless applicable to the undergrad program.

Rationale

The University wants to encourage undergraduates to challenge themselves academically and provide access to graduate course work to qualified undergraduates when warranted. This policy update will not change that supportive perspective.

Campus policy currently specifies that undergraduate students in combined bachelors/master's program pathways, commonly referred to as "BA/MA" students, are subject to graduate charges when registering for more than 12 graduate credits. There is no corresponding regulation/provision for undergraduates not formally in such "BA/MA" programs when registering for graduate level course work. This policy is proposed to create consistency of billing practices and to assure that such graduate enrollments are academically advisable in all cases. Creating a corresponding process to insure advisability, provide for up-front student financial liability/aid notifications and facilitate self-identification for such billing will be helpful to both the students and University billing offices. Too, undergraduate enrollments in graduate courses will be monitored so that faculty driven graduate admissions processes are not circumvented.

Supplemental

Upon endorsement and final approval, this policy may require implementation of an IAS registration system check point, subject to an override process when warranted, including notification to relevant advisors and offices.

Addendum

Policies and procedures currently in place:

Combined Baccalaureate-Master's Degree Programs

https://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/requirements_combined_baccalaureate_masters.htm

Students are considered undergraduates until they have accumulated 120 credits, satisfied all degree requirements and been awarded the baccalaureate degree. *However, although students who have failed to satisfy "all degree requirements" will not be granted the baccalaureate degree until all undergraduate requirements are met, please be aware that for determining such matters as whether students pay undergraduate or graduate tuition, the following policy applies:* Although admitted to an integrated degree program, a student will be considered as an undergraduate student for the purposes of tuition billing, financial aid, and enrollment identification until qualified to receive the bachelor's degree or until enrolled in the 13th credit of graduate coursework. Once a student is qualified to receive the bachelor's degree or enrolls in the 13th credit of graduate course work, the student will be considered a graduate student for tuition billing, financial aid and enrollment identification, and will be eligible for graduate assistantships, fellowships, and loans.

Registration Policies

<https://www.albany.edu/registrar/registration-policies.php>

Graduate Courses for Undergraduate Credit: A senior with a superior academic record may register for a 500-level course for undergraduate credit with the approval of the major department chair and the course instructor. A Permission Number is required to enroll in a 500-level course. In exceptional circumstances, seniors may be authorized to register for 600-level graduate courses provided they have completed most of the upper-division undergraduate and other courses essential to their major and require a graduate course to strengthen it. To qualify for such enrollment, the senior must have a superior record, particularly in his or her major field. To register for a 600-level course, students must have the approval of their advisor and obtain the written consent of their department chair and the instructor offering the course. The department chair should arrange for copies of these consents to be distributed to the persons involved and to be filed in the student's official folder. The student who has obtained permission should register, in person, at the Registrar's Office, Campus Center B52. In all cases, undergraduate students enrolled in graduate courses are subject to graduate grading policies (see Grading Policies below).

Graduate Courses for Graduate Credit: Seniors of high academic standing in the University may receive graduate credit for graduate courses taken in excess of undergraduate requirements in the last semester of their senior year provided not more than 6 credits are needed to complete the student's undergraduate program. Consent of the Dean of Graduate Education is required and must be obtained in advance of registration to receive such credit. Seniors who are permitted to take courses for graduate credit in their last semester also must make formal application for admission to a graduate program and be accepted as a graduate student before registering for study in the final semester.

Discussion/Clarification Points

- The proposed policy seeks to establish consistent billing treatment/limit for undergrads taking graduate courses, whether in combined “BA/MA” program pathways or not.
- The 12 credit threshold check point is intended to assure that graduate study beyond that point is academically advisable and that students are aware of costs and potential financial aid impacts in advance, rather than after the fact.
- A supporting check point approval process should provide a solid and improved student self-identification basis for billing and financial aid offices to administer campus, SUNY and federal policies.
- The 12 credit threshold check point is also intended to assure that students seeking to study towards the master’s degree seek formal admission from the faculty.