Academic Affairs Policy #6
Title: Admissions and Progression Standards in Restricted Programs

Date of Current Revision: September 10, 2013
Primary Responsible Officer: Vice Provost for University Programs

1. PURPOSE
This policy is designed to establish the rules concerning restrictions on admissions and progression in an academic major. The university strives to provide undergraduate students with maximum access to academic majors, minors and pre-professional programs. Program admission or progression standards are occasionally necessary, but are not considered desirable for the program or the university.

2. AUTHORITY
The Board of Visitors is authorized to set rules for the university, and where it has not acted, it has delegated authority to the president. In matters concerning the Division of Academic Affairs, the president has delegated authority to the provost.

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic Program:
An academic program of study offered by the university, including majors, minors and pre-professional programs.

Admission Standards:
Requirements that a student must meet in order to be admitted to a major, minor or pre-professional program

Modifications:
Includes changes to existing standards or the elimination of some or all of the current admission and/or progression standards.

Progression Standards:
Requirements that a student must meet in order to be allowed to continue in a major, minor or pre-professional program

Restricted Programs:
Those majors and minors that are limited in enrollment due to accreditation issues or availability of resources and space.

Restricted Program Advisory Group (RPAG):
A committee chaired by the Vice Provost for University Programs and composed of one associate dean from each college and representatives from University Advising, University Studies, the registrar’s office and the Faculty Senate, which reviews admissions and progression standards proposals and makes recommendations to the provost.
4. **APPLICABILITY**
   This policy applies to all undergraduate majors, minors and pre-professional programs offered by the university, and all academic units, schools, colleges and units.

5. **POLICY**

   5.1 **New Standards**
   No academic unit may implement or modify admission and/or progression standards for an academic program (including undergraduate majors, minors and pre-professional programs), unless the procedures set out herein are followed. Proposals for new or modified standards must be submitted by December 1 of the fall semester of the year prior to their proposed implementation.

   5.2 **Existing Standards**
   All academic units with programs that have admission and/or progression standards must submit them for review at least once every five years. Existing program standards that are not submitted and approved may not be enforced.

   5.3 **Approval Required**
   Academic units must receive formal approval before implementing new standards or modifying and/or using existing ones.

   5.4 **Limitations**
   Standards must be narrowly tailored to requirements and the abilities needed to succeed in the academic program. In no case may a student’s overall GPA be used as a primary determinant of student admissibility or progression, and no program is allowed to establish an absolute overall GPA score as a disqualification for admission or progression. Admission to programs must be offered twice a year (fall and spring semesters). Generally, admission offers are made prior to the pre-registration period for the following semester. Programs that review students for admission after final grades are posted must make an offer of admission prior to the beginning of the following semester. Students who are not admitted may file one additional application in the next regular semester in order to enter a major, minor or pre-professional program. Students re-applying must apply in two consecutive semesters of enrollment at the university. Exceptions may be made at the college dean’s recommendation if it can be demonstrated that an academic program may be harmed by these limitations.

   5.5 **Criteria**
   Circumstances that may necessitate the implementation of program admission and/or progression standards are limited to the following:
   - The need for students to demonstrate special talent and preparation (e.g., in fine arts programs)
   - Limitations on program resources that cannot meet student interest in the program
   - Accreditation standards for programs
   - Professional standards for students enrolled in programs
6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Accreditation Limits
If an academic unit must implement or modify admission or progression standards in order to meet accreditation standards, and if all levels of review support the decision that the university will comply with accrediting bodies’ requirements, the remainder of the review below will not be necessary. If the decision is made to deviate from the accreditation standards, the procedures below apply.

6.2 Initiation and Approvals
Proposals to add or modify academic program admission and/or progression standards will be initiated at the academic unit level by the administrative unit housing the academic program. Proposals for additions or modifications must be approved by the academic unit head and college dean, unless the program is not administratively assigned to a single college, in which case all appropriate deans and/or vice provosts must approve. Proposals must be sent to the Vice Provost for University Programs, who will forward the proposals to the RPAG for review. The RPAG will make a recommendation to the Academic Council concerning the approval of the proposal. The Academic Council is advisory to the provost. The provost will make the final determination on the implementation or modification of all admission and progression standards.

6.3 Implementation and Modification
Requests to implement or modify program admission and/or progression standards must be submitted in writing and should address the following:

- A description of the proposed admission policy and/or progression standards
- The rationale for implementing and/or modifying standards supported by quantifiable data over at least four years (i.e., number of majors/minors, full-time faculty, teaching loads, etc.)
- The impact of the implementation or modification on students
- Specific strategies for regular communication with students about the standards and student progress toward meeting them
- The impact on other university programs, to the extent that it can be ascertained
- Other alternatives that have been considered

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Program: The academic program is responsible for initiating proposals to implement and/or modify any admission and progression standards for that program, following the procedures herein.

Academic Unit: The academic unit is responsible for the administrative preparation and submission of proposals to implement and/or modify any admission and progression standards for academic programs it houses, following the procedures herein.

Academic Unit Head: The academic unit head is responsible for approving any proposals to implement and/or modify any admission or progression standards in the academic unit.

College Dean: The dean is responsible for approving any proposals to implement and/or modify any admission or progression standards that arise within his or her college.

Vice Provost for University Programs: The vice provost is responsible for coordinating the approval process and forwarding proposals to the RPAG for review.

Restricted Program Advisory Group (RPAG): The committee is responsible for making recommendations on proposals to the Academic Council.

Academic Council: The council is responsible for advising the provost on all proposals.

Provost: The provost is responsible for approving any implementation or mediation of admission and progression standards.
8. SANCTIONS
Failure to follow the provisions of this policy may subject the violator to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

9. EXCLUSIONS
This policy does not apply to non-credit or graduate courses and programs offered by the university.

10. INTERPRETATION
Generally, this policy is interpreted by the Vice Provost for University Programs.

Approved by the Provost: March 3, 2011

INDEX TERMS
Admissions standards
Restricted programs
Restricted major
Restricted minor
Restricted admission
Progression standards