

Brothers, Sheila C

From: Raphael Finkel [raphael@cs.uky.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 28, 2013 12:58 PM
To: Brothers, Sheila C
Cc: Davis, Alison F; Lowry, Regina; Prats, Armando; Graf, Gregory A; Hayes, Robert Z; Raphael Finkel; Stanley, Aaron D; Rachel McMahan; Lewis, Wayne D; Provost, University of Kentucky; Witt, Don
Subject: Item 18: College of Communication and Information undergraduate major entrance requirements

Sheila,

The SAASC has voted to approve this proposal. Some notes:

Reference:

http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/curricular_proposals/files/College%20of%20Communication%20and%20Information%20request%20to%20change%20major%20entrance%20requirements.pdf

Overview:

This proposal is to relax the GPA bar for entry into upper-division status in four undergraduate majors and two undergraduate minors in the College of Communication and Information. Currently, the GPA bar is (1) 3.0 or better over a specified set of pre-major or pre-minor courses (with 2.6 in one program) and (2) an overall UK GPA of 2.6 or better. The proposal is to relax both requirements. (1) becomes merely passing the set of pre-major or pre-minor courses, and (2) becomes 2.0.

The reason is to put these programs in line with other UK programs and reduce entry barriers. The hope is that relaxing the requirement will improve 2nd-to-3rd year retention.

A small case-by-case study shows that students who meet the new bar, but not the old bar, did not do noticeably worse in the first semester of upper division than students who met the old bar.

Beth Barnes has given me this extra proposed language, which was omitted in the original document:

Minor in Communication: Any student wishing to minor in communication must meet college selective admission requirements (45 credits completed, 24 credits in UK Core courses, COM 101 and have a 2.0 cumulative grade-point average). The student must file an application for the minor in the Department of Communication Office and have approval from the department chair for COM courses selected to complete the minor.

Minor in Media Arts and Studies: Any student wishing to minor in media arts and studies should file an application with the School of Journalism and Telecommunications after meeting the following requirements: Complete either MAS 101 or MAS 201 Complete 45 hours

of university course work with a cumulative grade-point average of 2.0.

These requirements differ from existing bulletin language only in the number 2.0.

SAASC consensus:

We defer to the College to know what is best for its students.

Positive effects: This change is likely to reduce grade inflation. It will increase retention.

Negative effects: It will permit a few students to linger in the major when they really should be choosing something else.

Other concern: A GPA of 2.0 is very low; a student with that GPA is not likely to excel at the upper-division classes, and might well not pass some of them. So we are gaining higher retention at the cost of (1) delaying the point at which a student actually drops out, or (2) decreasing the overall GPA of graduating students. However, the programs may have mechanisms in place to assist students who need it. Perhaps by the time students get to upper level courses. We assume the programs consider the progression of students through the program as a priority.



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COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

January 15, 2013

MEMO TO: Undergraduate Council
University Senate

FROM: Beth E. Barnes, Associate Dean for Undergraduate and International
Studies
College of Communication and Information

SUBJECT: Request to Change Major Entrance Requirements

The four undergraduate majors in the College of Communication and Information (Communication, Integrated Strategic Communication, Journalism and Media Arts & Studies) and two undergraduate minors (Communication and Media Arts & Studies) currently require that students applying to move into upper-division status in the program have completed a set of pre-major/minor courses with a GPA of 3.0 or better (2.6 in Media Arts & Studies) and have an overall university GPA of 2.6 or better.

The College is requesting approval to change the requirement for admission to upper-division in all four majors and both minors. Students would be required to have passed all pre-major/minor courses, and to have an overall GPA at the University of Kentucky of 2.0 or better. This would put our programs in line with most other programs at UK, and reduce barriers to entry to our majors for students.

We first began to discuss this possibility in light of the university's emphasis on student retention. We know that our second-to-third year retention rates are lower than is desirable; this is largely due to the GPA requirement to move into upper-division in our majors, which hits most students during their second year. The move from USP to UK Core also provided some impetus because students are now ready to move into upper-division sooner in their program of study, giving them less time to make up for early GPA problems before they apply for upper-division status.

This proposal does not involve a change to the make-up of the pre-major/minor in any of the College's undergraduate degree programs.

We experimented with this approach on a case-by-case basis during 2011-12. Mrs. Cathy Hunt, director of student services for the college, tracked first semester performance in upper-division courses for students who were admitted into upper-division who would

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not have been admitted under the existing GPA requirements. Those students' performance was not noticeably worse than that of students who met the GPA requirements. Consequently, we do not anticipate that this change will negatively affect standards in our four majors.

The proposed change has been approved by faculty in the Department of Communication (for the Communication major) and the School of Journalism and Telecommunications (for the Integrated Strategic Communication, Journalism and Media Arts & Studies majors). It was also approved by the College's Faculty Council on January 14, 2013. Dean Dan O'Hair is also supportive of the proposal.

The following page includes the current language in the Bulletin related to the College's admission requirements and proposed language in line with the requested change.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information. I may be reached at 257-4275, or via email at bbarnes@email.uky.edu.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beth E. Barnes".



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Current Bulletin language:

Admission to Degree Programs

In order to be admitted to any of the four undergraduate majors (communication, integrated strategic communication, journalism, and media arts and studies) offered by the College of Communication and Information, an applicant must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Enrollment in the University of Kentucky (Students are considered for acceptance by the college only after acceptance by the University.);
2. Completion of 45 semester hours of course work;
3. Minimum of 2.6 cumulative grade-point average;
4. Completion of premajor requirements of the program to which application is made.

Students majoring in Communication, Journalism, and Integrated Strategic Communication must attain a minimum grade-point average of 3.0 on all premajor courses. Media arts and studies majors must attain a minimum grade-point average of 2.6 in the premajor.*;

5. Completion of UK Core areas I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII and VIII;
6. Submission of an application form.

**For the journalism premajor requirements, the student's grade in JOU 204 counts double in figuring the premajor grade-point average.*

Proposed Bulletin language:

Admission to Degree Programs

In order to be admitted to any of the four undergraduate majors (communication, integrated strategic communication, journalism, and media arts and studies) offered by the College of Communication and Information, an applicant must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Enrollment in the University of Kentucky (Students are considered for acceptance by the college only after acceptance by the University.);
2. Completion of 30 semester hours of course work;
3. Minimum of 2.0 cumulative grade-point average;
4. Completion of premajor requirements of the program to which application is made;
5. Completion of UK Core areas I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII and VIII;
6. Submission of an application form.

Also, the language under the headings “Automatic acceptance” and “Admission based upon departmental review” would be deleted. (Page 182, middle column, in the current Bulletin.)