

Ad Hoc Workgroup on SAASC Charge Fall 2020

Purpose: Review the broad charge of the Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) and provide recommendations to narrow its focus.

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The Workgroup has seven recommendations:

1. Retain the existing expectation that the SAASC review proposals to suspend admissions into a program or close a program.
2. Retain the existing expectation that the SAASC review proposals to create/change college-level requirements.
3. Retain the existing expectation that the SAASC review proposals to create/change University-level requirements.
4. Revise *SR 3.2.1.3* ("Significant Changes") to accommodate program changes involving admissions, progression, and requirements. This language could be improved upon further if SAASC were to identify any types of program changes that should "automatically" trigger the significant change clause and require review by the SAASC.
5. Revise *SR 3.2.3.2.3* ("Review by Senate Council Office") to incorporate the SAASC into the review process for significant program changes involving admission, progression, and graduation requirements.
6. Revise the Senate Rules (SRs) language in *1.4.2.2* ("Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC)") to clarify when the SAASC may be asked to review specific program change proposals.
7. Require Senate review of all edits to the Bulletin to ensure content has been approved by the Senate.

Current Charge to SAASC:

1.4.2.2 Senate Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC)

The SAASC is charged to examine and recommend to the University Senate changes: in the admission requirements and grading rules; standards for granting academic credit; probation and suspension procedures; and degree and graduation requirements. Basically, the SAASC shall review Sections IV and V of the Senate Rules but may consider other related areas. Recommendations by the SAASC on conditions of merit and circumstance for (1) graduation requirements, (2) honors with degrees that are conferred to graduating students (SR 5.4.2.2) and (3) Honorary Degrees conferred to others (SR 5.4.2.3), shall be acted upon by the elected University Faculty Senators, as per KRS 164.240.

Issue:

Due to the broad nature of its charge, the SAASC receives so many proposals that it is difficult to review them all within the timeframes anticipated by proposers. Some of the proposals reviewed by the SAASC are non-substantive program changes while others are requests for considerable modifications to Senate policy. Such weighty policy-related proposals can be delayed or not reviewed at all when there are many program-specific proposals on the docket with proposers who quite reasonably want to know when their proposals will be reviewed by the SAASC, SC, and Senate.

Background:

Senate Rules 1.4.2.2 charges the Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) with reviewing changes pertaining to *Section 4* ("Rules Related to Admission to the University") and *Section 5* ("Rules Related to Attending the University"). When the charge to SAASC was [last discussed](#), the SC acknowledged its broad nature and asked the SAASC to draft suggested changes, but due to workload constraints the SAASC has not yet developed that language.

In the absence of specific formal guidance, the Senate Council Office has opted to read the SRs literally, meaning almost all program changes involving admissions, progression, and graduation requirements are sent to the SAASC for review.

In the meantime, the Senate's Rules and Elections Committee (SREC) has moved all program-specific language out of Sections 4 and 5; that language is now in Section 10 ("Appendices"). At the current time, it is not clear if the SAASC is specifically charged with reviewing program-specific language, because there no longer is any such information within Sections 4 and 5. However, given the SAASC's long-standing history of reviewing programmatic changes to admission, progression, and graduation requirements, the Workgroup thought it reasonable to review all of the SAASC's most recent activities and determine what changes, if any, should be made to the types of proposals that the SAASC currently reviews.

Deliberations and Recommendations:

The Workgroup reviewed the [types of proposals](#) the SAASC receives and noted that in addition to those listed, the SAASC also reviewed proposals to suspend admissions into programs, as well as close programs. Early during deliberations, the Workgroup determined that the lack of specific guidance regarding program changes was likely causing delays in the review process. Program changes include a wide variety of changes to admission, progression, and graduation requirements, some small and some large. Due to the variation in these types of proposals, **the Workgroup focused on types of program changes as the area in which to provide the SAASC some relief from its current workload.** To be clear, the Workgroup is **not recommending any changes to the other components of the SAASC's charge.** (See Recommendations 1, 2, and 3, above.)

The first attempt at managing the number of program changes sent to the SAASC involved possibly restricting the SAASC's participation to program changes that involved changes to the SRs. The problem with that strategy was that there is no formal standard (or process) for adding newly created program requirements to the SRs. Therefore, if the Workgroup recommended that only SR-related program changes be reviewed by the SAASC, then the SAASC would only ever review program changes that were already codified in the SRs.

Next, the Workgroup considered whether certain types of program changes could be identified as requiring SAASC review. However, the problem with that suggestion was that some types of changes have different ramifications depending on whether the program is an undergraduate or graduate program. For example, at the undergraduate level, changing the total required credit hours almost always requires formal consultation with the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. On the other hand, at the graduate level it is relatively common for the total required credit hours for a graduate degree to increase or decrease by one or two credit hours when the credit hours for a required course are changed. The Workgroup thought that perhaps another type of proposal could be defined as either in or out of the SAASC's purview. As with the other attempts, the "category" of program changes involving pre-major requirements was also unsatisfactory. Some program change proposals regarding

pre-major requirements involved lowering existing requirements to be consistent with overall University requirements, while other proposals involved drastically raising pre-major requirements.

Given that there was no simple way to categorize the types of proposals that the SAASC reviews, the Workgroup ultimately decided that the most workable solution was to suggest modifying the existing *SR* language on “significant changes” to explicitly include changes to admissions, progression, and graduation requirements. (See Recommendation 4 and 5, above, and Appendix for proposed *SR* changes.) Because the current charge to the SAASC is not at all clear about specific program changes, the Workgroup also recommends revising the language in *SR 1.4.2.2* to clarify when the SAASC is expected to review program changes. (See Recommendation 6, above, and Appendix for proposed *SR* changes.) As previously stated, the Workgroup’s recommendations relate to the SAASC’s review of program change proposals, not the other aspects of their charge.

The proposed revisions to the SAASC’s charge are intended to help clarify that the SAASC’s focus is generally expected to be on bigger policy issues, although the SAASC may be asked to review certain program changes involving significant changes to admissions, progression, and graduation requirements.

Finally, the Workgroup was concerned about anecdotal reports of changes to academic policy that appear in the Bulletin without having first received University Senate approval. To alleviate perceptions that a level of oversight may be lost if not all proposals involving admissions and academic standards are sent to the SAASC, the Workgroup recommends that the University Senate have final review oversight of all edits made to the Bulletin from year to year, to ensure that all revisions are the results of approvals from the Senate. (See Recommendation 7, above.)

Appendix

1.4.2.2 Senate Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC)

The SAASC is charged to examine and recommend to the University Senate changes: in the admission requirements and grading rules; standards for granting academic credit; probation and suspension procedures; and degree and graduation requirements. Basically, the SAASC shall review Sections IV and V of the Senate Rules but may consider other related areas, including specific program-related proposals as outlined in SR 3.2.1.3 and 3.2.3.2.3. Recommendations by the SAASC on conditions of merit and circumstance for (1) graduation requirements, (2) honors with degrees that are conferred to graduating students (SR 5.4.2.2) and (3) Honorary Degrees conferred to others (SR 5.4.2.3), shall be acted upon by the elected University Faculty Senators, as per KRS 164.240.

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## 3.2. PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND CHANGES

[US: 11/14/88; 10/11/99; 5/7/2012]

The faculties of educational units or graduate programs initiate proposals for new academic programs and for changes in existing academic programs. Such proposals shall be processed as provided in SR 3.2.

Dual credit programs proposed by an educational unit faculty in partnership with a high school or school district shall (a) comply with policies established by the Council on Postsecondary Education for these programs, (b) contain a specific provision that the UK educational unit Faculty approve both the educational site and each individual high school instructor, and (c) provide for the classification of enrolled high school students as non-degree-seeking UK students.

### 3.2.1 DEFINITIONS

#### 3.2.1.1 Initiation of proposals

The faculties of educational units or graduate programs initiate proposals for new academic programs and for changes in existing academic programs. Such proposals shall be processed as provided in SR 3.2. Proposals for significant reduction to or closure of academic programs shall also include the considerations prescribed in SR 3.4. [US: 4/23/2018]

#### 3.2.1.2 Changes

Changes to an academic program include changes to:

1. the requirements for admission,
2. the specific courses, the number of credit hours, or other requirements, for a certificate or degree,
3. a major, minor, area, core, or track within an undergraduate degree,

4. a core or concentration within a master's degree (either a research /scholarship master's degree or a professional master's degree) [US:3/19/2018],
5. a core or specialization within a doctoral degree (either a research/scholarship doctorate, a professional practice doctorate, or an advanced practice doctorate),
6. change in mode of delivery (e.g., to a distance learning or correspondence format), because it may be that the nature of the educational material is such that it cannot be delivered in distance learning form without being a substantive change in content,
7. the title of a certificate, degree, major, minor, area, core, track, concentration or specialization,
8. changes in probation and suspension procedures and policies [SREC: 1/30/2018]

The establishment of a joint degree offering with another institution is considered as an academic program change for the purposes of SR 3.2.

### **3.2.1.3 Significant changes**

Significant changes to the academic content of a program (GR IV.C.2) are defined as those that the College Faculty, Undergraduate Council, Graduate Council, or Senate Council Office determines involve one or more of the following: [US: 4/23/2018]

1. changes to academic content of the program (GR IV.C.2) (including admissions, progression, and graduation requirements) that carry a significant impact (e.g., curricula) on the home unit or another educational unit; or
2. significant impact on the character or the purpose of the program (e.g., addition of a track, concentration, or specialization in a degree program).

A degree program change meeting the criteria of "minor program change" (SR 3.2.3.4) is exempt from the above definition. [US: 4/23/2018]

The Honors Program is an academic program within the meaning of this significant change procedures rule. [US: 4/23/2018]

### **3.2.2 FORMS TO BE USED**

Senate Council-approved forms and other mechanisms to initiate proposals for new undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees, and for undergraduate, graduate or first professional certificates, or to initiate changes to these academic programs, are available at <http://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/forms> and shall be used to initiate proposals under SR 3.2. In the case of academic programs in the health care colleges, the initiator of the proposal shall contact the chair of the Health Care Colleges Council (HCCC) or, in the case of the College of Law, the appropriate associate dean, for information on the appropriate proposal submission format.

### **3.2.3 PROCEDURES TO BE USED**

### **3.2.3.1 Approval by the Educational Unit Faculty**

[US: 5/7/2012]

The Faculty of the originating educational unit makes the decision whether to approve proposals for new academic programs or changes to academic programs (including changes to the educational unit's University Scholars program and to dual degree programs) (GR VII.E.1-5). For UK Core, the "Faculty" within the meaning of this rule is the body identified by the University Senate to perform the educational policy-making functions of the respective program. For graduate programs, "the Faculty" is the voting graduate faculty of that program (SR 3.2.3.1.2). [US: 5/7/2012; 5/6/2019]

In a manner prescribed by the College Faculty Rules, the chair/director shall forward to the College Faculty a proposal arising under SR 3.2. The chair/director's transmittal attests thereby that the proposal has been approved in accordance with the Rules of the Faculty of the originating unit. The chair(s)/director(s) may include separate opinion(s) on the academic merits or on the administrative feasibility of the proposal.

- \* If a program was originally approved for face to face delivery, and the dean later wants it to be delivered in part as 'face to face' and in part as distance learning, then the College Faculty has the role, and not the dean, to determine and approve as to whether the academic content of the program lends itself to delivery in part by distance learning. [SREC: 3/9/2012]
- \* This rule does not have the intent or effect of prohibiting any college from seeking and utilizing the opinion of any willing academic council of the Senate before the proposal is submitted to the first officially required academic council of review. [SREC: 8/21/2014]

Dual degree programs are simultaneously considered for approval by the respective unit faculties pursuant to the above procedures. One of the department chair(s)/director(s) shall forward the approved proposal to the College Faculty, or, in the case of dual degree programs that cross colleges, to each College Faculty.

#### **3.2.3.1.1 Undergraduate and professional certificates or degrees**

In cases of proposals concerning undergraduate or professional certificates or degrees, the respective College Faculty makes the decision whether to approve the proposal, in a manner pursuant to its College Rules (GR VII.E.3). The dean, or their designee, shall forward an approved proposal to the appropriate academic council of the Senate (SR 3.2.3.2), attesting thereby that the proposal has been approved in accordance with the College Faculty Rules. The dean may include a separate opinion on the academic merits of the proposal (GR VII.F.2.a). The dean shall include a statement of administrative feasibility for new certificate and degree programs and for certificate and degree programs with a significant change. [US: 4/23/2018]

For degree programs and certificates that report to an office outside of a college, the Office of the Provost shall provide a statement of administrative feasibility for new degree programs, for degree programs with a significant change, or concerning for new certificates or certificates with a significant change. [US: 4/23/2018]

Dual degree programs are simultaneously considered for approval by the respective college faculties pursuant to the above procedures. The respective deans may include separate opinions on the academic merits or the administrative feasibility of the proposal. One of the deans, or their designee shall forward a single dual degree proposal to the appropriate academic council of the Senate.

### **3.2.3.1.2 Graduate certificates or degrees**

In the case of proposals for graduate certificates or degrees, a proposal approved by the Faculty of the graduate program shall be forwarded by the Director of Graduate Studies to the dean of the college that contains the home educational unit of the graduate program. If so prescribed by the College Rules, the proposal may be reviewed by, and advisory opinion added by, faculty committees/councils of that college and by the dean of that college. The dean shall include a statement of administrative feasibility for new certificate and degree programs or for certificate and degree programs with a significant change. [US: 4/23/2018]

For degree programs and certificates that report to an office outside of a college, the Office of the Provost shall provide a statement of administrative feasibility for new degree programs, for degree programs with a significant change, or concerning for new certificates or certificates with a significant change. [US: 4/23/2018]

The Director of Graduate Studies, or their designee, shall then forward the proposal to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the proposal is for new graduate program and is arising from faculty in an educational unit that does not already home a graduate program, then the dean of the college containing that educational unit shall perform the administrative processing roles prescribed in this paragraph for the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **3.2.3.1.3 UK Core Program**

Changes in the UK Core Program need approval of only the Senate's designated UK Core Education Committee prior to submission to the Senate Council and do not need the approval of any other college or academic council. Courses offered as a part of UK Core are processed through regular procedures under SR 3.3. [US: 5/7/2012]

### **3.2.3.2 Approval by Academic Council**

[US: 10/11/99; SREC: 6/8/2006; US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.2.1 Jurisdiction.**

The dean, or their designee, shall forward the proposal to the appropriate academic council as provided below. Responsibility for the approval of proposals concerning academic programs shall be vested in the appropriate academic council as follows. [US: 5/7/2012]

##### **3.2.3.2.1.1 Health care college professional degree programs**

Proposals concerning either a professional certificate or a degree program in a health profession that are recommended by a health care college shall be forwarded first to the HCCC. The HCCC shall act for

the University Senate to make a final decision to approve such proposals, except when the proposal requires final approval by either the Board of Trustees or the Council on Postsecondary Education, wherein such cases the chair of the HCCC shall recommend the approved proposal to the Senate Council (SR 1.3.4.1.3).

#### **3.2.3.2.1.2 Other proposals arising from a health care college**

Proposals for an undergraduate or graduate certificate or degree shall be first forwarded to the HCCC if the program involves the students in health care practices.\* If approved by the HCCC, the chair of the HCCC shall forward the proposal concerning a certificate or degree to the Undergraduate Council (subpart c) or Graduate Council (subpart d), as appropriate, below. [US: 5/7/12; SREC: 2/13/2013]

- \* “Health care practices” within the meaning of this rule includes those health care practices that subject students to jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees-approved Health Care Colleges Code of Student Professional Conduct (‘HCC Code’), even if the practices are conducted as part of an undergraduate or graduate academic program (see also HCC Code 1.B, para. 2) [SREC: 12/17/2013].

#### **3.2.3.2.1.3 Undergraduate certificates and degrees**

All proposals concerning undergraduate certificate or degree programs shall be forwarded to the Undergraduate Council [US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.2.1.4 Graduate certificates and degrees**

All proposals concerning graduate certificates and degrees, including professional degree programs not subject to HCCC review, shall be forwarded to the Graduate Council. [US: 5/7/2012; 3/19/2018]

#### **3.2.3.2.1.5 Transmittals and notifications**

New professional degrees or changes in professional degree programs in the College of Law do not require approval by an academic council and are transmitted by the dean of the College of Law, or their designee, directly to the Senate Council Office. If the curriculum of a professional residency or fellowship program is planned to require 18 or more credit bearing hours of Senate-approved courses this information shall be provided to the Senate Council for reporting to the Council of Postsecondary Education. [US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.2.2 Action by Academic Council**

Within 30 days of initial receipt of the proposal, the academic council(s) will take action on the proposal or notify the college as to the status and reason for delay. The academic council will evaluate the proposal for compliance with rules and regulations, and for its academic merit. When the academic council approves a proposal, the Chair of the academic council, or their designee, shall forward its evaluation and recommendation to the Senate Council. If the academic council disapproves the proposal, the chair of the academic council shall notify the college. [US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.2.3 Review by Senate Council Office**



The Senate Council Office shall review proposals for new certificates or degrees for compliance with current rules and regulations. In the case of final approvals of proposals by the HCCC, the Senate Council Office shall notify the Registrar and Provost. In the cases of all other proposals, the Senate Council Office shall forward the proposals to the Senate's Academic Programs Committee (SAPC) for review. The SAPC shall submit its evaluation and recommendation to the Senate Council.

The Senate Council Office shall review proposals for changes to existing certificates or degrees for compliance with current rules and regulations. [US: 4/23/2018]

If the change has been deemed a significant change, the Senate Council Office shall determine if the change pertains to the curriculum, or to admissions, progression, and graduation requirements. The Senate Council Office shall forward curricular-related proposals to the Senate's Academic Programs Committee (SAPC) for review and forward proposals related to admissions, progression, and graduation requirements to the Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) for review. The committee (SAPC or SAASC) shall submit its evaluation and recommendation to the Senate Council. [US: 4/23/2018]

### **3.2.3.3 Final University Approval**

[US: 10/11/99; US: 2/10/03; US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.3.1 New Certificates and Degrees**

The Senate Council shall review the proposal and take appropriate action. If the Senate Council approves the proposal for consideration by the Senate, the Senate Council shall place the proposal on the University Senate agenda for its action.

In the case of new degree-granting academic programs, the Senate shall either (1) approve the proposal and forward it through the University Senate Chair (the President) to the Board of Trustees for final University action, including also a Senate recommendation on the organizational placement of the degree program in a particular home educational unit and college, or (2) shall make the final University decision to disapprove and stop action on that proposal.

In the case of establishment of a new certificate, the Senate shall either (1) make the final University decision to approve the establishment of the certificate, including a recommendation to the Provost on the organizational placement of the certificate in a particular home educational unit and college, or (2) shall make the final decision to disapprove and stop action on that proposal.

In the case of disapproval of a proposal, the Senate Council Office shall notify the college dean that forwarded the proposal. [US: 5/7/2012]

When a new certificate or degree has received final University approval, the Senate Council office shall notify the Provost, Registrar and other appropriate entities.

#### **3.2.3.3.2 Changes to Existing Certificates and Degrees**

##### **3.2.3.3.2.1 Substantive changes as per SACSCOC**

Program changes that the Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness has administratively noted in proposal documentation to be “substantive changes” per SACSCOC (AR 1:5), but which do not otherwise meet the definition for significant change (SR 3.2.1.3), shall be processed according to Senate procedures referenced in AR 1:5. [US: 4/23/2018]

#### **3.2.3.3.2.2 Significant reduction**

Significant reduction in an academic program or educational unit within the meaning of SR 3.4 shall be processed within the University Senate as prescribed by SR 3.4. [US: 4/23/2018]

#### **3.2.3.3.2.3 Other Changes**

A proposal that has not been identified as a significant change by one of the lower levels of review or Senate Council Office (SR 3.2.1.3) shall proceed directly to 10-day post (SR 3.2.3.2.4). The Senate Council shall review a proposal received from SAPC pursuant to SR 3.2.3.2.3 and take appropriate action. The Senate Council may direct that the proposal shall proceed directly to the Senate 10-day posting approval process (SR 3.2.3.2.4). If the Senate Council approves the proposal for consideration by the Senate at a Senate meeting, the Senate Council shall place the proposal on the University Senate agenda for its action. The Senate shall either (1) approve the proposal, or (2) shall make the final University decision to disapprove and stop action on that proposal. The Senate Council office shall circulate reports of these decisions to the Provost, Registrar and other appropriate entities. [US: 4/23/2018]

#### **3.2.3.3.2.4 Posting**

The Senate Council Office shall post proposals to change an existing certificate or degree on the corresponding Senate web site for ten business days. [US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.3.2.5 Objections**

Any University Faculty member can raise an objection to a posted proposal through a member of the University Senate. If a Senator raises an objection to the Senate Council and the objection is not resolved, then the Senator may have the issue placed on the agenda of the next regular Senate Council meeting by having five Senators submit an objection to the Senate Council Office. If the Senate Council deems the objection has merit, then it will place the item on the Senate agenda. The Senate shall be informed about the nature of the objection by information included with the proposal packet. Formal action by the University Senate on the proposal is final Senate action. The Senate Council shall circulate reports of these decisions to the Provost, Registrar and other appropriate entities. [US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.3.2.6 Final Approval**

If no objection is raised to the Senate Council Office within ten business days of the posting, then the proposal is approved. The Senate Council Office will report approvals to the Provost, Registrar and other appropriate entities. [US: 5/7/2012]

#### **3.2.3.3.3 Changes to the Structure of UK Core.**

In the case of proposals involving significant changes in the nature of UK Core, if the Senate Council approves the proposed changes, the Senate Council shall put the proposal on the Senate agenda for action. [US: 5/7/2012]

### **3.2.3.4 Exception for Minor Program Changes**

[US: 10/9/2017]

#### **3.2.3.4.1 Procedure**

If a proposed program change meets the criteria of a minor program change, below, then the dean of the college shall forward the program change form directly to the Chair of the Senate Council for approval. If the Chair of the Senate Council concurs that the proposed change meets the criteria for a minor program change and approves it, the Chair of the Senate Council shall notify the Registrar's Office and the dean of the college originating the proposal. If the Chair of the Senate Council believes the change does not meet the criteria for a minor program change or does not approve the change, the Chair of the Senate Council shall reject the proposal.

#### **3.2.3.4.2 Definition**

A request may be considered a minor program change if it meets one (or more) of the criteria below and it does not result in a change to the total credit hours required for the degree program and there is no need to change the descriptive, narrative Bulletin language for the program.

1. Updating a course prefix due to the home educational unit having received Senate approval to change that particular course prefix.
2. Substituting one course for a comparable course with no change in credit hours if: the home educational unit offering the course is no longer offering the course; or the home educational unit is changing a sequence of courses; or the course is replacing a course the home educational unit intends to drop.
3. Changing a list of electives, only when: the courses are all offered by the home educational unit offering the degree program; and there is no net decrease in the number of elective courses available in the list; and there is no net decrease in the number of elective credit hours available in the list.