June 8, 2006

To:       Gary Sandefur, Dean of the College of Letters & Science  
Nancy Westphal-Johnson, Associate Dean of the College of Letters and Science and  
Chair of the University General Education Committee

From:     Patrick V. Farrell, Provost

Re:       2005-06 University General Education Committee Report to the University Academic Planning Council

Thank you for attending the University Academic Planning Council (UAPC) on May 18 to present the annual report of the University General Education Committee (UGEC). It is clear that the UGEC is active and productive, and I applaud the progress you have made on several important initiatives this year.

The UGEC report included three action items; all three were supported by the UAPC. I am attaching the draft minutes of the UAPC meeting, which includes a summary of the discussion.

The first action item, which adds flexibility to the Communication Part A requirement, was endorsed by the UAPC and the UGEC may implement this change immediately. The adopted motion reads: To change the policy related to the Communication Part A requirement to read “Students may receive degree credit for only one Communication A course taken in residence”.

The second action item, which proposes a change in nomenclature and rhetorical framework for presenting the general education requirements to broad audiences, was also endorsed by the UAPC. The adopted motion reads: To change the nomenclature and rhetorical framework for discussing general education requirements and use a bifurcated structure in which we refer to the general education breadth requirements and the general education core proficiencies. This action item has been referred to the University Committee for review and a determination if additional governance approval is required.

The third action item, a recommendation to update and clarify the language related to high school math preparation has also been referred to the University Committee for review and to determine if additional governance approval is required. The adopted motion reads: To update and clarify language in the Office of Admissions materials related to high school math preparation as specified in items 1-5.

1. Three-year sequential integrated curricula like Core Plus and the three-year traditional curriculum (i.e., algebra 1, geometry, and advanced algebra) should be treated as equivalent for the purpose of satisfying the UW-Madison minimum requirement of three years of college preparatory mathematics for admission.

2. The Office of Admissions should state in its printed and Internet documents that the three-year traditional and integrated curricula both satisfy the minimum requirement.

3. The Office of Admissions should state explicitly in its public documents that four or more years of high school mathematics, including a pre-calculus course, is recommended for an applicant to be competitive for admission.

4. The Office of Admissions should include at its internet site a link to the Department of Mathematics’ statement for incoming freshmen (http://www.math.wisc.edu/~maribeff/highschool.html).

5. For the purpose of ranking applicants with respect to their preparation for college mathematics, the Office of Admissions may use as a rough guide the following order: 1) two or more years of (AP) calculus; 2) one year of (AP) calculus; 3) four years of mathematics, including a fourth year of pre-calculus within a traditional or (supplemented) integrated curriculum; 4) three years of mathematics within either a traditional or integrated curriculum.”

(continued)
Please contact me or Jocelyn Milner (jmliner@wisc.edu, 263-5658) if you have any questions.

Attachment

Copies: Elaine Klein, Assistant Dean, College of Letters and Science
Leslie Smith, Chair of the Department of Mathematics
David Musolf, Secretary of the Faculty
Patricia Brennan, Chair, University Committee
Steve Cramer, University Committee Representative to the UAPC
Joanne Berg, Registrar, and Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management
Rob Seltzer, Director of Admissions
Jocelyn Milner, Director of Academic Planning and Analysis
UGEC members (via Nancy Westphal-Johnson)