



OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

Memorandum

TO: Academic Council

FROM: Brad Maclsaac, AVP Planning and Analysis & Registrar

RE: Program Change Policy - revised

DATE: September 20, 2016

Motion: That CPRC recommends to Academic Council the clarification to the Program Change Policy. Specifically, that the exclusions of D and F grades will occur for “degree” changes only rather than majors or specializations.

4.11 Program/Degree Changes

Students wishing to pursue a program of study other than the one to which they were originally admitted must submit a change of program request through the Registrar’s office. Such requests will be subject to the admission requirements of the new program of study and permitted only if space is available in the destination program. For “changes of degrees” all courses with grade of D or lower will remain on the transcript but will be excluded from the grade point calculation. For more information, including deadline dates, visit uoit.ca.

Last year UOIT implemented changes in hopes of reducing barriers for students however, it has become evident that some of these changes are not being implemented as intended. In February 2016 Academic Council received a **Revision to the Program Change Process**:

<https://shared.uoit.ca/shared/department/opp/Governance/Academic-Council/20160223/8-2-1-office-of-registrar-changes.pdf>

The intent of the change was to treat ALL students the same (i.e. treat our internal transfers like transfers students from other institutions which means no D or F grade would count in the CGPA calculation). However, having gone through the winter and spring/summer terms we have encountered numerous appeals by students which have been approved by faculties for exceptions to the new policy. These different “exceptions” are making the process confusing for students and staff in addition to becoming administratively burdensome.

A number of options were explored with the academic advisors and academic representatives, such as:

- a. Absolutely no D or F grade counts (current policy)

- b. Count all D or F grades count unless retaken and replaced by higher grade (previous policy)
- c. Move to all Ds count but no Fs count if there is a change of program

The advisors have recommended option c because one of the larger issues would be a student altering majors may have to retake introductory courses - for example students in BCom pick their major entering into year three – under the current policy they would have previous “D” grades excluded which means they may have to go back and repeat. This is not the desire as we hope to encourage majors. Furthermore, two faculties have noted that this will not provide a solution to the original issue – the fact that low grades in courses that will not be retaken after a change of program is negatively effecting GPA and in turn academic standing. For example, if a student transfers from BEng to BComm all of their D grades will remain and pull down the cumulative GPA such that they may not be able to reach clear academic standing.

In the original discussions we had a hard time determining whether the change should apply to the degree (BA, BHSc, BEng, etc.) or program (Major) level. When the initial policy was proposed, it was agreed that it would be good to include majors as some were quite different in the core courses required (ie BHSC or BAs). This point had some good discussion and the reason it is recommended as degree level is because we have seen some students move out of a major, get the F excluded, and then ask to move back to the original major. Since most moves are from Science and Engineering programs to BComm or BA the majority of those consulted agree to recommend that the exclusions of D and F grades will occur for “degree” changes only rather than majors or specializations. This means if a student has an F in Accounting II and moves to an HR major they will retain that F – it is only if they moved to a BA (Communications major, for example) that the grade would be excluded.

The two major procedural questions that were brought up by the faculties and again at CPRC were:

- If a student had a “D” grade in the originally degree should they be able to move it over to the new degree. The recommendation is no for two main reasons: we do not want the records officers to be determining what should count verses not count – if we say no “D” grade in policy we should follow that and this is similar to external transfers as we would not accept a “D” grade form another institution.
- If a student had a “D” in a pre-req but passed the next course it does not seem right to have them retake the foundation. While we prefer not to alter the policy this is seen as a relevant point. We have not seen this often but as with all policies in the Academic Calendar, exceptions can still be made at the discretion of the Dean for this rule.