MEMORANDUM

September 3, 2013

TO: Ms. Cynthia M. Sanchez
FROM: Patti Ohlendorf
RE: Faculty Council Legislation: D 10328 – 10329, Proposed Change to the General Information Catalog on Simultaneous Majors Policy

Our office has reviewed Faculty Council Legislation D 10328 – 10329, the Proposed Change to the General Information Catalog Language on Simultaneous Majors Policy. The proposed modification, as recommended by the Educational Policy Committee and approved by the Faculty Council, enhances the procedure for a student to pursue two degrees simultaneously and provides guidelines for the review and approval of such requests, with a focus on four year graduation rates. The rationale presented also takes into account monitoring for development of best practices.

Our office finds that the proposed wording is in order for approval.

Thank you.

PCO/bh

cc: Dr. Charles A. Roeckle
    Dr. Dean Neikirk
    Ms. Debbie Roberts
DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

PROPOSED CHANGE TO GENERAL INFORMATION CATALOG LANGUAGE ON SIMULTANEOUS MAJORS POLICY AS APPROVED BY THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Educational Policy Committee, Dr. Mary Rose (committee chair, sociology) submitted the following proposal recommending changes to the language in the General Information catalog (GIC) on the simultaneous majors policy. On April 4, 2013, the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) unanimously approved the proposal.

The secretary has classified this proposal as legislation of general interest. The Faculty Council will act on the proposal at its meeting on May 6, 2013. Final approval resides with UT System with formal notification to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

[Signature]

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

Posted on the Faculty Council website (http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/) on April 23, 2013.
PROPOSED CHANGE TO GENERAL INFORMATION CATALOG LANGUAGE ON SIMULTANEOUS MAJORS POLICY AS APPROVED BY THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE

This legislation emerged from the Enrollment Management Policy Implementation Team, a committee appointed by Senior Vice Provost David Laude and chaired by Vice Provost and Registrar Shelby Stanfield. The team's task is to review reports on improving the University's four-year graduation, especially the one produced in February 2012, to consider which policy recommendations can be readily implemented and can help to improve UT's four-year graduation rate. The committee decided that UT's policy on Simultaneous Majors should be adjusted as recommended by the Task Force on Undergraduate Graduation Rates.

The purpose of the policy is to more formally incorporate the four-year graduation expectation into decision making about adding a second major. The policy requires that approval of the additional major take into account the student's ability to graduate within four years of entering the University (with a footnoted provision for programs that exceed four years in length).

There was significant discussion on EPC about the broad language adopted in the policy (e.g., "take into account" is not specifically defined). After considering various alternative policies that might specify enforcement of the policy to a greater degree (e.g., requiring a dean's signature when adding a major increases time), EPC members unanimously endorsed this broader language. The body felt that getting better information on the circumstances in which an additional major extends time, and how best to strike a balance between improving four-year rates while also allowing students to explore different fields of study, require time and experience with a culture of increased attention to four-year graduation goals. The EPC believes that the adopted language finds the right balance between bringing more attention to four-year graduation goals while also allowing the University time to work out best practices in this regard.

**Simultaneous Majors (new language underlined below)**

(see: http://catalog.utexas.edu/undergraduate/the-university/simultaneous-majors/)

With proper approval, an undergraduate may pursue two majors simultaneously. The two majors may lead either to a single degree or to two degrees. For example, a student who majors simultaneously in history and government is awarded a single Bachelor of Arts degree; a student who majors simultaneously in journalism and government receives the Bachelor of Journalism and the Bachelor of Arts.

The student is admitted to the University with a single major. He or she may choose a second major after completing thirty semester hours of coursework in residence at the University. The student must follow any application procedures and meet any admission requirements that have been established for the second major; information about these and other relevant college policies is available from the dean. Approval of the student's application for simultaneous major will take into account the student's ability to graduate within four years\(^1\) of entering the University.

Students with simultaneous majors must pay all applicable major-related fees for both fields, and they have the right to use the advising and student services provided by both colleges. Decisions about admission to programs, honors, scholastic probation, and dismissal are based independently on the criteria for each major.

A student who chooses to pursue two majors simultaneously is expected to take responsibility for his or her educational development. The student must know and abide by all policies of each of the colleges in which he or she is enrolled. The student must also know and meet the requirements of both degree programs, enroll in courses appropriate to both, meet prerequisites and take courses in the proper sequence, and seek advice from both colleges about degree requirements and other University policies when necessary.

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\(^1\) For programs requiring more than four years, the projected length of the program will be used instead of the four-year standard.