



Proposal to Establish a University Policy on Repeating Undergraduate Courses (Senate Document #18-19-09)

APAS Committee | Chair: Thomas Cohen

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) and Senate Chair Walsh request that the Academic Procedures & Standards (APAS) Committee review the Proposal to Establish a University Policy on Repeating Undergraduate Courses.

Specifically, it asks that you:

1. Review the University's existing [Repeat Course Guidelines](#) in the Undergraduate Catalog.
2. Consult with the proposer.
3. Consult with a representative of the Office of the Registrar.
4. Consult with a representative of the Office of Undergraduate Studies for their perspectives on the impact of the proposed policy on student success.
5. Consult with the Undergraduate Ombudsperson to understand how students are affected because the repeat course guidelines are not formal policy.
6. Consult with the Undergraduate Programs Advisory Committee (UPAC).
7. Consult with the Senate Student Affairs Committee.
8. Review similar policies on repeating undergraduate courses at Big 10 and other peer institutions.
9. Consult with a representative of the Office of General Counsel on any proposed changes to University policy or associated guidelines.
10. If appropriate, recommend whether the University should establish a formal policy on repeating undergraduate courses and submit recommendations for Senate consideration.

We ask that you submit a report to the Senate Office no later than **March 1, 2019**. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Reka Montfort in the Senate Office, extension 5-5804.

**Proposal to Establish a University Policy on Repeating Undergraduate Courses****NAME/TITLE** Doug Roberts**EMAIL** roberts@umd.edu**PHONE** X5-9357**UNIT** Office of Undergraduate Studies**CONSTITUENCY** Faculty**DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE**

The campus does not currently have an official policy dictating how repeated courses are treated in an undergraduate student's record, nor what if any limits are imposed on the repetition of courses. The effective practice is described in the Undergraduate Catalog, but without the backing of official policy students have little solid ground on which to stand when trying to rectify problems caused by the potentially varied interpretation and implementation of this practice around campus. Furthermore, the current practice handles different conditions of repeating courses in sometimes inconsistent manners. Greater consistency and clarity to the handling of repeated courses would be a benefit to students, faculty, advisors and administrators alike.

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE

First and foremost, we would like to see the repeated course practice elevated to official policy. A workgroup consisting of Assistant/Associate Deans and representative from the Registrar's Office convened and generated a draft (attached) of a proposed repeat policy for undergraduate students. This draft was informed by interviews with advising offices from each College or School on campus, a survey of similar policies from peer institutions, and nearly a year of discussion around the guiding principles that such a policy should abide. The goals were clarity, consistency, the promotion of student success, and maintaining the integrity of the student transcript.

SUGGESTION FOR HOW YOUR PROPOSAL WOULD BE PUT INTO PRACTICE

The proposed Undergraduate Course Repeat Policy is, for the most part, a formalization of existing practices in the form of official University policy. There are, however, a few places where the proposed policy differs from existing practice. To the extent that these changes would have to be implemented in our Student Information System, the input of the Registrar's Office would be required to estimate the timeline and cost of such changes. But most of the current implementation involves manual processes. Therefore, most of the implementation would require training and communication.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A draft of the proposed Undergraduate Course Repeat Policy is included as an attachment.

Course Repeat Policy - Undergraduate Students

Introduction

Undergraduate students at the University of Maryland are allowed to repeat courses within the guidelines specified in this policy. The policy aims to strike a balance among several concerns: promoting timely progress toward and the successful completion of degree programs; efficient utilization of instructional resources; an understanding that students, for a variety of reasons, may not realize success in an initial attempt at a course; and a recognition that the adjustment to the University of Maryland campus is not always easy.

Definitions

- For the purposes of this policy a **Repeated Course** will be defined as an attempt beyond the initial attempt of a University of Maryland course that has not been designated as repeatable for additional content. The subsequent attempt at the course may be either:
 - The same course with the same course number
 - The same course offered under a new number
 - Indicated in the Schedule of Classes as “Previously offered as...”
 - The same course offered using a cross-listed number
 - Indicated in the Schedule of Classes as “Also offered as...”
 - A different course whose content and learning objectives overlap sufficiently with the content and learning objectives of the original course such that course credit should not be earned for both courses
 - Indicated in the Schedule of Classes as “Credit may only be granted for one of...”
 - A transfer course that has been evaluated as being equivalent to the University of Maryland course

It should be noted that some courses may not be repeatable. For example, a course may not be offered again, or a course may have restrictions in place that would not permit a student to repeat it.

In this definition of Repeated Course initial attempt only refers to courses that are taken as resident credit at the University of Maryland. If a student receives transfer or prior learning credit for a course and subsequently takes the course at the University of Maryland, the first attempt at Maryland would not be considered a repeat.

- An **Attempt** at a course refers to a course for which a student received a grade of A+ through F, XF, P, S, W, I, NG, or AU (a notation of WW does not count as an attempt).

- **Prior Learning Credit** refers to academic credit awarded for knowledge and achievements gained through prior learning/competency-based education experiences. Details regarding acceptable forms of prior learning credit are given in Maryland Policy III-1.41(A).
- **Transfer Credit** generally refers to academic credit awarded for college-level courses completed through regionally accredited institutions of higher education, provided that the transfer course is similar in level, scope, content and expected learning outcomes to courses offered at the University of Maryland and a grade of C- or higher is earned (grades of D- or higher for courses completed at Maryland public institutions). Details regarding acceptable forms of transfer credit are given in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Limits on Repeats

The following limits apply to repeating courses:

1. Students are allowed ONE repeat of a previously attempted course.
2. Students are allowed up to 18 attempted repeat credits.

Exceptions to Repeat Limits

Under very unusual circumstances, a student may obtain an exception to these limitations by appealing to the dean of the student's primary advising college. The justification for granting such exceptions must be well documented and include, at a minimum, the student's plan for successfully completing the course and degree, and a contingency plan (such as changing majors) should the exception not facilitate the desired outcome.

Effect of Repeated Courses on Total Credits Earned

Students will not receive duplicative credit for repeated courses. When the repeated attempt of a course is at a lower credit level than the original attempt, the student will lose credit upon a completed repeat attempt. This loss of credit also applies to cases where Prior Learning Credit or Transfer Credit has been awarded, followed by an attempt at a University of Maryland course whose content is deemed equivalent and whose credit level is lower. In all cases, the earned credit will come from the most recent attempt of a course.

Effect of Repeated Courses on GPA

With the exception of the New Student Forgiveness policy described below, all grades earned in courses at the University of Maryland will enter into the student's official Maryland cumulative GPA calculation. While repeated courses will not earn academic credit multiple times, all grades will be used in the GPA calculation.

New Student Forgiveness

To help freshmen and transfer students adjust to the University of Maryland, the following two exceptions allow for the student's cumulative GPA to be calculated using only the most recent grade from repeated courses taken at the University of Maryland:

1. when the repeated course was taken within the student's first regular (Fall or Spring) semester at Maryland (this normally applies to students who begin at the University as a transfer student), or
2. when the repeated course was taken either prior to or within the semester during which the student reached 24 credit hours attempted (including transfer credit) (this normally applies to students who begin at the University as freshmen) .

The grade or grades from any attempt at a course at Maryland that falls within either of these two conditions shall be replaced in the cumulative GPA calculation by the most recent earned grade provided that all attempts were taken with the same grading method. All grades will, however, remain on the student's transcript and all attempts at the course will enter into the student's total repeated credits and course attempts calculations. **Note:** grades from Prior Learning Credit or Transfer Credit are never calculated into the Maryland cumulative GPA. Also, New Student Forgiveness only applies to courses taken at the University of Maryland. Neither transfer nor prior learning credit can be used to satisfy the conditions above.

Students may appeal to the dean of the student's primary advising college if they want to forgo the New Student Forgiveness being applied and keep all grades in their GPA calculation. This practice can only be exercised for attempts at courses taken at the University of Maryland and does not apply to transfer or prior learning credit.