

MEETING 10/02/25

2 October 2025 / 3:00 PM / Zoom

ATTENDEES

Michel Pleimling, Dan Thorp, Keith Thompson, Keith Goynes, Lauren Thomas, Susan Sumner, Jennifer Pike (meeting notes)

NOTES in response to Rick Spark's email to Michel Pleimling

1. Regarding Section 2.1.2 and combination degrees:

Message sent to Registrar:

The Registrar requested removing Section 2.1.2 Senior Residency Rule because "Banner will record all course credit regardless of whether it was earned at VT or through transfer credit." The Committee noted that Section 2.3 Combination Degrees also contains a residency rule under point 1: "At least two of the three years of pre-professional work, including the third year in residence, must be at this university." Doesn't the issue noted for Section 2.1.2 also apply to Section 2.3? If so, should the passage in bold above be removed?

Registrar's response:

Yes - good catch! This should also be removed.

Vote: The Academic Policies Committee agrees that all residency requirements should be removed from the Policy 6815.

2. How many VT credits are needed to get a Virginia Tech degree? What is the minimum percentage?

Message sent to Registrar:

Does a policy exist that sets expectations regarding the number of credits earned at Virginia Tech to receive a Virginia Tech degree? Concerns were voiced that without the Senior Residency Rule students transferring from a four-year institution may transfer so many credits that they only need to pass a few courses at Virginia Tech to receive a VT degree (an example was mentioned in CNRE where at other institutions well established online courses exist that are very close to what is taught at VT so that upper-level courses easily transfer). Should there be a limit on the number of credits that can be transferred from a four-year institution to replace the Senior Residency Rule?

Registrar's response:

This is a great question! We do not have a policy that defines the minimum number of credits that need to be earned at VT outside of SACSCOC minimum (25%). We have a limit on community college credit, only allowing up to 50% of the degree's credits to transfer (this has been challenged at times in the past but I feel it makes sense given the difference between lower and upper division courses and that generally a degree would contain roughly 50% of each). So - 50% is clearly too high, so the question is, is 25% too low. I will say that I don't have a strong opinion - on it's surface 25% FEELS a bit low but I don't have a specific suggestion as to a different percentage. you may not have gotten there in your conversation, but does the committee have any opinions?

Committee discussion touched on the two baseline percentages that could be utilized to determine a minimum amount of VT classes required for graduation from VT: the maximum number of credits that can be transferred from a two-year institution (50% of credits required for a VT degree can be transferred) and the SACSCOC requirement (accreditation requires that students have at least 25% of their classes earned through VT). One concern that was voiced was a

desire not to discourage students with a lot of transfer credit from choosing VT as the place to finish their undergraduate education.

Vote: The committee agreed to require 25% of credits from VT to obtain a VT degree. The logic is that starting at the minimum percentage (25%) was a rational choice based on SACSCOC, and the matter could be revisited if needed.

3. Section 2.2, Double Majors and Second Degrees

Message to the Registrar:

The new sentence “Students cannot earn multiple degrees, majors, or major options that are part of the same degree,” proposed in Section 2.2 Double Majors and Second Degrees, was found to be not very clear. Is there a better way to formulate this? Something like “Once a degree is earned, it cannot be earned again through a different major or major option”?

Registrar’s response:

Yeah – sorry about that. That sentence isn't very good – I was trying to pull in suggestions from areas of the office and did a poor job on this one. At minimum, we need to create language to say that a student cannot earn a dual degree within the same degree program regardless of the number of majors that have been established beneath that degree. Ideally – we wouldn't let students earn even a double major with 2 majors that are beneath the same degree however, I suspect going that far will not be well received. Do you have sense of what the committee would think?

Vote: The committee agreed that two degrees under the same degree program will no longer be allowed, in alignment with the restrictions due to the change to Banner SaaS. There exist degree programs with very different majors under the degree, and in some Departments students have been allowed to get two majors under the same degree. The committee agreed to allow this practice to continue.

4. Graduation ceremonies

Message to the Registrar:

In Section 2.4.1 Degree Conferring Dates the Committee proposes to remove “after completion of degree requirements” in line 5 as this is currently not enforced for University and (most) College ceremonies. Would this be okay? It seems that most Colleges do not have a process to determine if a student can walk in a ceremony (i.e. whoever shows up at the College ceremony is allowed to attend).

Registrar’s response:

Yes – sounds good to me.

Vote: Committee agreed to remove any mention of requirements that must be met before being allowed to walk in a commencement ceremony.

5. Associate’s degree conferral

Message to the Registrar:

As there is no graduation policy for associate degree students, could Policy 6815 include both undergraduate and associate graduation? It seems that needed changes would be minor and that the biggest change would be to replace at the beginning “student” with “a student in an associate or undergraduate degree program” or something similar and clarify in a few places that something only applies students in undergraduate programs.

Registrar’s response:

Good thought – let's proceed assuming we're going to expand to include AS students – I'll have our graduation team think this through to ensure I'm not missing anything that would prohibit this.

Vote: While not a vote to include/change anything in the policy, the committee resonated with the Registrar’s response and was in agreement that the undergraduate graduation policy needs to include students earning Associate’s degrees.

Final thoughts:

The committee expressed a general need to clean up some of the sentences/language for clarity. To that end, Michel will send a clean copy of the changes, the original copy of the policy, and the track changes version for the committee to review, suggest language improvements, etc.