SPECIAL REPORT

of the

ACADEMIC MATTERS COUNCIL

concerning a

CHANGE IN THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
B.A. AND B.S. PROGRAMS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Presented at the
743rd Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
December 11, 2014

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Background and Recommendation

This proposal is a revision to the residency requirement for Psychology majors (B.A. and B.S.). Under the new requirement, Psychology students must complete at least 18 credit hours in Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

The revision was submitted as proposal #1257 on the UMass Course and Curriculum Management System.

Discussion arose at the levels of both the Program Subcommittee and the full Academic Matters Council questioning the presence of any University policy prohibiting such a residency requirement beyond the University-wide requirement of 45 credits in residency. No such policy exists, and many departments already have major-specific residency requirements, so the Academic Matters Council found no reason not to approve this proposal.

The Program Subcommittee recommended the approval of this proposal and the Academic Matters Council unanimously voted in favor of it on September 17, 2014.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Change in the Requirements for the B.A. and B.S. 13-15 Programs in Psychology, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 15-013.
All Psychology majors (B.A. and B.S.) would be required to complete at least 18 Psychology credits at UMass-Amherst.

The university requires that students complete at least 45 credits at UMass to receive their degree from here. However, Psychology majors are not required to take any of these credits in Psychology.

All Psychology majors (B.A. and B.S.) would be required to complete at least 18 Psychology credits at UMass-Amherst.

The university requires that students complete at least 45 credits at UMass to receive their degree from here. Some transfer students major in Psychology but meet most of their Psychology requirements with courses taken at other institutions. These students typically meet the university residency requirement by taking classes in other departments and receive a UMass Psychology degree having taken only a few Psychology courses at UMass.

This change is proposed to ensure that all students with a degree in Psychology from UMass have experience with this department. It is critical for students who need letters of recommendation to form a professional relationship with at least one faculty member from the department and institution where they receive their degree. Eighteen UMass Psychology credits (typically 6 courses) including research and teaching assistantships and internships will promote these critical relationships.

This proposal requires no additional resources. The number of required UMass Psychology credits would be low enough that a student could take all of the needed courses in 1 year. This change is not expected to increase the demand on courses that are at or above capacity since it will affect a very small number of students (0-10 students/year) and since students who have completed most of the Psychology requirements (e.g., 240 and 241) are eligible to enroll in a broad range of courses. The 18 UMass Psychology credits will count towards the currently required 45 UMass credits.