

SPECIAL REPORT

of the

ACADEMIC MATTERS COUNCIL

concerning

**CHANGE IN THE CREDIT LIMIT FOR PRACTICA
AND
GUIDELINES FOR NUMBERING PRACTICA COURSES**

Presented at the
636th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
December 16, 2004

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

**William Richards Adrion
Mokhtar Atallah
Martha Baker
Robert Bernatsky
Deborah Carlin
Stephanie Chapko
John J. Cunningham
Jeffrey Eiseman
Ginger Etinde
Ruth Green
Dennis Hanno**

**John Jenkins (Chair)
Arthur Keene
M. Christine King
Linda Lowry
Pamela Marsh-Williams
Ernest May
Jennifer Normanly
Elizabeth Pyle
Theresa Ray
Dennis Searcy
Linda Slakey**

**CHANGE IN THE CREDIT LIMIT FOR PRACTICA
AND
GUIDELINES FOR NUMBERING PRACTICA COURSES**

I. BACKGROUND.

The current Academic Regulations covering Grading System and Credit Guidelines (VI. F., p 55) specify that “*Students are limited to a maximum of 15 credits in practica courses (numbered 298 or 398 or 498) that are not required for the major.*” Noting that a one-semester internship can count for as much as 12 credits of practicum, these guidelines contrast with the current University emphasis on the value of field and practical experience.

Students who enroll in practica as underclassmen or before declaring a major can be unduly restricted in taking internships related to their major since practica credits in excess of 15 credits cannot be counted toward graduation.

The situation is further complicated by the existence of courses (numbered 289, 389, or 489) that are required by certain majors.

II. AMC RECOMMENDATIONS.

The AMC reaffirms the beneficial impact of practical experiences on the total undergraduate learning experience and the need to provide more flexibility in planning a student’s academic experience while maintaining the reasonable proportion that these practica contribute to the 120 credits required for graduation. Toward achieving this balance, the AMC recommends the following:

1. Practica courses that are part of a degree requirement should be assigned regular course numbers that are different from x98, as appropriate to their level. Thus, voluntary practica courses (x98) can be easily recognized as true electives.
2. Internships, Teaching Assistantships and other optional practical experiences, serving as avenues to apply knowledge to practice or as exercises leading to added proficiency, should carry practica course numbers (x98).
3. The limit on credits in practica should be increased to 18 credits and the language under VI. F. be changed to “*Students are limited to a maximum of 18 credits in practica courses (numbered 298 or 398 or 498).*”

In view of the above considerations, AMC voted unanimously in favor of the proposed revision of the existing Credit Limits for Practica and the Guidelines for Numbering Practica Courses and recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the following two motions recommended by AMC.

**MOVED:
17-05** **That the Faculty Senate approve an increase from 15 to 18 in the number of credits in elective practica courses which may be applied to undergraduate degree requirements. Elective practica courses are to be numbered 298, 398 or 498, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 05-020.**

**MOVED:
18-05** **That the Faculty Senate approve that practica courses required by a degree program are to be designated permanent course numbers other than those used for elective practica courses, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 05-020.**