

SPECIAL REPORT

of the

ACADEMIC MATTERS COUNCIL

concerning

**EMERGENCY MODIFICATION OF THE REQUIREMENTS
OF COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE**

Presented at the
603rd Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
March 14, 2002

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At its meeting on February 20, 2002, the Academic Matters Council voted to recommend that the total number of Honors courses required for graduation as a Commonwealth College Scholar be temporarily reduced from ten to eight, as described below.

Rationale

This action is taken in response to present budget constraints and is not intended as a permanent change. It will take effect from the date of its approval by the Faculty Senate and will affect current and future students. The requirements detailed in the legislation authorizing Commonwealth College (Sen. Doc. No. 99-005A) may be fully restored when the Dean of Commonwealth College judges that resources permit.

Some members expressed regret over the budgetary necessity for this emergency modification. However, it was agreed that a program requiring that students who begin as first-semester freshmen complete eight honors courses maintains the integrity of the concept that the Commonwealth College curriculum is a four-year program, with an expectation that students take on average at least one honors course every semester. It should also be noted that Commonwealth College does not contemplate restricting the number of courses a student *may* take. The proposed action only lowers the number a student *must* take. It is the case now that some students take more than the required number, and Commonwealth College advisors expect that a portion of the student body will continue to do so.

A decrease in the number of required Honors courses, implemented along with a reduction in the size of the Fall 2002 incoming class, will conserve substantial resources now deployed to mount General Education Honors sections. These savings will enable Commonwealth College both to live within its means and to deploy some funds to support capstone courses, as required in Sen. Doc. No. 99-005A.

Proposed Changes

The current requirements for graduation as a Commonwealth College Scholar include the completion (with grades of B or better) of ten Honors courses, which must include College Writing (ENGLWP 112H or 113H), one General Education Interdisciplinary course, and two other General Education courses.

This proposal will reduce the total number of required Honors courses to eight, and the specification of “two other General Education courses” to “one other General Education course.” The other course that will no longer be required will come from the five courses that are not specified as to source or application to degree requirements.

The following regulations will remain unchanged: the required Honors courses must be completed with grades of B or better; such courses must include College Writing and one General Education Interdisciplinary course; and such courses must include three courses at the 300-level or above. There will be no change to the means by which requirements are modified for students who join Commonwealth College after their first year at the University.

In summary, Sen. Doc. No. 99-005A will be modified as follows:

	Sen. Doc. No. 99-005A	Proposed modification
General Education Requirements	“...Complete University Gen. Ed. requirements; the courses used for Gen. Ed. must include three Gen. Ed. Honors courses, one of which has Gen. Ed. “T” designation...”	“...Complete University Gen. Ed. requirements; the courses used for Gen. Ed. must include <u>two</u> Gen. Ed. Honors courses, one of which has Gen. Ed. “T” designation...”
Total Honors Courses Required	“...Ten honors courses completed with grades of B or better. At least three courses at 300-level or above. The ten courses must also include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Writing 112H or 113H. • three Gen. Ed. courses, one of which has a Gen. Ed. “T” (Interdisciplinary) designation. • one other interdisciplinary course or an interdisciplinary independent study. • five other courses (e.g., Gen. Ed., disciplinary, interdisciplinary, independent study, research thesis) any of which may apply to the requirements of departmental or interdisciplinary track...” 	“... <u>Eight</u> honors courses completed with grades of B or better. At least three courses at 300-level or above. The <u>eight</u> courses must also include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Writing 112H or 113H. • <u>two</u> Gen. Ed. course, one of which has a Gen. Ed. “T” (Interdisciplinary) designation. • one other interdisciplinary course or an interdisciplinary independent study. • <u>four</u> other courses (e.g., Gen. Ed., disciplinary, interdisciplinary, independent study, research thesis) any of which may apply to the requirements of departmental or interdisciplinary track...”

Recommendation of the Academic Matters Council

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve that the requirements for graduation as 22-02 a Commonwealth College Scholar (as specified in Sen. Doc. No. 99-005A) be temporarily modified, as described in Sen. Doc. No. 02-027.