Proposal to change the Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition policy

The proposed change in the Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition (Senior Petition) policy would benefit students who entered College of Charleston with sixty or more transfer credit hours and wish to take a course at another institution during the senior year – giving them similar opportunities to those of students with little or no transfer credit hours.

CURRENT POLICY (from page 14 of the 2014-2015 Undergraduate Catalog):

The senior year of work for the degree must be completed in residence at the College of Charleston. However, candidates who have earned more than 60 credit hours at the College of Charleston may petition to complete up to 7 of their final 37 credit hours at another institution or by CLEP exam by submitting the Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition Form (Senior Petition), available on the Registrar's website (http://registrar.cofc.edu/forms/index.php).

PROPOSED CHANGE:

The senior year of work for the degree must be completed in residence at the College of Charleston. However, candidates who have earned more than 60 credit hours at the College of Charleston may petition to complete up to 7 of their final 37 credit hours at another institution or by CLEP exam by submitting the Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition Form (Senior Petition), available on the Registrar's website (http://registrar.cofc.edu/forms/index.php). Note: Degree completion requires that all residency requirements for the major, the minor, and the degree be met.

RATIONALE:

Students who enter College of Charleston with sixty or more transfer credit hours are at a disadvantage under the current Senior Petition policy. For example, a senior who wishes to take a pre-requisite course during the summer at an institution closer to their home, for financial reasons or because of employment, would not be allowed to transfer credit for the pre-requisite until sixty hours were earned at College of Charleston. Senior students with sixty or more transfer credit hours are also effectively prevented from participating in study abroad experiences outside the College of Charleston because until they have earned 60 credit hours at the College they cannot transfer in additional courses.

Another example is students enrolled in the Bachelor of Professional Studies (BPS) program. Entrance requirements for the BPS program include the completion of at least sixty transfer credit hours prior to admission, including the majority of the student’s General Education equivalent requirements. It is recommended by the BPS program that students complete missing General Education equivalent requirements at a local technical college during a summer term, for reasons such as the required BPS courses normally fill a student’s fall and spring semester schedule. However, many BPS students are classified as seniors by the time their schedule allows for the completion of General Education equivalent courses. Under the current policy which requires sixty earned hours at College of Charleston before taking a course at another institution, BPS students will graduate with more than the 122 credit hours required for the degree.

A change in the Senior Petition policy would allow students to take a course during senior year, as long as the student had at least thirty hours earned in residence at College of Charleston. Changing the earned hour requirement for the Senior Petition from sixty to thirty would not impact the residency requirements for the degree, the major, or the minor. Rather it would give more students the option of petitioning to take courses at another institution during senior year, without having to exceed the required 122 credit hours for a degree.
Request to change the Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition policy for students who hold a baccalaureate degree from another institution

The current Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition (Senior Petition) policy is prohibitive to students with a baccalaureate degree earned at another institution who wish to transfer a course taken during their degree program at College of Charleston. The proposed Senior Petition policy changes would eliminate this obstacle, while still maintaining all residency requirements for the College of Charleston degree program.

CURRENT POLICY (from page 14 and page 12 of the 2014-2015 Undergraduate Catalog):

The senior year of work for the degree must be completed in residence at the College of Charleston. However, candidates who have earned more than 60 credit hours at the College of Charleston may petition to complete up to 7 of their final 37 credit hours at another institution or by CLEP exam by submitting the Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition Form (Senior Petition), available on the Registrar’s website (http://registrar.cofc.edu/forms/index.php).

The maximum number of transfer credits acceptable toward a College of Charleston degree is ninety-two (92) credit hours total from all institutions. Sixty (60) credit hours total are the maximum from two-year institutions. Students may decline transfer credit, prior to enrolling at the College of Charleston, in order to add another transfer course(s) without going over the maximum hours of transfer credit allowed. Students may not decline transfer credit after enrolling at the College of Charleston in order to take a course at another institution as a transient or cross-registered student.

PROPOSED CHANGE:

The senior year of work for the degree must be completed in residence at the College of Charleston. However, candidates who have earned more than 60 credit hours Students who hold a baccalaureate degree from another institution and have earned a minimum of 30 credit hours at the College of Charleston may petition to complete up to 7 of their final 37 credit hours at another institution, or by CLEP exam, by submitting the Coursework Elsewhere during Senior Year Petition Form (Senior Petition), available on the Registrar’s website (http://registrar.cofc.edu/forms/index.php). Note: Degree completion requires that all residency requirements for the major, the minor, and the degree be met.

Students may not decline transfer credit after enrolling at the College of Charleston in order to take a course at another institution as a transient or cross-registered student. Students who hold a baccalaureate degree from another institution may also decline up to 7 hours of previously awarded transfer credit, in order to take courses at another institution and remain within the 92 transfer credit hour maximum allowed. Students who need to decline transfer credit should submit the “Decline Transfer Credit Form,” available on the Registrar’s Office website (http://registrar.cofc.edu/forms/index.php).
RATIONALE:

Students with an earned baccalaureate degree from another institution enter the College of Charleston classified as seniors – having transferred the maximum 92 credit hours. Under the current policy requiring sixty earned hours at College of Charleston before taking a course at another institution, these “second degree” students would graduate with a minimum of 152 credit hours – thirty credit hours, or a typical academic year, over the 122 required for degree programs at College of Charleston. In addition, before beginning a degree program at College of Charleston, second degree students would need to decline enough of their 92 transfer credit hours to transfer additional credit hours at a future date – another policy which students may not initially consider necessary until the deadline had passed. Both of these obstacles make the transfer of hours during a degree program at College of Charleston prohibitive, for second degree seeking students who find themselves in a situation where it is necessary to take a course at another institution.

One recent example is an adult student, active in the Air Force reserves, seeking a second degree under the GI Bill. Two semesters into her program, the student was advised by her major department to take an eight hour science sequence at a local technical college during the upcoming summer term, in order to obtain the needed pre-requisites for her fall semester major coursework. By taking the science sequence at the local technical college, she could remain on track to complete her degree within GI Bill time limits and would not experience additional delays necessary to complete another eight hours of pre-requisites required to enroll in the same science sequence at College of Charleston.

The student was denied her request to take the eight hour science sequence at the technical college because she had not completed sixty hours at College of Charleston and she did not decline any of her 92 hours of transfer credit before initially enrolling in classes at College of Charleston. However, she would have been approved if the proposed changes in the Senior Petition policy were in place at the time.