Senate Document Number   2418S
Date of Senate Approval   02/08/18

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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

APC Document 13 (LAC):   Removing Language for Computer and Oral Competencies
                                                             from Descriptions of the Majors

1. Delete:

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Competency Requirements and Proficiency Examinations

Major Competency. A demonstration of competency in the major field (or, in the case of students not pursuing a traditional major program, in an area of academic concentration) is required of every degree candidate in the senior year. The departmental faculty determines the form of the major field demonstration of competency. The Director of Interdisciplinary Studies will determine the form of demonstration for students pursuing interdisciplinary or individual degree programs. The demonstration of competency may take the form of a comprehensive examination that is oral, written or both; a research project; an analytical paper in which appropriate principles and methodologies are applied; or any other form established by the faculty group responsible for its administration. As a condition of graduation, any academic deficiencies or weaknesses revealed by the demonstration of competency must be corrected to the satisfaction of the supervising faculty group.

Oral Competency. A demonstration of oral competency is required of every degree candidate. The departmental faculty determines the form of the demonstration. The Director of Interdisciplinary Studies will determine the form of the demonstration for students pursuing interdisciplinary or individual degree programs. As a condition of graduation, any academic deficiencies or weaknesses revealed by the demonstration of competency must be corrected to the satisfaction of the supervising faculty group.

Computer/Technology Competency. Academic programs may choose to require successful demonstration of computer/technology competency for their degree candidates. If required as a condition of graduation, any academic deficiencies or weaknesses revealed by the demonstration of competency must be corrected to the satisfaction of the supervising faculty group. Please consult the listed requirements for each major for additional information.

Proficiency Examinations. Currently enrolled students may fulfill the requirement for many courses, including Liberal Arts Core requirements, by passing a proficiency examination. LANG 120 and courses such as internships, theses, research seminars, field experiences, or any course that meets the departmental requirement of competency or is graded S/U are excluded from this option.

        The student completes a Proficiency Examination form obtained from the Office of the Registrar and makes arrangements with the department chair in which the course is taught to take an examination covering all material in the course. Any student who is in good academic standing may request approval from the appropriate department chair to take a proficiency examination. Departments have the discretion to determine courses in which examination is appropriate. Grading will be Pass or Fail. If passed, the results will be noted on the student's transcript. The minimum number of hours for a degree will not be reduced. There is a $15 fee that must be paid to the Bursar prior to the administration of the exam.

Add:

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Impact:
There is no impact for the optional Computer/Technology Competency. Departments that wish to continue this expectation of their major may include it as part of the Learning Outcome and Assessment Plan for their major.
This does eliminate the Oral Competency requirement, as currently configured. The impact will be that departments that feel Oral Competency is important for the major program will need to include it in their learning outcomes and assessment plans. If the university wishes to retain the Oral Competency requirement, the impact will be that a faculty group will need to be identified to determine how where in the curriculum all students will develop these skills, along with an appropriate assessment plan.
If the removal of these competencies is approved, the Assistant Provost and the Registrar's Office will work with academic departments to make the appropriate editorial changes to their sections of the catalog.

Rationale:
(Based on IREP Report: "Competency Requirements and Institutional Accreditation".)

Prior to 2001 the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) required specific competencies for all academic programs:

> The institution must demonstrate that its graduates of degree programs are competent in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills and the basic use of computers.[1]

UNC Asheville addressed three of these in the general education curriculum, but delegated the competencies for oral communication and use of computers to academic departments to address in their major program.

In 2001, SACSCOC changed their standards to allow schools to determine their own general education competencies; however, UNC Asheville made no changes to their university-wide oral communication and computer competency expectations, nor did they include them as expectations in either of the two subsequent revisions to general education. The only change occurred in 2012, when Faculty Senate modified the computer/technology competency by making it optional.

With the mandate that all learning goals and objectives or stated competencies be fully assessed within the general education curriculum, it seems appropriate to remove the current requirements and all catalog references to oral and computer competencies. If the university feels that the oral competency is important for all students, a learning goal and objective(s), specific curriculum, and an assessment plan should be included in the LAC general education program. Departments that consider computer/technology skills are important to their major program should develop learning goals and objective(s) in their program assessment of student learning plan.

Please refer to IREP Report, "Competency Requirements and Institutional Accreditation", for additional detail and discussion.