REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

Special Student Policy

University Senate Committee: Academic Policies Committee

Brief History of Issue—why the issue is being considered:
1. The Undergraduate Catalog contains outdated policy text that has not been utilized for several years. The change in text will reflect current practices.
2. The University’s change to CampS requires a change in policy, as CampS can accommodate only a limitation in number of credits—not number of courses.

Summary of Recommended Content/Policy Changes (not regular Catalog text clean up changes)
1. Replace outdated and non-utilized policy on page 9 of the Undergraduate Catalog related to early admission for high school students. The current policy exists on page 10 under the “Admission as a Special Student” heading.
2. Change text on page 10 of the Undergraduate Catalog to specify credits—rather than a configuration of courses and credits—so that our CampS software can enforce the credit limit per semester.
3. Change the per-semester credit limit from 6 (or 8, in practice) to 12.

Points Discussed by Committee:
1. Courses vs. Degrees. Students classified as “special students” are taking courses—they are not seeking degrees. Admissions intervenes if a special student appears to be moving towards a degree. The student would need to apply as a degree-seeking student through the regular admission process.
2. Number of Credits per Semester. All institutions provide an opportunity for students to attend as non-degree seeking. The majority of UWS institutions allow their non-degree seeking student to complete 18 credits per semester; however, the Associate Deans recommended 12 credits. For fall 2014, there are 121 special students taking coursework: they are taking 6-8 credits.
3. Special Students Taking Seats. Do special students take seats that would otherwise be occupied by degree-seeking students? Most special students do not take the maximum credit load. Since they register last, course options are very limited. In the past year Admissions has had 3 students ask permission to take more than two courses.
4. Financial Aid. Special students pay full tuition and receive no financial aid.
5. Types of Special Students. Special students include high school students, students home on leave from military assignment, community members, auditors (e.g., university faculty seeking to broaden their knowledge). Some students may already be attending another institution and they just take a course or two as a special student at UW-EC; others may take coursework as additional coursework for certification or a pre-requisite for grad program.

Pros of Recommendation:
1. The special student policy has the potential to be a great bridge to our community as part of a long term plan for attracting community members. However, because special students register last, they are typically unable to get the coursework they want.
2. Special students pay full tuition and so are providing a source of income by registering for otherwise empty seats in courses.
3. The special student policy enables really bright high school students to take courses while they are still in high school.

Cons of Recommendation: None

Technology/Human Resource Impact: None

Committee Recommendation:
Update the Undergraduate Catalog with the approved modifications to the special student policy as represented in the attached document.
MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The Academic Policies Committee,

by a vote of _9_ in favor and _0_ against on September 23, 2014

recommends that the Undergraduate Catalog be updated with the approved modifications to the special student policy as represented in the attached document. (http://www.uwec.edu/Usenate/motions/141111Handout_SpecialStudentPolicyCatalogText.pdf)

Implementation Date: 2015-2016 Catalog

Signed: ______Jean A. Pratt______
Chair of the Committee

Send to: University Senate Office