Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Memorandum of Action
MOA – 26/04
Revise the Undergraduate Catalog Graduation Requirements General Requirements for Earning a Bachelor's Degree

RECOMMENDATION

The Undergraduate Studies Council recommends revising the Undergraduate Catalog, Graduation Requirements, General Requirements for Earning a Bachelor's Degree such that "Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least 122 hours of credit" be revised to "Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least 120 hours of credit."

RATIONALE/PURPOSE

Timeline of current graduation requirement language:

- 1957 Western Michigan College became Western Michigan University and the minimum credit hour requirement for a bachelor's degree read: "Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least 124 hours of credit."
- In academic year 1960-61 the requirement was revised to read: "Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least 124 hours of credit including only four hours of general physical education."
- 1968-1969, a grammatical change to the requirement was made which read: "Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least 124 hours of credit which may include only four hours of general physical education."
- 1970-71, a grammatical change to the requirement was made which read: "Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least 124 hours of credit of which no less than 120 hours of academic (i.e., not general credit P.E.) are required."
- 1972-73, the requirement was changed to read: "Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least 122 hours of credit."

The requirement has remained unchanged for the last 53 years. With an expected student course load of 15 credit hours per semester over eight semesters equaling 120 credit hours, the minimum credit hour requirement of 122-24 has included physical education requirements. However, considering WMU's current general education program WMU Essential Studies includes a requirement of Level II Personal Wellness, the requirement of 122 hours is outdated.

In addition, the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Grand Valley State University and Central Michigan University each require a minimum of 120 credit hours.

This concern was raised by the Western Student Association (WSA) as the requirement affects the cost to earn a degree without obvious benefit. In addition, the requirement affects time to graduation.

If the student is in an undergraduate program that has requirements totaling more than 122 credit hours, it will have no impact. If an undergraduate program that has requirements totaling less than 122 credit hours, it will have a positive financial impact.

It should be noted that this policy is a minimum requirement and does not prohibit a program from requiring more than 120 credit hours of study.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE(S) AND ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL(S):
Registrar's office

STAKEHOLDERS
undergraduate students

CURRENT POLICY MODIFICATION
Undergraduate Catalog-Graduation Requirements-General Requirements for Earning a Bachelor's Degree
Any curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree consists of at least ~~122~~ **120** hours of credit.

REFERENCES
Bulletin: Western Michigan University: Undergraduate Catalog 1957-1958
Bulletin: Western Michigan University: The Undergraduate Catalog 1960-1961
Bulletin: Western Michigan University: The Undergraduate Catalog 1969-1969
Bulletin: Western Michigan University: The Undergraduate Catalog 1970-1971
Bulletin: Western Michigan University: The Undergraduate Catalog 1972-1973
CMU Requirement: https://cmich.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2025-2026/undergraduate-bulletin/graduation-requirements/summary-of-graduation-requirements
GVSU Requirement: https://www.gvsu.edu/facultyadvisor/graduation-requirements-34.htm
UM – Ann Arbor Requirement: https://lsa.umich.edu/lsa/academics/lsa-requirements/credit-requirements.html
MSU Requirement: https://reg.msu.edu/academicprograms/Print.aspx?Section=282