



To: Interim VCAA and Provost Elisha Baker,  
University of Alaska Anchorage  
  
Fr: Kimberly Swiantek,  
UAA Governance Office  
  
Re: Proposed Modification of Catalog Language Regarding Course Repeats

On November 2, 2012 the Faculty Senate approved the following joint motion from UAB and GAB:

**Motion: To accept the proposed modification of catalog language regarding course repeats.**

Please see the attached document for more information.

If I may be of further assistance, please let me know.

**Provost**

Approved     Disapproved

Comments:

23/04/2012

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Elisha Baker, Interim VCAA and Provost

Date

**Chancellor**

Approved     Disapproved

Comments:

4 Apr 2013

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Tom Case, Chancellor

Date



Date: 20 March 2012

To: Undergraduate Academic Board  
Graduate Academic Board

From: Academic Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)  
T. Bart Quimby, Chair

JBQ

RE: Proposed modification of Catalog language regarding course repeats.

The PAC has been approached about issues regarding the number of times a student can repeat a course. The PAC has identified UAB and GAB as the appropriate venue for the development of any policy in this area. To initiate this discussion, the PAC has drafted new catalog language to address this issue (see below).

In most cases students retake the course to achieve a passing grade, however there are cases of students trying to improve on an earned passing grade for purposes of increasing their GPA.

The problems with this practice seem to be:

- These students are often times taking up seats in oversubscribed courses,
- Students chances for success in the course are low (for example the student who took a course 15+ times in an attempt to pass) and they need advising to help them either be successful or find another educational alternative.

In discussion, it seems that the problem is primarily with specific courses which tend to be oversubscribed (the first bullet).

### Challenges

Experience shows that it is difficult to enforce an enrollment requirement based on number of attempts unless the course is a specialty program requirement and the program is small and shares information about their students' performance within the program. There is not a Banner option at the time of registration for checking number of times a student has enrolled.

It would be difficult to thoroughly enforce any such policy in a large general education course, or other high demand course with multiple sections and multiple instructors. Consequently any solution should make enforcement a faculty option instead of a hard requirement which would require extensive resources to enforce. This way the requirement could be enforced only where there is a significant problem.

There is some thought that programs could change their program catalog copy to restrict course with their prefix. The problem with this approach is that program catalog copy only applies to admitted majors.

## Possible Solutions

It appears that there are two paths for addressing the problem.

- Modify the catalog section on Faculty Initiated Withdrawals to allow faculty to withdraw students who have taken the course at least twice. Faculty would have to do their own check on enrollment history in order to invoke this option.
- Modify the registration restrictions for each course with a statement that limits number of times a student may enroll in the course.

Both options could also be pursued. The language should probably capture students who withdrew from the course in addition to those who followed all the way through to a grade.

## Action Sought

The PAC concluded that the first solution could be easily implemented with the second being offered to programs where there are specific course problems. The following suggested catalog copy would address the first bullet. It is requested that the two boards consider this action for inclusion in the Catalog. It would be nice to have in the next catalog, however there would be little harm done if left for the following catalog.

## Proposed Catalog Copy

The highlighted text is the proposed new language.

### Retaking Courses (currently p. 58)

Any course for which a student has received a transcribed grade may be retaken **once** at the student's discretion, if the course is available and if permitted by the program offering the course. **After a student has retaken a course once, faculty have discretion to initiate a drop or withdrawal of a student who registers for additional retakes.** The student's transcript will reflect all grades earned by the student in each semester in which the course is taken. Only the credits and chronologically last grade earned are applied toward graduation requirements, prerequisite fulfillment and cumulative UAA GPA calculation.

The credit/no credit grading option cannot be selected when courses are to be retaken for GPA improvement. Students may not retake a course through credit-by-examination, correspondence, or through work at another college or university for the purpose of raising their grade point average at UAA.

To determine eligibility for graduation with honors, all credits and grades from retaken courses are included in GPA calculation.

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### Faculty-Initiated Drop or Withdrawal (currently p. 66)

A faculty member may initiate a drop or withdrawal from a class of a student who fails to meet published individual course requirements (see next paragraph). A student who fails to attend class within the first seven calendar days of the semester is also eligible for this action. The deadlines for faculty-initiated drop or withdrawal are the same as for student-initiated drop or withdrawal.

The requirements which a student must meet include all catalog pre- or co-requisites for the course, as well as other registration restrictions, and attendance requirements established for the class. Faculty have discretion to initiate a drop or withdrawal of a student who has already received a transcribed grade for the course and has already retaken the course once. Faculty may initiate a withdrawal for a student in audit status for a class according to criteria for audit status distributed in the class syllabus.

Faculty are not obligated to initiate drops or withdrawal for any reason. Students who need to be excused from first-week attendance must contact the faculty member and receive permission before the first class meeting of the semester.