

UC 12795 14S

TO: Lawrence Williams, Chair
Undergraduate Committee

FROM: Richard Scamell
Academic Policies and Procedures Committee

SUBJECT: UC 12755 14S: Bachelor of Arts Degree Special Requirements

DATE: April 16, 2014

APPROVED APR 23 2014

The Academic Policies and Procedures Committee met on Wednesday, March 5, Wednesday, April 9 and on Wednesday, April 16 to consider a proposal to update the University of Houston's Bachelor of Arts Degree Special Requirements. Participating in the discussion at one or both meetings were committee members Christina Gola, Ognjen Miljanic, Willie Munson, Richard Scamell, Shishir Shah, Lesley Sisk, and Steve Soutullo. Jyoti Cameron and Sarah Fishman attended one or both of the meetings as guests.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Special Requirements (Current Catalog Wording)

Candidates for any Bachelor of Arts degree must complete at least six semester hours at the 2000-level or higher in one foreign language. Students may satisfy part or all of this requirement by placement examination.

Deans may waive this requirement for students majoring in their college who can demonstrate that they meet at least one of the following requirements:

1. students presented a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score to qualify for admission to the university, or
2. successfully completed ENGL 1309 and ENGL 1310 in residence, or
3. completed at least eight years of formal education in schools where English was not the primary language of instruction.

Bachelor of Arts Degree Special Requirements (Revised Catalog Wording)*

Candidates for any Bachelor of Arts degree must have documented proficiency at the second semester of 2000-level or higher in one foreign language.

- Students typically satisfy this requirement by completing six consecutive semester hours at the 2000-level or higher in one foreign language.
- Satisfactory completion may require four (4) semesters of sequential courses starting with two (2) semesters of 5 credit hour freshman level foreign language courses for a total of 16 credit hours.
- Students with foreign language competency may satisfy part or all of this requirement by placement or credit by examination.
- Students who place out of the freshman and first semester sophomore level of and (*approved*) foreign language may satisfy the requirements by completion of three (3) semester hours of credit at the second semester sophomore level or higher.
- Students should contact the UH Testing Center for UH approved placement/credit by exams options.
 - * Placement exams are required prior to enrollment in Spanish courses at UH.
 - * High School foreign language credit does not apply unless UH approved AP or IB credit is awarded.
 - * It is highly recommended that all levels of the foreign language courses are completed at one institution.

*The revised catalog wording incorporates a number of suggestions offered by the Committee to the wording that originally appeared in UC 12755 14S.

Deans may waive ** this requirement for students majoring in their college who can demonstrate that they meet at least one of the following requirements:

1. students whose first language is not English who presented a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score to qualify for admission to the university, or other language exam verified by the UH Testing Center or
- ~~2. successfully completed ENGL 1309 and ENGL 1310 in residence, or~~
2. completed at least eight years of formal education in schools where English was not the primary language of instruction.

Discussion

The purpose of the proposed changes in UC 12755 14S is to clarify the options available for completion of the foreign language requirement. In particular, the emphasis is on documented proficiency at the second semester of 2000-level or higher coursework in one foreign language rather than simply credit hours. A brief discussion of the five bullets at the beginning of the revised wording follows.

Bullet 1 makes it clear that the standard completion of six semester credit hours at the sophomore level is required.

Bullet 2 states that it takes up to four semesters to complete (rather than two) when students start at the first semester freshman level and also clarifies that the freshman level language courses are five semester hours rather than three semester hours.

Bullet 3 makes it clear that students with foreign language competency may satisfy part or all the of the foreign language proficiency requirement by placement exam.

Bullet 4 makes it clear that the six hour requirement can be satisfied with three semester hours when students place out of the freshman level courses and one of the sophomore level courses.

Bullet 5 includes additional information on placement and exam options listed in the UH Testing Center.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that UC 12755 14S be approved.

** Students who are eligible to waive their foreign language requirement must take six additional hours of electives.