

Proposal Date: 3/2/17

**University College
Dean's Office
Proposal to Revise an Academic Policy
(Action Item)**

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1. **Identification of proposed policy revision:** Revision of course renewal policy to:
 - a. accommodate students needing fewer than 12 hours to graduate, and
 - b. remove the requirement that students sit out two years for students with 60 hours of college credit.

2. **Catalog statement of existing policy:**

An academic renewal program is available to qualified undergraduate students. Academic renewal prevents the voided coursework from counting toward graduation and the computation of the grade point average; however, the voided coursework will remain a part of the transcript. Qualified undergraduate students must not have attended any accredited college or university for at least two previous years and must have a cumulative grade point average, since readmission, of at least 2.0 (with no grade below "D"), computed at the end of the term in which the student completes a minimum of 12 semester hours of courses numbered 100 or above.

WKU accepts transfer credit retained through academic renewal at other institutions but will use grades from those courses for the computation of the higher education grade point average.

Students requesting academic renewal are required to complete and submit the "Petition for Academic Renewal" form to the Office of the Registrar, indicating whether one semester or all previous coursework is to be voided. No student may declare academic renewal more than once.

Note: The application form includes the following statement, that does not appear in the handbook:

Academic renewal is available only to currently enrolled students seeking a degree from Western Kentucky University.

3. **Catalog statement of proposed policy:**

An academic renewal program is available to qualified undergraduate students. Academic renewal prevents the voided coursework from counting toward graduation and the computation of the grade point average; however, the voided coursework will remain a part of the transcript. **Qualified undergraduate students must have either earned at least 60 credit hours (counting hours before and after readmission) or have not attended any accredited college or university for at least two previous years. If further courses are required to graduate, students must have a cumulative grade point average, since readmission, of at least 2.0 (with no grade below "D"), computed at the end of the term in which the student completes either 12 semester hours of courses numbered 100 or above or the number of such hours required to fulfill all other graduation requirements with the exception of GPA.**

WKU accepts transfer credit retained through academic renewal at other institutions but will use grades from those courses for the computation of the higher education grade point average.

Students requesting academic renewal are required to complete and submit the “Petition for Academic Renewal” form to their department head or equivalent, indicating whether one semester or all previous coursework is to be voided. The approved form will be sent to the Office of the Registrar for final processing. No student may declare academic renewal more than once.

The statement found on the application shall be deleted:

~~Academic renewal is available only to currently enrolled students seeking a degree from Western Kentucky University.~~

Revision of Procedure: The form shall be approved by the student’s assigned advisor.

4. **Rationale for proposed policy revision:** Academic renewal is an excellent option for many students who have had a poor start, but take a lengthy break from academics and then come back with a more mature perspective. However, it is hard to expect them to pay for and take 12 credits to prove a point when they are closer than that to completion. 12 credits is a full-time one-semester or part-time two-year commitment with a minimum current cost of over \$4200; these students are adults, often with full-time jobs and little chance of financial aid. This policy change allows such students to take advantage of academic renewal and graduate without incurring a significant financial impact to take courses that are not part of their degree program.

The removal of the requirement that students sit out two years if they have junior standing allows those who have been working to recover from a poor semester at an earlier stage of their academic career to restore their GPAs without a two-year delay in graduation. Removing the two-year requirement across the board, as an earlier proposal considered, would mean that students who are not serious about a college career could extend their stay well beyond the time they would normally be dismissed by declaring academic renewal, an unintended consequence we would be wise to avoid. Removal of the current enrollment rule (on the form but not in the catalog) allows students who would have completed a degree but for a single semester to apply for renewal and receive a degree without taking additional classes.

We believe that it is important that academic renewal be subject to an approval in academic affairs, in case there are academic or other reasons why approval should not be forthcoming. At present, approval is in the Registrar’s office, and only checks face validity of the application.

5. **Impact of proposed policy revision on existing academic or non-academic policies:**
 - 5.1 Impact on policies: None
 - 5.2 Impact on populations that may be affected: Will allow some students to graduate in a shorter time. Will allow other students who have left WKU to be re-recruited in order to finish.

The Academic Policy Subcommittee requests that the Office of the Registrar provide a complete report of all instances of academic renewal after a period of two years, in order that the impact of the change and any possible unintended consequences can be assessed.

6. **Proposed term for implementation: First available.**
7. **Dates of prior committee approvals:**

Department/ Unit _____	<u>n/a</u>
University College Curriculum Committee (if applicable)	<u>3/2/17</u>
UCC Academic Policy Subcommittee (if applicable)	<u>10/11/17</u>
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee	<u>10/26/17</u>
University Senate	_____