Revisions to School of Social Welfare Field Seminar

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the University Senate approves the attached proposal as approved by the Undergraduate Academic Council.

2. That this takes effect for the fall 2011 semester.

3. That this proposal be forwarded to President George M. Philip for approval.
Changes to Social Welfare Field Seminar

Proposal: To separate out the field seminar from the field practicum course (RSSW 400) to be a concurrent 2 credit, A- E graded course. Under this arrangement the practicum courses (RSSW 400 and 410) will be 3 credits each instead of the current 4 credits. Therefore, the total number of credits for field (8) will remain the same.

Rationale: Currently the field seminar is part of RSSW 400 which is graded S/U. Taking the seminar out of the practicum course and assigning a letter grade will hold students accountable for their work and increase the academic rigor of the course. With the current arrangement where students receive one grade for the practicum and the seminar, there is little accountability for the quality of work done in the seminar. Students only have to perform at an overall C level in the seminar and practicum combined in order to receive a grade of Satisfactory. In the proposed configuration, students who perform well in seminar will be rewarded and those who do not will receive a commensurate grade.
Credit Load: Existing Text
A normal semester load is 15 credits. The maximum number of credits for which a student registers in a semester is an individual matter. The maximum credit load for a student in a given semester is determined with the advice and consent of that student’s academic advisor. It is incumbent upon students to present a rationale to their academic adviser for registration for more than 15 credits.

No undergraduate may register for more than 19 credits.
The Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (LC 30) may authorize students to register for more than 19 credits. Students must present compelling academic justification and have the approval of their academic adviser or major department for a request to exceed 19 credits to be considered.

Credit Load: New Proposed Text
A normal semester load is 15 credits. Registration for at least 12 credits is required for a student to be considered full time. For loads of no more than 19 credits, the number of credits for which a student registers in a semester is an individual matter, determined by the student with the advice of that student’s academic advisor. No undergraduate may register for more than 19 credits without prior permission obtained from the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. Students must present compelling academic justification and have the approval of their academic adviser or major department for a request to exceed 19 credits to be considered by the Office of the Vice Provost.

Students studying abroad who plan to take more than 19 SUNY credits must apply for permission no later than 4 weeks after the start of classes overseas. Credits earned for pre-session courses which, when added to the regular semester’s course load, bring the total semester’s enrollment to over 19, do not need such authorization.

Rationale: Undergraduate students sometimes believe that they will be able to undertake a course load which advisors at UA may believe is overly ambitious. UAC wants students to be able to succeed in the full set of courses they enroll in each semester, whether at UA or abroad. Since students studying overseas often cannot know what their schedule will be until they have arrived overseas, this bill allows them additional time to consult with their advisor and to file a petition with the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

Some study abroad programs include a credit-bearing pre-session. Since the pre-session coursework is completed prior to the start of the regular term, this bill allows students to register for up to 19 additional SUNY credits without requiring specific permission.

NOTE: The Office of Study Abroad and Exchanges at Albany will implement this rule as follows: if a student’s application for a waiver is not approved, the student will be instructed to drop back to a maximum of 19 SUNY credits. Any courses dropped because of such instructions will be removed in their entirety from the SUNY Transcript Supplement, even if the host university assigns a failing grade or otherwise assigns a grade due to that withdrawal. This will assure that students are not penalized for following rules set by UA which might contradict the registration or grading policies of the host university.