

**UNIVERSITY SENATE**

**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

Introduced by: Council on Educational Policy

Date: April 19, 1993

Criteria for Capping or Restricting a Major

**IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:**

1. That the Criteria for Capping or Restricting a Major be approved by the University Senate;
2. That the bill become effective upon the approval of the President; and
3. That the Bill be referred to the President for approval.

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STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

Introduced by: Educational Policy Council

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**CRITERIA FOR CAPPING OR RESTRICTING A MAJOR**

**IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:**

- I. The following criteria will be used by the Undergraduate Academic Council (UAC) and other governance bodies to evaluate a department's request to cap or restrict a major in any way:
  - A. The Department must first consult with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Director of Institutional Research in preparing a written report on a) the impact of the proposed restriction on the University and the department, including enrollment, access to the major, diversity and multiculturalism, and b) possible alternative strategies (e.g., redeployment of the faculty across the departmental curriculum).
  - B. The Department must make its case to UAC based on one or more of the following rationales:
    1. Program Quality -- quality threatened due to instructional resource limitations, e.g.,
      - a) student/faculty ratio
      - b) need for faculty strength in such areas as Gen Ed, non-major courses, or graduate program
    2. Prerequisites
      - a) essential incoming competence or preparation
    3. Quantitative Considerations
      - a) inability of students to finish in four years
      - b) finite number of student spaces in the program, e.g., field placements

4. It is understood that the final decision will be made, on a case-by-case basis, by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with the University Senate.

5. All restrictions, existing and new, will be reviewed at least once every five years. These reviews insofar as possible will be clustered by cognate disciplines, following the process outlined in these guidelines.

6. Notification and Appellate process for applicants to the major

Any proposal for capping or restricting a major must include details on the notification of students as early in their undergraduate career as possible if they are unlikely to be accepted into the major. The proposal must also include details on the appellate process, which must be made known to applicants to the major. Appeals will be handled within the academic unit; they will be considered by the Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing of the Undergraduate Academic Council only if the issue cannot be resolved at the college or school level.

II. That this Bill be forwarded to the President for approval and implementation.

## RATIONALE

In response to a request from the Undergraduate Academic Council, the Educational Policy Council's Long-Range Planning Committee undertook a year-long review to develop criteria for academic departments seeking to cap the number of majors or to restrict admission to the major through competence or preparation standards.

This policy is designed, first of all, to ensure that the full range of potential impacts on the institution and, especially, on students is established through an administrative review. In addition, the policy identifies, for the first time, the criteria that may be employed to cap or restrict a major. Finally, it identifies an appellate process for students denied admission to the major.

The intention of this policy is to ensure that only those majors meeting clear institutional criteria may implement a cap or restriction in order that students continue to have access to the widest array of majors possible. The periodic review further ensures that any cap or restriction will be tested at a regular interval against changes in disciplines, in the institution, or in other areas such as student demand.