

October 5, 2006

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Layton R. McCurdy, Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Proposed Changes in College Preparatory Course Prerequisite Requirements
Effective Date: Academic Year 2011-12
Entering College Freshmen

At the ACAP meeting of July 31, 2006, the members and institutional delegates present agreed unanimously to accept revisions to the current College Preparatory Course Prerequisite Requirements (revised 2003-2004). Subsequently, all institutions reaffirmed their support of this by the action of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing at its meeting on September 7, 2006.

Attached you will find a copy of the College Preparatory Course Prerequisite Requirements which, if approved by the Commission, will become required of graduating seniors in South Carolina for admission to our colleges and universities in Fall 2011. This draft has been marked up electronically in those areas which are revised from the 2003-04 document.

The reasons for this change are multiple:

- In continuing studies by ACT and other testing organizations, four years of high school mathematics is correlated very highly with success in college.

- The preference for taking the fourth course in mathematics in the senior year of high school has been expressed often at ACAP, based upon the institutions' evidence-based experience of the freshman year at South Carolina's four-year institutions of public higher education.
- Requiring a course unit in one of the Fine Arts is important for aligning the precollege curriculum with the *Understanding University Success* document which has been adopted unanimously by ACAP and endorsed by both the State Department of Education's Division of Curriculum Services and Assessment and the Office of High School Redesign.
- Requiring a course in the Fine Arts is in alignment with the 2000 study *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning* funded by the MacArthur Foundation and the General Electric Fund. That study shows the impact on learning across the board that comes from studying the arts and the consequent development of the creative enterprise in thinking.
- Reducing the number of required course units from 20 to 19 (including one precollege elective) more closely aligns the precollege curriculum with the goals of the Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) by providing more choices for students for depth in particular fields of precollege study; and b) permitting students enough units outside the prerequisites to take a complete five –unit “career cluster” of courses in addition to meeting the college prerequisites.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends that the Commission approve the proposed revised College Preparatory Course Prerequisite Requirements, to become effective for high school graduates entering as freshmen in Fall 2011 in South Carolina's public four-year institutions.

Enclosure: 2006 Revision (Draft)