



A RESOLUTION TO REDUCE BARRIERS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS (25/7)

WHEREAS, the George Washington University (GW) benefits from the strong and engaged students who transfer into the university, often from other schools in the Washington, D.C. region;

WHEREAS, national statistics show that more students today transfer than ever before, and transferring between colleges is an important component in national strategies designed to improve access to higher education and control the costs of university attendance;

WHEREAS, national statistics also show a dramatic increase in the number of high school students enrolled in Dual Enrollment programs, taking college classes at community colleges and four-year universities during their high school years, and who are transferring them into universities, including GW;

WHEREAS, the national conversation about demographic, economic, and political challenges to enrollment has led universities nationwide to consider increasing the number of transfer students, especially in cases in which undergraduate enrollment targets are unexpectedly missed, which can generate significant financial strain on colleges and universities;

WHEREAS, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and the Office of the Registrar are striving to reduce barriers for transfer students to GW by providing accurate information about whether and how coursework from the students' origin schools "counts" as equivalent to coursework at GW;

WHEREAS, these efforts are important for attracting talented students by providing clear and transparent information about the cost and length of attendance at GW;

WHEREAS, transfer students and the admissions team often cannot predict whether GW treats a course from another university as the equivalent of a course or as meeting the requirements for the General Education Curriculum (GPAC) at GW.

WHEREAS, the current process often creates inconsistent answers about whether these courses are the equivalent of courses taken at GW;

WHEREAS, the process for determining course equivalents can be time consuming, and applicants often do not know until after they are admitted how courses count, creating uncertainty about whether attending GW is feasible for them and their families;

WHEREAS, competitor universities are working to streamline these processes, such that students can easily learn before applying how the coursework at their origin school counts at the destination school, enhancing confidence and reducing uncertainty during the transfer process;

WHEREAS, transfer students often face challenges in finding community, may have greater need of academic advising, and may require other special services and programs to enhance their college experience that are different in kind from other students; and

WHEREAS, continuing to attract high-quality transfer students enriches the student body, our classrooms, and the university community as a whole;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

1. Strongly supports the leadership of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and the Office of the Registrar in making the transfer process more transparent and predictable to potential students and their families;
2. Encourages the President and Provost to form a university-level working group designed to enhance the transfer experience that focuses on curricular concerns;
3. Recommends that the charge to this working group include working toward improving the student experience of transfer students, including exploring programs such as a transfer Living-Learning Community, coresidential opportunities, specialized courses featuring the DC Experience that are designed to encourage social interaction and learning about the university and its programs, and experiment with other initiatives to build community and welcome transfer students;
4. Recommends also charging this working group with ensuring that students can learn before applying to the George Washington University how their existing coursework counts at the George Washington University in their plans of study; and
5. Recommends also charging this working group with exploring the merits of flexible equivalency, where courses count as the equivalent of requirements at the George Washington University when they, broadly speaking, serve the same pedagogical purpose, especially in the general education curriculum.

Educational Policy & Technology Committee
February 14, 2025

Adopted as amended by the Faculty Senate
March 7, 2025