



Class C Bulletin No. 553

Class C Resolution concerning holistic review of applicants to competitive admissions majors

July 5, 2016

Class C Resolution adopted at the May 19, 2016, Faculty Senate Meeting

Background and Rationale

Applicants for admission to the University of Washington are assessed for admission based on two categories of information: academic accomplishment and personal factors. Academic accomplishment includes such things as courses undertaken and grades obtained. Personal factors context the academic accomplishments of the applicant and include such things as familial socio-economics and the applicant's responses to essay prompts. This process is referred to as "holistic review," is based in the Student Regulations Chapter 101, and is overseen by the Faculty Council on Academic Standards (FCAS) for the Seattle campus and the appropriate bodies for the Bothell and the Tacoma campuses.

Students at the University of Washington must declare a major by the time that they have completed 105 credits (Student Regulations Chapter 116). Three methods for admission to majors exist at UW: open, minimum requirements, and competitive admission. Open admission to major means that students may declare the major at any time. Two units that have open majors at this time are Anthropology and Oceanography. Minimum requirements admission to major is a situation where students must meet criteria, such as completion of a course with a specified course GPA, before they are admitted to the major. All students who meet these minimum requirements are admitted to the major. Dance and Philosophy are currently minimum requirement majors.

Competitive admission to major exists when units have more qualified students, i.e., students who are admissible, than ability to educate them. These capacity constrained units must select students, who will be allowed to declare the major, from a group of qualified students. Business and Engineering majors are competitive.

The number of competitive majors has increased in the last few years at the University of Washington and currently approximately 70% of the majors on the Seattle campus are competitive admissions.

While the admission process to the University of Washington requires holistic review, admission to majors does not.

Class C Resolution

Recommendation for holistic review of applicants to competitive admissions majors

WHEREAS, the University of Washington admits "...those students deemed best able to contribute to and benefit from the educational programs and opportunities offered at the University"¹; and

WHEREAS, some units are capacity constrained in that they receive more applications from qualified students than the unit can accommodate in their major course(s) of study; and

WHEREAS, the University of Washington recognizes that an "...important and essential component of any educational program is the exchange of information and life experiences though a diverse student body, with representatives from all cultural backgrounds given opportunity at participation"¹; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate recommends that units that are capacity constrained use a

holistic review process that includes "...personal factors such as school and community service, leadership, overcoming adversity, and family educational and socioeconomic background"² and academic qualifications in the selection of students who are to be admitted to study in the unit.

¹ Board of Regents Governance, Policy No. 4, Policy on Admission.

² University of Washington Student Regulations Chapter 101.2.A.

submitted by:

Patricia Ann Kramer, Chair
On behalf of
Faculty Council on Academic Standards

With concurrence of:
Faculty Council on Multicultural Affairs Faculty
Council on Women in Academia

Approved by:
Senate Executive Committee
May 2, 2016

Approved by:
Faculty Senate
May 19, 2016