

Proposed: Policy Statement regarding Authority over Prerequisites and Other Course Restrictions
Approved by Academic Affairs for the Consideration of Faculty Assembly

Summary

The Executive Committee the Faculty Assembly referred the issue of who has the authority to override course restrictions to the Academic Affairs committee for review. What follows is a summary of the Academic Affairs committee discussion of the issue.

Discussion

On November 20, 2014, the Faculty Assembly of SUNY Polytechnic Institute Utica campus passed the following resolution:

SUNY Poly reaffirms that management, oversight, curricular development, and hiring decisions must be overseen by faculty in the respective disciplines.

In accordance with this resolution, the Academic Affairs committee affirms that the authority to override a course restriction rests with the faculty in the discipline of the respective course.

While we agree that authority for granting overrides rests with the faculty of the discipline, we also recognize that many of the issues that arise are the result of imperfect processes and procedures. For example, it is often the case that overrides are needed in order to correct errors (for example, to permit a student to register for a course because that student's prerequisite course is not correctly recognized). Thus, the committee anticipates that many of the issues that arise can be addressed procedurally.

The committee proposes the following as a starting point to assist faculty and academic units to implement and exercise this authority.

Suggested guidelines for the administration and oversight of course registration overrides:

1. Authority for granting overrides for courses is held by faculty in the discipline to which the course belongs.
2. Faculty in the discipline shall determine the appropriate individual or office to grant overrides depending upon the nature of the course, instructor, etc. These individuals should be clearly identified as the appropriate authority and communicated to those concerned (advisors, program coordinators, secretarial and support staff, etc.)
3. Individuals who exercise authority for granting overrides should be available during key registration periods such as transfer orientations. If they will not be available during orientation, they should designate a substitute to act in their absence.
4. When an override is necessary in order to address a demonstrable error (e.g., when a student possesses the correct prerequisite and when that prerequisite is not being correctly applied), it may be appropriate for the student's advisor to correct the error. However, the advisor should inform the appropriate authority overseeing the course on all such overrides.
5. Where specific courses provide service to another program, it may be useful for the faculty in these areas consult to develop mechanisms to establish agreed upon procedures to ensure the smooth and timely granting of overrides.