

A proposal to change the Bachelor's Degree requirement that a minimum of 54 semester hours be completed in courses numbered 300 and above, referred to in this proposal as "The 54-Hour Rule."

WHEREAS, The 54-Hour Rule may have been adopted because of rumors that State University funding would be tied directly to the rule; and

WHEREAS, there is little or no evidence that a high correlation exists between a course's number and the difficulty or quality of the course, and no evidence that The 54-Hour Rule improves the quality of undergraduate education at Western Kentucky University; and

WHEREAS, the quality of undergraduate education at Western Kentucky University may actually be diminished in some cases because students may forgo certain lower-level courses that would be beneficial to them in order to conform to The 54-Hour Rule; and

WHEREAS, some departments are involved in the inflation of course numbers without substantially changing the content of the courses, thus causing the integrity of much of the undergraduate academic program to come under suspicion; and

WHEREAS, The 54-Hour Rule may discriminate against departments that have not changed their course numbers, and may discriminate against departments that rely on large numbers of junior-college transfer students; and

WHEREAS, The 54-Hour Rule continues to require unnecessary work by faculty members who advise students and who are involved in preparing petitions for exemptions from the rule and/or rationales for raising course numbers; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University requests the Academic Council to replace The 54-Hour Rule with the following Bachelor's Degree requirement:

A minimum of 42 semester hours must be completed in courses numbered 300 and above.

The Faculty Senate also requests the Academic Council to set a moratorium on the further raising of course numbers until the above degree requirement is acted upon.