

The Committee on Educational Policy
Policy on Major Qualification Policy and Course Repeats

Preface:

Given that Admissions will no longer consider repeats in admissions decisions for transfer students, it would not be fair to admit a transfer student and then refuse to allow that student to declare their intended major as listed on their UC Santa Cruz admissions application (see CAFA correspondence appended). Community college courses are comparatively inexpensive, and students taking Community College classes often work or have other obligations. When life interferes, they sometimes “drop” a class by just not finishing it; this does not necessarily reflect an inability to succeed in a major.

Policy:

Effective with the fall 2022 entering class, major qualification policies that consider course repeats, or grades below a certain threshold, may only consider non-passing or below-threshold grades that are received after matriculation to UC Santa Cruz.

Approved by the Committee on Educational Policy on April 27, 2022

November 10, 2021

DEANS
DEPARTMENT CHAIRS
University of California, Santa Cruz

Re: Major Screening Coursework Repeat Policy for Transfers

Deans and Department Chairs:

At all other UC campuses serving undergraduates, admission of transfer students is determined without reference to repeated coursework (failing grades or withdrawals that are replaced by a passing grade). At UCSC alone, we have until now instead had a patchwork of policies by department, with some departments rejecting -- or reviewing individually -- the files of students with more than one repeated major-preparatory course.

Admissions directors have made the argument to CAFA for many years that community college students often take a different view of coursework than students in high school or in a 4-year college or university; they will often decide mid-quarter that other priorities (work or family) have to take priority temporarily, and put off serious engagement in their courses until another time, often doing well when they return to the material in a more favorable semester. This behavior is rational given the nature of community college, and not necessarily a predictor of how they will prioritize coursework when established full-time as transfers at UCSC. Furthermore, there are numerous cases every year of students with high GPAs whom we have rejected for multiple repeats who have instead attended more selective UC campuses.

For these reasons, CAFA has decided to align UCSC with the rest of the UC system and direct Admissions to no longer consider repeats in admissions decisions for transfers. Other requirements for screening majors, such as preparatory coursework, overall GPA (for all majors), GPA in preparatory courses, or specific grades required in preparatory courses will not be affected by this change. The principle that these required courses and grade patterns should be no stricter than those required for students who began as frosh at UCSC to declare the major will remain in effect.

Please feel free to contact me directly with questions or comments on this change in policy.

Sincerely,
/s/
David Smith, Chair
Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid

cc: Richard Hughey, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education
Michelle Whittingham, Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management

Blia Yang, Director, Office of Admissions

Timetra Hampton, Associate Director of Evaluation and Advising

David Brundage, Chair, Santa Cruz Division of the Academic Senate

Tracy Larrabee, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy

Matthew Mednick, Director, Office of the Academic Senate