Proposed Update to Language and Guidelines regarding Grade-Restricted Programs
For Committee on Admissions | March 27, 2019

Background and the Case for Change

In April 2018, the Committee on Admissions articulated a need for clarity around policy and review of restrictions on enrolment, arising from review of proposals for modifications to enrolment requirements. The committee raised questions with respect to how restricted enrolment programs are categorized, the language and nomenclature used to describe enrolment categories, and the policy guidelines around changing or introducing such restrictions. In May 2018, the Committee formed an ad hoc Working Group to review the current policy and reported their findings along with recommendations for change to the Committee in the Fall of 2018.

The current policy framework on enrolment requirements arises from the Guidelines on Grade Restricted Programs (2010), which offers guidance on the use of minimum grades as a basis for restricting enrolment. The Committee finds a case for change emerging from several challenges in the current implementation:

- The current program type labels are jargon (Type 1, 1S, 2, 2L, 3-yes, or 3-no) rather than information; these types emerged historically in response to different operational needs.
- There are too many program type categories, adding to student, instructor and staff confusion.
- The language used to describe enrolment criteria is unstandardized.
- It is not transparent how differences between enrolment categories are assessed.
- The current guidelines require revision to address several gaps, including:
  - How minimum grades should be determined when restrictions are proposed for reasons of student success.
  - How to account for added, non-grade requirements in deciding program admission (for example, Type 3 scenarios), if a candidate who is refused admission asks for an explanation.
  - How to consider eventual shifts in enrolment criteria (for example if minimum required grades are raised or lowered).

Current Program “Types”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Admission Criteria</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No specific minimum grades or courses required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>Special version of Type 1 for a program that charges higher-than-normal (differential) fees which are also often retroactive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Specific minimum grades in specified courses; if these minimum grades are achieved, a student normally is admitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2L</td>
<td>Specific minimum grades in specified courses plus a minimum required average in some/all of the same courses. This minimum required average changes year by year based on demand and the number of spaces available. Students are advised that meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The same as “2L”, but with additional criteria outside of results in specified courses that factor into a student’s admission eligibility. Examples: an audition; an essay; an interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-yes/3-no</td>
<td>This distinguishes Type 3 programs which either have two rounds of enrolment in a Spring/Summer (“yes”) or only have a first round (“no”).</td>
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General Principles

1. **Limiting Enrolment** – Programs have the right to change or establish restrictions on entry into programs to support student academic success (see below), to manage resource limitations, or both. These distinct rationales must clear both to academic units and to students, and proposals to establish or change such restrictions must be supported with demonstrated consultation and with data. When considering a changing minimum average across multiple courses, due to enrolment pressure, programs must consult first with the Office of the Dean to determine if provision of further resources may alleviate the pressure.

2. **Student Success** – Proposals to establish minimum grades to support student success should consider “student success” as a student's ability to proceed through the program and complete it with results that maintain the students good academic standing and their ability to graduate with the Honours degree (CGPA 1.85).

3. **The Right to Due Notice** – Students have the right, wherever possible, to receive appropriate notice of changes to program entry requirements, and to understand clearly what factors will play into being invited into a desired program of study, or what may contribute to being refused entry.

Goals in Revising the Guidelines

1. Use simpler language and less jargon so it is better understood by students and staff alike.
2. Recommend common standards on how program enrolment restrictions are communicated in the Calendar to best serve student planning and is transparent about competitive enrolment.
3. Establish best practices around upper year entry requirements such that students need not repeat first year courses to undertake another attempt at program enrolment.
4. Establish guidelines for units around the basis for proposing restrictions.
5. Recommend a framework for review on the current state of program “type” diversity within sectors and disciplines.

Proposed Guidelines

1. Programs will fall into one of two type categories:
   a. “Open” enrolment (programs requiring only the completion of 4.0 FCE):
   b. “Limited” enrolment (programs with special grade conditions or assessments for enrolment).

2. Limiting entry into programs may only be done for two reasons and must be supported by data to form a basis for such restrictions. These reasons are either:
   a. To ensure the academic success of students in the program; or
   b. Because of enrolment pressure on the program.

3. Limited programs will use standardized language as much as possible to indicate the criteria that make a program limited, including some combination of:
   a. Minimum grades in specific courses needed for program entry;
   b. A competitive average across multiple courses which, as a “cut off”, changes year by year based on demand and available spaces; and
   c. Another process of assessment needed to manage either demand or to ensure academic success.

4. The Academic Calendar will publish clear information about the criteria but with no reference to information that might change year by year. This includes rough approximations about minimum course averages in competitive program entry, or details on special enrolment processes like auditions or interviews.

5. All programs must normally make clear an option for enrolment for students after second year (or higher) of study to distinguish it from requirements after first year.

6. No program will use CGPA or GPA values in indicating requirements for program entry, just as these may not be used as a prerequisite for enrolment in individual courses.
7. The Committee on Admissions will coordinate with the Office of the Dean to establish a working group to assess current program entry requirements to highlight any immediately needed changes. This same group will establish a standard review process of such entry requirements as part of the review cycle for programs.

Policy Implementation
The new language and guidelines will be in full effect for the 2020–21 Fall/Winter Session with the publication of the 2020–21 Academic Calendar.

- The Arts & Science governance unit will assist academic units who are not proposing curriculum change in the 2019–20 governance cycle in making administrative edits to program language to align with the new guidelines and the new language.
- The Arts & Science governance unit will assist academic units proposing curriculum change in the 2019–20 governance cycle that incorporates this language and falls in the new guidelines.
- Over the 2019–20 cycle, Committee on Admissions will undertake a review of all limited enrolment (previously type 2, 2L, or type 3) programs, in consultation with academic units, to determine what modifications may be needed to transition to the new framework and develop consistency across all limited enrolment programs.
- A review cycle will be established within the UTQAP cycle, to examine whether:
  - The current situation for the program continues to warrant restrictions in enrolment;
  - The restrictions should be modified or updated; or
  - The restrictions place undue pressure on certain sectors of the curriculum or present obstacles for students in accessing program areas.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Old Type</th>
<th>Admission Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>1, 1S</td>
<td>No specific minimum grades or courses required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>2, 2L, 3-yes, 3-no</td>
<td>Entry into limited programs require further conditions be met, and the three kinds of conditions are as follows. These conditions often “stack”.</td>
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- **Students must meet minimum grades in specified courses, or a minimum average across specified courses.** These minimum grades do not change year-by-year, as they are established to support academic success for admitted students. Meeting these minimum grades ensures entry into the program.

- **Students must meet a minimum average across specified courses that changes each year.** This minimum grade average is a percentage value and is established by an academic unit based on expected demand. This is established only due to resource strain due to enrolment pressure, and changes year by year based on demand and capacity. Students are advised that meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to the program.

- **Students must meet additional criteria outside academic results in specified courses.** These are established because of the nature of the study requires additional or atypical assessment, or to allow a different assessment of candidates for a program that is highly competitive due to demand and strict resource limitations. Students are advised of this added criterion and are given instructions as how to meet it. Examples: an audition; an essay; an interview.

<table>
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<th>Proposed Calendar Text</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>This program is an open enrolment program, which means a student may join the program if they have completed 4.0 credits.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>This program is a limited enrolment program. To join the program, students not only must have completed 4.0 credits but must also meet the following criteria:</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- **Students must meet minimum grades in the following courses: ABC100H1 (X%), DEF100H1 (Y%) .... / Students must obtain a minimum combined average of Z% in the following courses ...**

- **Students must meet a minimum threshold mark based on their average across these courses: ABC100H1, DEF100H1 ... This minimum mark changes every enrolment period based on student demand and the spaces available.**

- **[Special additional criteria/assessment.]**

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<th>Rationale</th>
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<td>There is no evidence that minimum grades (except a pass) in foundational courses support academic success, and there are no expected resource limitations.</td>
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<td><strong>Student Success</strong> – There is data to support that, without minimum grades in specific courses (or a stable minimum average across specified courses), students are unlikely to be able to proceed through the program obtaining at least a C.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resource Limitations</strong> – Multi-year data is needed to show enrolment pressure on a program of study. Programs should also consult with the Dean’s Office to determine if further resources are not available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Assessment Criteria</strong> – Use of interviews, essays, tests or any other mode of assessment must be shown necessary for student success, managing enrolment pressure, or both.</td>
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