

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee

From: Dr. Winningham, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Amy Clark, University Registrar

Re: Catalog Year Text Review & Revision

January 16, 2019

To facilitate a smooth transition to WOU's new General Education requirements and ensure beneficial results for students it is necessary to address the institution's undergraduate [catalog year rule](#)ⁱ and the current practical application of the rule.

The following needs to be addressed:

- **Matching catalog year requirement:** Current application of the rule does not allow students to have different catalog years for any of their curricula (i.e., university and major requirements must be from the same catalog year). If this does not change many students will have to make unpalatable choices between the programⁱⁱ requirements that best suit their needs and the most direct path through general education requirements. For example, without any changes, a student who has completed their LACCs and then finds it more advantageous to switch to the 2019/20 catalog year for their major would find themselves subject to the new general education requirements. In addition, if we continue using a single catalog year model we anticipate a higher volume of exceptions required in Degree Tracks to address these types of issues. The existing language does not require matching catalog years, but the text should reflect any such requirement and if a change in process is made it must be reflected in the published rule.
- **Concentrations:** This is a relatively new curricular category at WOU. Concentration requirements are intertwined with major requirements, therefore the catalog year of the major must be the same as that of the concentration.
- **Transfer students:** The options for transfer students, as currently stated, apply to students enrolled through our partnership programs with regional community colleges. The language should specify that.
- **Clarifying information:** Provide additional clarity regarding how initial catalog year is determined and a statement addressing our rights and responsibilities relative to curricular changes that impact students currently enrolled in a program.

For purposes of transparency, clarity, student success and facilitation of the general education transition, we propose and request endorsement for the following changes to the existing text.

The academic year has four terms, fall, winter and spring, each of which have 10 weeks of class plus final examinations; summer term offers varying course schedules. Undergraduate students may enter the university at the beginning of any term.

This catalog lists requirements and policies in effect at the beginning of summer term for the academic year. Degree, program and graduation requirements for a given catalog year are valid only for seven years.

- *A catalog year for degree, general education, and program requirements is assigned to students according to their first term of enrollment.*
- *Degree Partnershipⁱⁱⁱ students are assigned catalog year requirements according to their term of admission to the university.*
- *Students may choose a catalog year greater than their term of admission, but in no case shall a catalog year be more than seven years old.*
- *The assigned or chosen catalog year for university and general education requirements may differ from the catalog year assigned or chosen for major/concentration/minor/certificate requirements*
- *A WOU adviser may approve for a transfer student to utilize the catalog year for degree, general education, and/or program requirements that best serves the student, provided it is not older than the student's first term of enrollment at the regionally accredited college or university from which the student transferred to WOU.*
- *The catalog year of a major and any attached concentrations must be the same.*
 - *At the time of declaration a concentration is assigned a catalog year identical to that of its corresponding major.*
 - *In the event that the major catalog year is changed, any attached concentrations will consequently be updated to correspond with the major.*
- *A WOU adviser may approve a student to utilize a catalog year for minor and/or certificate requirements that differs from the catalog year of the student's major/concentration if it is in the best interest of the student to do so.*
- *The institution may find it necessary to make changes to courses, degree, general education, and/or program requirements. In the event that such changes affect students already enrolled, to the extent possible the institution will find reasonable accommodations to ensure continued progression towards degree completion.*

- ⁱ Catalog Year (U-4): <http://catalog.wou.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=379#u-4-catalog-year-u-4->
- ⁱⁱ Programs consist of at minimum a major, but may also include concentration, minor, and/or certificates.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Degree Partnership refers to students enrolled in a specific partnership program agreed to by Western Oregon University and a partner college or university, in which the student is admitted and eligible to enroll at both institutions simultaneously.