



## MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 27, 2007

TO: Chief Academic Officers

FROM: *Linda L. Baer*  
Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

SUBJECT: ASA-2007-021 - Implementation of Academic Programs Policy 3.36 and Procedure 3.36.1

In the several months since the new Academic Programs Policy and Procedure 3.36 and 3.36.1 were approved, questions have been raised about the implementation timeline, particularly in light of the 60/120 program credit length legislative requirement. While there is the expectation that all new and current programs will conform to the new policy and procedures, I have determined that some of the elements of the transition require additional time. I would like to take this opportunity to clarify expectations.

Future program applications. The official implementation date of the new policy and procedures was August 1, 2007. Subsequent to this date, all future program applications have to conform to the new Academic Programs policy and procedures.

Retroactive changes to current programs. While most of the new procedures do not depart much from current procedure, several changes may require significant time and effort to implement. We have identified two key issues that are likely to require special attention. Described below, these new requirements will have an implementation date of July 1, 2011.

1. *New requirement that Associate in Science(AS) degrees have an articulation agreement with at least one system university.* Previous policy required an articulation agreement with any university for AS degrees. In an effort to increase the transfer options for students specifically within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, the new procedure requires “*at least one articulation agreement between a community college, community and technical college, or technical college and a system university awarding a baccalaureate degree in a related discipline, unless the chancellor grants an exception.*” To ensure that all course requirements are reflected accurately, articulation agreements will have to be reviewed and re-written, or new agreements with one (or more) system universities will have to be developed.

2. *Inclusion of prerequisites in award credit totals.* In past policy, the definition and interpretation of the relationship of prerequisites and preparatory courses to degree requirement was unclear. Sorting out these distinctions, now defined in policy 3.36 and procedure 3.36.1, will require extensive review and revision of degree requirements where applicable.

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The July 1, 2011 date has been selected because implementation of these two policy and procedure changes is likely to be affected by new policy developed in response to 2007 legislation, which states:

*By January 1, 2009, the board must adopt a policy setting the maximum number of semester credits required for a baccalaureate degree at 120 semester credits or the equivalent and the number of semester credits required for an associate degree at 60 semester credits or the equivalent. The board policy may provide for a process for granting waivers for specific degree programs in which industry or professional accreditation standards require a greater number of semester credits.*

Beginning in November of 2007, a task force will review and develop recommendations to respond to this legislation. The charge to the task force includes the following:

- (a) identify criteria and processes for granting consistent exceptions to the legislatively prescribed degree credit limitations,
- (b) propose timelines for implementation of required Board policy, and
- (c) propose Board policy and Chancellor's procedure to support implementation of the legislative mandate.

This is a major undertaking for all of our colleges and universities, and I would like to encourage you to begin the process at all levels for the benefit of students.

c: Presidents  
Manuel M. López  
Academic Programs Unit  
Transfer Unit