



SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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TO: Members, Commission on Higher Education

FROM: Fred R. Sheheen *AS*

**Statement of Policy by Senior Public Colleges and Universities
and the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education**

REGARDING: Required high school courses for admission to senior public colleges and universities; temporary provisions for students enrolled in Applied Academic (Tech Prep) courses which do not meet course requirements.

In 1984, the baccalaureate degree-granting institutions of South Carolina and the Commission on Higher Education adopted a set of required College Courses (Prerequisite Courses for Admission) which students must take in high school in order to gain admission to the senior public institutions in the State. That list of courses, the College Preparatory Curriculum, is attached (**Attachment 1**).

The course requirements were phased in over a four-year period, and since 1988, each prospective student entering a four-year institution has been and continues to be expected to have completed successfully the college prep curriculum.

This educational improvement measure has proven to be important for raising standards of scholarship among our students entering colleges and universities. **The institutions and the Commission hereby reaffirm the policy which requires the college preparatory curriculum reflected in the attached list of course requirements for high school students desiring to enter four-year public institutions in the State.**

However, it has recently been brought to our attention that students who intend to proceed directly from high school into baccalaureate degree-granting institutions have been erroneously enrolled in a variety of "Applied Academic" or "Tech Prep" courses in some high schools. The "Applied Academic" courses were initially developed for students who were considering entrance into two-year colleges or postsecondary certificate programs. They remain valuable preparation for those purposes.

It is clear from a survey of school districts that some students have been advised to enroll in "Applied Academic" courses on the mistaken assumption the courses would meet the required courses for entering four-year institutions. We believe that these students should not be penalized for the erroneous information which has resulted in their registration in these courses.

At the request of the State Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education's Advisory Committee on Academic Programs, representing all public colleges and universities, will examine these Applied Academic/Tech Prep courses and make a clear determination by December 1, 1993, whether or not all, some, or none of them shall count as substitutes for courses in the traditional college preparatory curriculum for purposes of meeting the required courses for admission into senior public institutions.

In the meantime, however, the institutions and the Commission recommend temporary relief for students who have completed or who are currently enrolled in Applied Academic/Tech Prep courses, and **ONLY** for those students, as follows:

1. Students who are presently enrolled in or who have completed any Applied Academic/Tech Prep courses and who are planning to apply for admission to four-year institutions for academic years 1993-94 or 1994-95 should make every effort to complete the required college prep courses (**Attachment 1**).
2. The current policy on the college course prerequisites allows for individual institutions to make certain exceptions under the policy **when the student's failure to fulfill the course requirements lies beyond the control of the individual student**. Therefore, under the policy's exception clause, the institutions may accept those students who have successfully completed the Applied Academic/Tech Prep courses in lieu of the college preparatory courses for the two academic years listed in Item One above, but only for those two academic years unless there is a subsequent change in policy.
3. At the request of the State Department of Education, the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs will examine the seven Applied Academic/Tech Prep courses submitted to the Commission and make a determination by December 1, 1993, whether to accept all, some, or none of them in lieu of traditional college preparatory courses described in the College Courses Prerequisites Policy. This will be accomplished in the manner and on the schedule prescribed in **Attachment 2**.

Attachment 1: High School Course Requirements

Attachment 2: Process for Consideration of Changes to Course Prerequisites Policy