Current Early & Continuous Enrollment in English and Math Requirements

Undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are expected to make timely progress towards completing their degree requirements. In an effort to have students remain compliant with the requirements of the KU Core and the College, students are required to complete the Written Communication and Quantitative Literacy requirements of both the KU Core and their degrees within the first year of undergraduate study.

Quantitative Literacy. Students are expected to meet the requirement of Goal 1, Learning Outcome 2 of the KU Core in their first year of study. Students should pay close attention to their degree specific requirements (such as for the Bachelor of Arts) given that certain degrees require specific Goal 1, Learning Outcome 2 courses to meet both KU Core and degree-specific requirements. To ensure compliance with this policy, students may be administratively registered for courses if the College determines that they are not on track to complete this requirement in the first year of study. If a student is found to be in non-compliance with this policy, the College retains the right to place a hold on their records to prevent future registrations.

Proposed Early & Continuous Enrollment Policy:

Undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are expected to make timely progress towards completing their degree requirements. In an effort to have students remain compliant with the requirements of the KU Core and the College, students are required to complete the Written Communication requirements of both the KU Core and their degree within the first academic year of their enrollment and to complete the Quantitative Literacy requirements of both the KU Core and the College by the end of their third full semester.

To ensure compliance with this policy, students may be administratively registered for courses if, after the first semester, the College determines that they are not on track to meet the requirement. The College also may place administrative holds on records of students not in compliance with this policy.

Students should play close attention to the requirements specific to their degree and major. Some degrees and majors require specific Goal 1, Learning Outcome 2 courses to meet the requirements of the KU Core, their degree and their major or minor.
Additional comment:

- We appreciate the ongoing efforts by the Mathematics Department to meet this important need for so many students. Their innovations, including enhanced sections of MATH 101 and developing sections of MATH 101 with greater “applied” or “data-driven” focus, are yielding results.

- One of the most significant changes of this proposed revision to the Early & Continuous Enrollment Policy includes summer sessions and a third semester for students to meet the Quantitative Literacy requirement, giving them time to adjust to KU’s expectations, allay some math anxiety, and complete the Quantitative Literacy requirement without putting their sophomore status and financial aid in jeopardy. This may decrease the number of DFW grades and can probably be initiated this fall.

- This wording of the policy backs us away from administratively registering (i.e., pre-enrolling) students in math courses in their first semester for some of the same reasons (allowing students to come to terms with college life and/or math anxiety issues). This might have the additional benefit of evening out enrollments in MATH 002 and 101 which are presently heavy in the fall. Administrative registration of students in courses needed for completion of this requirement might begin if they have not taken appropriate steps for their second semester’s registration.

- The current language of the Early & Continuous Enrollment policy says nothing about restricting course withdrawals. As currently implemented, first-time students in MATH 002 or MATH 101 are barred from withdrawing until after the 50% tuition refund date has passed (e.g., February 15, 2017) unless they meet with a Math advisor and petition to withdraw. Petitions are granted for emotional issues, academic status, accommodations, and not having had math in a while. This restriction may put their progress to sophomore status and financial aid in jeopardy, increase math anxiety, and increase the number of DFW grades, especially if no alternatives to their first math course are available until the next semester (e.g., switching to enhanced sections, alternative content, tutorials, online classes, see below). Our recommendation is that students should be allowed to withdraw from any math course at any time.

- However, as noted above, students need alternatives (e.g., alternative sections, content, tutorials, online classes) to maintain their math skills between withdrawing from their first math course and their next math enrollment if they are to complete their quantitative requirements in a timely fashion. “Off-ramp” alternatives during the semester in which students withdraw might include:
  - Having students switch to alternative sections, for instance, to enhanced sections (i.e., meeting five days a week and including material from MATH 002 and MATH 101) or sections using less abstract, more applied content (e.g., “data driven,” problem solving). This might be implemented in the coming semester, but it is obviously a resource and planning issue.
- Having students enroll in online math courses -- abstract or applied -- of variable credit for variable weeks (e.g., four-week and eight-week courses). See, for instance, the Assessment and LEarning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS) (see https://www.aleks.com/highered/math) or the NROC Project (Network Resources Open College & Career at http://thenrocproject.org/#/). These courses would not provide a full alternatives to MATH 002 or MATH 101 but they would fill the gap between withdrawing from math one semester and enrolling in it again the next semester. It could also provide perquisites that might reduce the number of DFW grades in their next enrollment. This could be implemented in the upcoming semester.

- Their next enrollment in math might include alternatives such as:
  - Having students enroll in an enhanced section of MATH 101. These sections reportedly have lower DFW rates than those in MATH 002 and non-enhanced MATH 101. Indeed, having students enroll in them in the first place – instead of MATH 002 – might be more effective and, ultimately, less expensive for them and the College. If this reduced the number of MATH 002 sections, then expanding the number of the enhanced MATH 101 sections might be revenue neutral. However, the enhanced sections are taught by faculty members, not graduate students, who teach MATH 002. This would increase the cost of each section. In the fall 2017, Math is expanding the number of its enhanced sections from four to eight. More sections might be added by the fall.
  - Increasing the number of alternative sections of MATH 101 that are more applied (e.g., “data driven,” problem-solving) would reduce the number of purely abstract sections and, thus, be revenue neutral.

- These enhancements and alternatives might enhance students’ quantitative skills and reduce some math anxiety, and thereby reduce the number of DFW grades in meeting KU’s and the College’s requirements for quantitative literacy and reasoning, respectively.

- This policy statement retains a fair warning about degree-specific and major requirements. It will not be in students’ best interest to merely delay fulfilling these requirements.