

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE MOTION

Submit this form to the Faculty Senate President

SUBJECT: Reaffirming the opinion of the GEOC on certain First Year Seminar issues.

SENATOR PROPOSING MOTION: José I. Juncosa, Jr.

SENATOR SECONDING MOTION:

MOTION: The Faculty Senate concurs with the opinion of the GEOC that:

- First Year Seminar is a requirement for all 1st year undergraduate students at Salisbury University regardless of incoming credits. In other words, all incoming undergraduate students should take First Year Seminar during their first year at SU, regardless of their classification as freshmen, sophomores, juniors or seniors.
- Specific First Year Seminar courses may not be required by any major, minor, concentration, track or focus at SU.
- First Year Seminar courses should be capped at 18 students per section.

JUSTIFICATION:

Regarding the first item, even though some of this language was already included within the General Education Model adopted by the Faculty and the accompanying documents, there were some instances where the exact meaning of “First Year” was unclear. Both the First Year Seminar subcommittee of the GEOC and the GEOC itself voted in favor of defining “First Year” as the first year of any undergraduate student at SU, regardless of their status as freshman, sophomore, junior or senior and of their incoming number of credits.

Regarding the second item, GEOC considers that requiring specific First Year Seminar courses within a major goes against the intention of the course that students be able to choose from a great variety of options so they can find a topic that interests them personally, thus making them more engaged with the class. In addition, requiring a specific FYS course might cause problems with students changing majors, among other issues.

On the third item, the GEOC agreed with the subcommittee’s opinion that FYS sections should be capped at 18 students per section. FYS classes at many institutions are no larger than 20 students. In addition, many rating agencies use the arbitrary number of 19 to designate a class size as “small” or not. Finally, 18 students is large enough to create a good community, yet small enough that students are less likely to feel unengaged due to class size.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT:

Negative: None. These are issues that had already been determined by the GEOC, so no change would be happening by approving this motion.

Positive: The aforementioned determinations of the GEOC will be clarified to Faculty.

Is this a recommendation to the Provost? Yes ___ No ___

Is this a recommendation to someone else? No ___ Yes, to _____

DATE: Number of Senators Present:

Votes in Favor:

Motion Passes or Fails: