

Faculty Meeting – March 3, 2006

AP Credits – Draft

MOTION: The Committee on Educational Policy and Planning moves that the faculty adopt the following limits on AP credits: (1) a student may count no more than sixteen AP credits towards graduation and (2) no AP exam will count for more than four credits.

RATIONALE: The current policy allows students to count unlimited AP credits towards graduation. It also stipulates that the College will “grant up to six semester hours of credit toward graduation to those achieving a grade of 4 or 5 on an Advanced Placement Test...” After studying both the institutional impact of maintaining the present practice and the national trends among colleges and universities, CEPP believes it is time to modify the policy, especially given that the average number of AP credits awarded per student has increased by 50% in the past eight years (from almost 8 AP credits per student in the class of 2001 to almost 12 in the class of 2009). More troubling, perhaps, is the number of incoming students who are transferring a large number of AP credits. Presently, 27 students in the class of 2009 are able to count at least 24 AP credits towards graduation.

CEPP believes that a student’s classroom experience at Skidmore is unique. More often than not, that experience is richer, more meaningful, and more rigorous than that which accompanies preparation for an AP examination. Accordingly, CEPP believes that a policy allowing students to count more than an average semester’s worth of credit towards graduation exists in some tension with the College’s primary mission of using the classroom to “cultivate students’ intellectual and personal excellence.” We ought to strike a balance between rewarding students for their success in Advanced Placement courses and celebrating the distinct quality of the Skidmore classroom experience.

CEPP also believes that a cap on the number of AP credits is in the long-term interest of the College. If the recent past is any indication of the trend in the academic quality of incoming students, it is likely that an increasing percentage of future students will enroll at the college with a high number of AP credits. Placing a ceiling on that number now, rather than in the future, seems a prudent course of action in light of the need to strike the balance mentioned above.