

MEMORANDUM

To: Committee on Academic Programs

From: Steering Committee

Date: April 1, 2026

Re: Types of Undergraduate Academic Programs Defined

Background: During Fall 2025, it has come to Steering's attention that the current policy, [Types of Undergraduate Academic Programs Defined](#), which delineates how TCNJ counts courses between majors, minors, and certificates may create impediments to students taking on minors or certificates to complement their current course of study. The two specific instances brought to our attention are the recent request sent to CAP for an exemption to this policy for the Financial Planning Minor and the request sent to Steering for clarification of double counting between the WILL certificate and WGSS minor. In their discussion of these two instances, CAP has concluded that the entire policy needs closer revision, including but not limited to, creating more detailed definitions of the distinctions between a minor and a certificate, as well as the ongoing conversation about double counting courses between programs of study.

In light of these changes, **Steering is rescinding the earlier charge from November 19, 2025**, and replacing it with this new charge that expands upon the scope of work needed to update the policy.

Charge: Steering asks CAP to review the Types of Undergraduate Academic Programs Defined policy, and to continue their discussion of double counting courses between majors, minors, and certificates. CAP should determine if we need to revise our current practice of counting one class between majors, minors, and certificates. If they do determine it should be revised, CAP should move forward with a revision. If CAP determines it should not be revised, they should put forward a recommendation on how programs may apply for an exemption, as well as how those exemptions will be tracked and archived within the governance process.

CAP should also review the definitions of a minor and an undergraduate certificate, as well as any other definitions or nomenclature that should be updated to reflect both practice at the College and a clearer distinction between kinds of academic programs. In particular, CAP should review all terms and definitions and determine if they are aligned with contemporary usage in higher education (for example, the use of "correlate" is ambiguous and may not be current).

The testimony tier and timeline are outlined below. In particular, at Step 2, in considering the need for clarification and definitions of courses in the Types of Undergraduate Academic Programs Defined policy, CAP should consult with the Council of Deans, Academic Leaders, Faculty Senate, and Records and Registration.

Testimony Tier: Tier III

- The issue requires a high degree of testimony from the campus community. The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant individuals and groups in developing a

preliminary recommendation. The completed preliminary recommendation should then be made available to the relevant stakeholder groups. Testimony should be solicited in the form of both written and oral feedback, as well as approval by the appropriate representative bodies.

Written feedback should take the form of a survey and/or email feedback. Oral feedback should take the form of public testimony at a meeting of the appropriate representative body or bodies (as identified by Steering). These meetings should be open to the general public, and publicized so that individuals not represented by that group but interested in the issue may attend. Following that meeting, the representative body may, at its discretion, issue a formal response to the preliminary recommendation, which should be sent to the relevant council or committee as well as Steering. On the completion of a final recommendation, this response should accompany the final recommendation to Steering, and it should be considered as part of Steering's final review.

Timeline: CAP should make a Final Recommendation to Steering by **November 1, 2026**. If testimony is sought, in the submission of the final recommendation CAP should note the stakeholder groups, number of persons responding, and summary of testimony collected.

TCNJ Governance Processes

Step 1–Steering issues a charge

Step 2–Governance prepares a Preliminary Recommendation

Once the appropriate standing committee or council has received the charge, it should start by collecting data needed to make a preliminary recommendation. It should receive input from affected individuals and all relevant stakeholder groups prior to making a preliminary recommendation. For issues that have broad implications or that affect a large number of individuals, initial testimony should be solicited from the campus community at large. For some issues, sufficient initial testimony may come from input through committee membership or solicitation from targeted constituent groups. When, in the best judgment of the committee, adequate clarity of the principles contributing to the problem are known, a preliminary recommendation should be drafted and disseminated to the campus community.

Step 3–The Relevant Stakeholders provide Testimony

Once a preliminary recommendation has been completed, the standing committee or council should seek testimony from the campus community. The testimony should be gathered in accordance with the Testimony Tier (see below) assigned to the issue by Steering.

For issues that require public testimony from the campus community, the chair of the standing committee or council should approach the president of the appropriate representative bodies to schedule the next available time slot at a meeting of that body.

Testimony should be gathered in a way that allows stakeholders to weigh in fully on the issue. Members of the standing committee or council that wrote the preliminary recommendation should be present to hear and record the testimony.

Step 4–Governance prepares a Final Recommendation

Once the standing committee or council has received appropriate testimony, it should revise the preliminary recommendation into a final recommendation. Once the final recommendation is complete, the standing committee or council should use sound judgment to determine whether or not more public testimony is required. If, in its feedback to the original preliminary recommendation, a stakeholder representative body requests to review an issue again, the committee or council is bound to bring it back to that body. If a full calendar year has passed since the formal announcement of the preliminary recommendation, the committee must re-submit a preliminary recommendation to the campus community. When the committee or council has completed the final recommendation, it should forward it to the Steering Committee. The final recommendation should be accompanied by a cover memo that summarizes the initial charge, how testimony was gathered and the nature of that testimony, and how the committee responded to that testimony, including a description of how the preliminary recommendation evolved as a result of testimony.

Step 5–Steering considers the Final Recommendation

Step 6–The Provost and/or President and Board consider the Final Recommendation

Step 7–Steering notifies the Campus Community Testimony

For a complete description of all steps and of the testimony tiers, see [Governance Structures and Processes, 2019 Revision](#), pages 23–27.