

## VWW proposition facts

- Two VWW courses are currently required by all students at NMSU.
- NMSU has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of required credit hours when compared to all 15 of our peer institutions.
- No other peer institution, other than UNM, has a VWW requirement. UNM requires only a single VWW course.
- The VWW program has been in place for 24 years. Although individual VWW courses are reviewed to ensure they meet the VWW course requirements, the VWW program as a whole has **never been assessed** to determine any 'added value' to our students.
- This proposition does not end the VWW program. It merely makes a second course optional, with the decision process moved from the University level to the academic program level.
- This proposition is an opt-out measure, in that only programs that choose to actively opt-out of the second VWW course will now be able to do so. The courses will still be offered and students can always enroll in them if they wish.
- Without some flexibility at the program level, a reduction to 120 credit hours will require the removal of program specific content.
- We are working within a constrained system. While two VWW courses may enhance some programs, it may not be the priority of other programs that are reviewing their degree content.
- This proposition is supported by faculty and senators from the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Engineering, College of Education, College of Business, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, and the Dona Ana Community College.

## Frequently Asked Questions about the VWW proposition

***There is a recently formed "General Education Taskforce" which will be reviewing all General Education at NMSU. Shouldn't we wait until the taskforce has made its decisions before taking any action on VWW?***

The taskforce has no authority other than to make recommendations to the Provost and it will not be addressing the VWW program specifically. Gen-Ed changes are statewide and must be approved by the State of New Mexico's Department of Higher Education. Therefore, recommendations of the taskforce will not see implementation for years (if at all). Also, as a reminder, VWW although required of all, is not a part of Gen-Ed and can be modified at the NMSU level.

***Why is this proposition being considered if the 120 credit hour reduction of bachelor's degrees is not currently required?***

It is true that the 120 credit hour reduction is not currently required. However, the Provost has directed all Deans to provide plans for reducing all degrees to 120 credit hours. In turn, academic program coordinators were asked to provide their course reduction plans to the Deans on 11/13/15. Additionally, the Deputy Provost has directed all Academic Deans to submit their course reduction plans for approval in early January so that they may be processed and take effect in time for the next catalog year.

***Don't our students need the diversity and breadth of education that only required VWW courses can provide?***

Many academic programs on campus include most of the stated VWW student outcomes in their current program outcomes. Engineering has strong assessment documentation that the VWW outcomes are already being met without the use of VWW courses. This is also probably true for other programs outside of engineering. Recall that in its 24 year existence the VWW program has never assessed their stated student outcomes.

***Isn't this proposition the beginning of a slippery slope towards offering only a job specific or trade degrees?***

Absolutely not. Removing a single course in any program will not turn it into a trade or jobs program. The possible removal a single 3 credit hour VWW course out of 43 required Gen-Ed credit hours is only a 6.9% reduction in University required content.

***Is this proposition the end of the VWW program?***

This is not the end of the VWW program, since the VWW courses and a requirement to take them will remain. As a reminder, the proposition itself does not remove any courses. It merely moves the requirement from the university level to the academic program level. Each academic program would have to individually opt-out or they may keep it.

***Isn't this going to reduce a department's Student Credit Hour production?***

Depending on the department, this could be true. Some departments will see a reduction in the VWW portion of their student credit hour count. However, this is not confined to VWW heavy departments. A reduction of total required credit hours (to 120) will affect all colleges, departments, and programs. This should be seen as an opportunity for VWW reliant departments to illustrate their worth to the academic programs on campus. It is logical that students and programs will gravitate to the 'best of the best' VWW courses.

***Isn't this an Engineering only proposition?***

No. While the initial impetus for the proposition came from the engineering faculty, there is a support from six colleges sponsoring this proposition. Faculty and senators from the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Engineering, College of Education, College of Business, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, and the Dona Ana Community College support the proposition.