# Efficient Progress toward Degree Credits Not Required for Graduation by Major 

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## Introduction

Each semester, students in degree programs register for courses, most of which will apply toward their degree requirements, thus allowing them to make progress toward graduation. Nevertheless, some course will not apply toward their degree.

## What Is a Moot Course and a Moot Credit?

A moot course is a course that does not apply toward any degree requirement in the student's curriculum. A moot credit is a credit in such a course.

## Why do Students Register for Moot Courses?

Students may, of course, take some courses that do not apply toward their degree to expand their horizons, examine future educational channels, or to improve their professional skills. Some students may register for second-year level courses simply to transfer these less expensive credits to a senior college. Finally, some students may register for moot credits to meet visa, financial aid or other eligibility requirements.

At the same time, moot credits may result from a lack of understanding or awareness of degree requirements and incorrect advisement. Also, students may have misperceptions regarding exemptions, waivers and permits or program requirements that were changed but not officially updated.

## Moot Courses and Credits in Progress in Spring 2012 (Process and Current Status)

Using the students' degree audit system (DegreeWorks), I evaluated all current credit-bearing registrations against each student's degree requirements. DegreeWorks allows the classification of each course into a degree requirement, taking into account the student's major, option and catalog year.

As of the March 26, 2012 census date, students' registration to courses in session I and session II indicates:
(a) 3,170 students were registered for classes that do not apply toward their degree. This is $20 \%$ of the 15,721 students who registered for classes in degree programs. (Students in non-degree programs and high-school students were excluded.)
(b) 5,017 course registrations will not apply toward students' degrees. This is $10 \%$ out of the total of 48,583 credit-barring registrations.
(c) 13,435 credits were being taken that do not apply toward students' degrees. This is $9 \%$ of the total 150,532 credits in progress.

## Applications to Students' Progress

Some of the students taking moot credits may be unaware of their departure until they apply for graduation. Some of these students may be using limited financial aid resources for courses that do not apply towards their degree. In addition, a review of the moot courses registration list suggests that some students are using seats in courses that carry both high-demand and limited supply of special rooms and laboratories, (e.g., SCB 203, Anatomy and Physiology). Such cases may affect not only the registered students, but also other students who face limited access to classes required toward their degree program.

## Alternative explanations and caveats

(a) Exemptions, Waivers and Substitutions

Some of the moot course registrations may be, in fact, a result of a waiver or a substitution. Some of these changes do not appear to have yet been posted to students' records and will be applied only when an applicant is reviewed for graduation. I estimate that approximately 100 students may be affected by actions that have not been posted (about 3\% of the students with moot records).
(b) Changes to a Degree Requirement

The recognition of moot credit depends on the validity of the information included in the degree audit course requirements. When majors or options are updated or changed, some courses may not be classified correctly during the transition period. Even minor changes may affect the status of the credit block, if the system does not recognize the applicability of a credit towards a degree.

## Results

The table below shows the proportion of students in each major who have signed up this spring for courses that do not count toward their degree requirements. All developmental courses were counted as "in major" regardless of testing status.

| Major | Students <br> in Spring $2012$ | Students with Moot Credits in Spring 2012 Registrations | \% w/Moot <br> Credits in <br> Spring 2012 <br> Registrations | Total moot seats | Total moot credits |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Accounting | 811 | 231 | 28\% | 319 | 1,072 |
| Administrative Assistant | 9 | 2 | 22\% | 2 | 18 |
| Biology | 120 | 29 | 24\% | 46 | 126 |
| Business Administration | 1,337 | 128 | 10\% | 209 | 456 |
| Business Management | 534 | 56 | 10\% | 88 | 215 |
| Civil Engineering Science | 236 | 128 | 54\% | 189 | 466 |
| Commercial Photography | 222 | 59 | 27\% | 97 | 298 |
| Communications | 148 | 31 | 21\% | 48 | 144 |
| Computer Operations | 176 | 33 | 19\% | 49 | 143 |
| Computer Science | 218 | 99 | 45\% | 151 | 378 |
| Computer Technology | 201 | 44 | 22\% | 72 | 141 |
| Criminal Justice | 997 | 89 | 9\% | 138 | 288 |
| Dietetic Technician | 131 | 36 | 27\% | 48 | 205 |
| Digital Media Arts | 22 | 11 | 50\% | 23 | 47 |
| Education Associate-The Bilingual Child | 78 | 20 | 26\% | 26 | 121 |
| Electrical Engineering Science | 174 | 100 | 57\% | 130 | 416 |
| EMT/Paramedic | 216 | 33 | 15\% | 67 | 165 |
| Environmental Science | 21 | 5 | 24\% | 7 | 21 |
| Fine Arts | 352 | 67 | 19\% | 118 | 291 |
| Food Service Management | 45 | 11 | 24\% | 17 | 59 |
| Human Services: Child Development | 3 | 2 | 67\% | 3 | 28 |
| Human Services: Gerontology | 67 | 16 | 24\% | 21 | 57 |
| Human Services: Mental Health | 349 | 99 | 28\% | 146 | 441 |
| Industrial Design Technology | 12 | 3 | 25\% | 4 | 8 |
| Liberal Arts (Childhood Education) | 486 | 116 | 24\% | 161 | 540 |
| Liberal Arts (Ed Pgm w Sociology-Queens) | 214 | 76 | 36\% | 135 | 378 |
| Liberal Arts: Mathematics \& Science | 1,003 | 218 | 22\% | 327 | 799 |
| Liberal Arts: Social Sciences \& Humanities | 2,958 | 358 | 12\% | 618 | 1,513 |
| Mechanical Engineering | 144 | 78 | 54\% | 116 | 300 |
| Microcomputer Systems \& Applications | 1 | 0 | 0\% | 0 | 0 |
| Mortuary Science (with AA McAllister) | 1 | 0 | 0\% | 0 | 0 |
| Music Recording Technology | 213 | 62 | 29\% | 100 | 167 |
| New Media Technology | 154 | 24 | 16\% | 44 | 121 |
| Nursing | 488 | 106 | 22\% | 189 | 516 |
| Occupational Therapy Assistant | 343 | 54 | 16\% | 86 | 220 |
| Paralegal Studies | 219 | 34 | 16\% | 48 | 126 |
| Philosophy | 36 | 12 | 33\% | 19 | 50 |
| Physical Therapist Assistant | 478 | 110 | 23\% | 171 | 462 |
| Practical Nursing | 478 | 152 | 32\% | 281 | 881 |
| Programming and Systems | 105 | 22 | 21\% | 38 | 92 |
| Radiologic Technology | 234 | 45 | 19\% | 85 | 326 |
| School Food Service Management | 26 | 16 | 62\% | 18 | 44 |
| Spanish Translation | 12 | 2 | 17\% | 2 | 41 |
| Theatre | 24 | 8 | 33\% | 13 | 29 |
| Travel, Tourism, and Hospitality Manageme | 256 | 26 | 10\% | 41 | 166 |
| Undeclared Health Major-Nursing | 870 | 197 | 23\% | 302 | 544 |
| Veterinary Technology | 411 | 96 | 23\% | 161 | 376 |
| Writing and Literature | 88 | 26 | 30\% | 44 | 140 |
| All Degree Programs | 15,721 | 3,170 | 20\% | 5,017 | 13,435 |

