**TO:** Committee on Academic Programs

**FROM:** Steering Committee

**RE:** Policy on Academic Load, Amended charge

**DATE:** February 4**,** 2009, amended November 2010

In February 2009, the Committee on Academic Programs was charged clarify the college’s policy on academic load. Recently, Dean Rifkin has raised an issue whose consideration should entail the same principles as those concerning the academic load policy. We have amended the academic load policy to include this new issue.

**Background:**

Currently, the college has a policy on academic load saying:

The normal aca­demic load is four course units. The maximum load for any student is five course units. Normally, a student must receive permission of his or her dean’s office to carry five course units.  Permission to carry beyond four course units may be requested by sophomores, juniors, and seniors with at least a 3.3 GPA.  However, programs that require five course units in a given semester or under certain conditions may arrange for blanket approval through the Office of Records and Registration.

Students may make 4.5 course units (=18 credits) without permission. Ther[nayak@tcnj.edu](mailto:nayak@tcnj.edu)

e is, however, no indication in college policy of whether or not there is a restriction on the number of semesters in which a student may be allowed to take five course units. Currently, engineering, a specialized program, requires five course units on a regular basis in order to allow students to complete their degree within four years. On the other hand, the School of Culture and Society (in its printed materials) and the other schools (on a more informal basis) generally limit students to only one semester in which they may take five course units. They do so in the belief that frequent exceeding of the four-course-unit limit is inconsistent with the values that underpinned Academic Transformation.

Additionally, there is currently no policy concerning the ability of students to transfer credit for courses taken at another institution while they are taking a full load at TCNJ. Attached is a memo from Dean Rifkin concerning this question.

**Charge:**

At the request of the School of Culture and Society, the Steering Committee asks the Committee on Academic Policy to clarify principles supporting the college’s policy on academic load. As part of its discussion, CAP should consider: whether there should be any limitation on the number of semesters in which a student may take five course units; and if so, whether the limits should be set college-wide or by the individual school.

Additionally, CAP should determine:

1. Whether a student may receive credit for work done at another institution for work done while simultaneously taking a full load at TCNJ.
2. If the answer above is affirmative, should there be a limit to the number of semesters or courses? If it is negative, by whose authority should exceptions be allowed and what should the principles describing exceptional cases be?

**Timeline:**

Steering requests that CAP complete this charge by the end of the spring 2010 semester.