Historical Background

April 25, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Douglas Estry, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies

FROM: Gillian Bice, Chairperson, University Committee on Curriculum (UCC)

RE: UCC Comprehensive Proposal – Proposal 1

Enable departments to offer a minor in a field of study where no major is offered and eliminate the requirement that the minor must carry the same field-of-study name as the major.

For Transmittal to the University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP)

The request referenced above is being sent to you for action by the University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP).

UCAP Response Requested:

Please ask the UCAP to consider the request referenced above at its first meeting in the Fall of 2008. Please mail the related materials referenced under the heading Attachments at the end of this memorandum to the members of the UCAP.

The University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) is requesting to enable departments to offer a minor in a field of study where no major is offered and eliminate the requirement that the minor must carry the same field-of-study name as the major. Specifically to:

- Remove the limitation that minors must carry the same field-of-study name as the major.
  - Rationale:
    - The current practice limits a department’s ability to offer a minor, since it is not possible to offer a minor if no major is offered. There are a number of fields of study at Michigan State University that do not and will not offer a major, but where a minor is a desirable and appropriate academic offering.

UCAP Action Required:

Does the UCAP approve of the UCC’s recommendation to remove the limitation that minors must carry the same field-of-study name as the major?

If you have any questions about this memorandum or the attached materials, please call me at 5-8420.

Thank you for your consideration.

Attachments:

1. Proposal 1 and attachments

Cc: Dr. Linda O. Stanford, Associate Provost for Academic Services

s:\share\ucapprop1
UNDERGRADUATE PROPOSED CHANGES (1-6):

Proposal 1:
Enable departments to offer a minor in a field of study where no major is offered and eliminate the requirement that the minor must carry the same field-of-study name as the major.

Current Policy / Practice:
Minors are only able to be offered in fields of study where a major is currently offered and must carry the same name as the related major.

"Minors must carry the same name as the major." - Guidelines for Academic Minors, http://www.reg.msu.edu/Read/UCC/minorguidelines.pdf

Rationale for Change:
The current practice limits a department's ability to offer a minor, since it is not possible to offer a minor if no major is offered. There are a number of fields of study at Michigan State University that do not and will not offer a major, but where a minor is a desirable and appropriate academic offering.

Benefits of Adopting the Proposal:
Removing the limitation would allow departments to develop, propose, and offer minors in a wider variety of fields of study than currently possible, both in fields of study where no major exists as well as in fields of study where the name of the major is quite broad. For example, History might like to offer a Minor in Southeast Asian History in addition to a History Minor.

Impact of the Proposal:
There are no existing programs that would be negatively affected. Because of current policy, there have not been any minors proposed that do not carry the name of a major in the same field of study.
ENROLLMENT

ENROLLMENT
Enrollment is the selection of courses for a fall, spring, or summer schedule based on the student's Academic Progress Plan previously developed and continually reviewed with the academic adviser.

CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS
For purposes of enrollment and determining eligibility for certain student activities, a division of students by class is made by the Office of the Registrar at the end of each semester on the basis of the number of credits earned and according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits Earned</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than 28</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 to 55</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 to 87</td>
<td>Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 and above</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who have matriculated at Michigan State University and have achieved junior standing (56 semester credits) may not earn credits from two-year institutions.

Students who have matriculated at Michigan State University and have not yet achieved junior standing (56 semester credits) may earn credits from two-year institutions, up to the 56-semester credit limit.

REGISTRATION
Registration is the process of securing classes for which one has enrolled by payment of charges due. Completion of this process generates official University and class records for use by faculty and staff.

PERIOD COVERED BY REGISTRATION
Refer to the statement on Period Covered by Registration in The Academic Program section of this catalog.

SEMESTER CREDIT LOAD
All undergraduate programs of study require a minimum of 120 credits. Most programs are designed so that a student starting a program as a freshman may finish it in 8 semesters by satisfactorily completing an average of 15 credits a semester. In practice, students usually carry from 12 to 18 credits a semester depending on personal circumstances and the chosen program of study. Students with less than a 2.50 grade-point average (GPA) the preceding semester should not enroll for more than 15 or 16 credits except when required by the specific program. Only under unusual circumstances will a student be permitted to carry more than 20 credits.

A student with less than satisfactory academic performance may be required to take a reduced credit load as a condition of continued registration in the University.

Full Time Students
Students must carry at least 12 credits a semester in order to:
1. Participate in intercollegiate athletics.
2. Qualify for the Dean's List for the semester.
3. Qualify for most scholarships, awards, and financial aids. Most of these are limited to undergraduate students carrying at least 12 credits a semester excluding credits for any course carried as a visitor. Students should determine the specific requirements from the appropriate agency or contact the Office of Financial Aid.
4. Be certified in full-time status to loan agencies and other external entities.

Students participating in authorized forty-hour/week internships or cooperative work programs are considered full time for all purposes listed above.

SELECTING A MAJOR

A major is a primary field of study. Selection of a field of study as a major preference may be made at the time the application for admission is submitted. Any student entering the University with fewer than 56 credits may choose to enter without a major preference, No-Preference. A No-Preference student defers declaring a major preference or major until there has been an opportunity to sample courses from a variety of fields under special academic advising directed by a Student Affairs Office of the Undergraduate University Division. A major must be selected before junior standing (56 credits) is reached.

Certain academic programs which specify particular courses or sequences of courses during the first two years may require more than eight semesters for completion of the degree program.

CHANGING A MAJOR

FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES. Students (except James Madison, Lyman Briggs and Nursing students) with 55 or fewer credits initiate changes of major preference either in the office of the associate dean of the college major or in the appropriate Undergraduate University Division Student Affairs Office noted above.

JUNIORS AND SENIORS. A student wishing to change a major in one degree college to a major in another degree college (or within the same college) must initiate the change in the office of the associate dean of the college to which the student wishes to transfer.

The student must meet the requirements for graduation given in the catalog current at the time the change is effective. Twenty credits must be completed while enrolled in the major in the college in which the degree is to be earned.

SELECTING A MINOR

A minor is a secondary field of study at the undergraduate level. It is a coherent set of courses that provides students with an introduction to the breadth and in-depth knowledge of a field of study. Minors are supplementary to the student's major, and carry the same name as the major associated with that field of study. Minors are open to students who are not in majors in the field of study represented by the minor, and may be limited to students from particular majors or colleges. The minimum number of credits for a minor is fifteen. A student wishing to declare a minor must initiate the request with the unit responsible for the administration of the minor.

GUEST STATUS AT ANOTHER INSTITUTION

MSU students may attend other institutions as Guest Students or Non-matriculated Students for short periods, either during the regular academic year or in the summer, for the purpose of earning credit for transfer to Michigan State University.
Students planning to attend accredited Michigan institutions should use the Michigan Uniform Undergraduate Guest Application form available on the Web at www.reg.msu.edu. Students who wish to attend non-Michigan institutions should obtain application forms from the host institution. The completed form should be taken to the host school.

A student wishing to take courses at another institution should consult an academic adviser or the Transfer MSU course equivalency table on the Web at www.transfer.msu.edu to assure transferability.

A minimum of 2.0 must be earned in each course in order for the credit to be transferred to Michigan State University.

Michigan State University students beyond sophomore standing may not earn credit in two-year institutions for transfer to Michigan State.
POLICY AND PROCEDURES
FOR
MINORS
Michigan State University

Definition:
"A secondary field of study at the undergraduate level" – *Academic Programs* catalog

A Minor:
- is a coherent set of courses that provides students with an understanding of the central concepts of the field of inquiry;
- is an introduction to the breadth and in-depth knowledge of a field of inquiry, and must carry the same name as the major associated with that field of inquiry;
- is supplementary to the student’s major.

Target Student Audience:
The targeted audience for a minor:
- is students who are not majors in the field of study represented by the minor.
- may be students from a wide variety of majors.
- may be limited to students from particular majors or colleges.
- is students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs.

Credits and Requirements:
- The minimum number of credits for a minor is 15.
- At least 12 unique credits counted towards the requirements for a student’s minor must not be used to fulfill the requirements for that student’s major.

PROCEDURES

Transcriptability:
A minor is “transcriptable” (eligible to be listed on the student’s transcript).

Certification:
Consistent with other Association of American Universities (AAU) institutions, the Associate Dean of the college responsible for administering the minor will inform the Office of the Registrar when the student has completed the requirements for the degree program.

Relationship to Other Award Types:
What is the relationship between a major and a minor?
- A major and a minor are separate components in a student’s undergraduate degree program.
- All students are required to select a degree program in the major of their choice. A major is a primary field of study with its own set of requirements.
- A minor is a secondary field of study with its own set of requirements.

How is a minor different from a specialization?
- A *specialization* is an interdisciplinary program of thematically related courses separate from an academic major.

How is a minor different from a teaching minor?
- A disciplinary *teaching minor* consists of specific courses that fulfill the State Department of Education Standards for content suitable for preparation to teach the subject area and must be approved by the Michigan Department of Education as a program at MSU leading to teacher certification.

Request to Establish or Change a Minor:
Minors must be approved and/or changed via the academic governance system using the *Request for a New Academic Program* or *Request for Changes in an Academic Program* form.
- Each unit responsible for any course proposed in the minor must be given the opportunity to approve or not approve that inclusion in the minor.

Departments, schools, and colleges with administrative responsibility for offering degree programs may decide to offer a minor in a particular field.
- The department, school, or college may specify admission requirements for the minor.
- The minor must carry the same name as the major. For example, if there is a B.A. in Zoology, then a Minor in Zoology may exist.

More Information: See the University Curriculum and Catalog web page: [www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/ucc.asp](http://www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/ucc.asp)