

## GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING MINORS

With the objective of offering students greater opportunity to add cross-disciplinary knowledge to their major program of study, the Office of the Provost encourages the introduction of minor programs.

A minor is a cluster of courses constituting a coherent program of study requiring depth in the subject, but not as extensive a program as the major. Minors enable students to supplement their work in their departmental concentrations with focused study in another field. Most minors include required courses and elective courses within concentrated menus. Because of the rigorous requirements, students should identify their interest in a minor early in their academic careers.

For some students, minor programs provide an opportunity to pursue a special area of interest that closely complements their departmental concentration. Two examples: a student concentrating in architecture pursues a minor in interior design; a student majoring in writing pursues a minor in philosophy. For other students, minor programs provide an opportunity to pursue intellectual passions unrelated to the departmental concentration. Two more examples: a student majoring in industrial design pursues a minor in photography; a student majoring in fine arts pursues a minor in sustainability.

There are two categories of minors:

- Program Minor: a comprehensive study within a single discipline. Program minors are of two types:
  - Type I: all credits for the minor reside in one department;
  - Type II: a majority of the credits (9+) resides in one department, but the minor also *includes* courses from other departments.
- Interdepartmental/Interdisciplinary Minor: interdisciplinary study focusing on a single thread with courses offered by various departments, schools or divisions. Interdepartmental/Interdisciplinary minors have widely varying structures with flexibility in the distribution of credits across departments. Generally, no more than 6 credits are in any one department.

Please note: A select number of students may also apply to do a Customized Minor. In order to propose a Customized Minor, students should consult the Guidelines for Proposing Customized Minors, attend information sessions and workshops, speak to their advisors and subsequently take necessary steps to design and submit a Customized Minor proposal form, along with required documents.

### Student Academic Requirements

A student seeking a minor must consult with her/his adviser on a plan of work and the student must file a copy of this plan with her/his advisor as soon as the minor is declared. A copy of this plan should be sent to the Office of the Registrar to be filed in the student's permanent record at least one semester prior to graduation. Plans filed late with the Registrar may result in the minor not appearing on the final student transcript.

Minors are transcribed and restricted to matriculated students. Specific minors may include course prerequisites or different GPA requirements in addition to the course and credit requirements. The degree and the minor must be awarded simultaneously. Satisfactory completion of a minor will be noted on the final transcript following graduation.

A student majoring in a particular field cannot minor in the same field (i.e., a student majoring in Photography can't also minor in Photography). A student majoring in a field can however minor in a minor hosted or housed within the same department (i.e., a student majoring in Critical and Visual Studies—department of Social Science and Cultural Studies—can minor in Philosophy and/or Sustainability, both of which are housed in SSCS). A student with a major in a particular program can also minor in *another concentration* (or *area of emphasis*) within the same degree program (i.e., a student majoring in Fine Arts with a concentration in painting can minor in ceramics, which is also a different area of emphasis in Fine Arts).

## **Processes**

A unit proposing a minor must first submit a Concept Proposal to the Office of the Provost and the ICC (Institute Curriculum Committee) for feedback. For a Program Minor, the Concept Proposal should also simultaneously be forwarded to the Dean's Office of the school in which the Program Minor would reside. Subsequent to the approval of the Concept Proposal, the unit submits the Proposal to Establish a Minor form to the appropriate committees along with all supporting documents. (Please see below for details.)

> Proposals involving Program Minors are initiated by the department, supported by the departmental curriculum committee, the chairperson, the school curriculum committee and subsequently by the dean. They are then submitted to the Office of the Provost and forwarded to the ICC for review and comment prior to final approval by the Office of the Provost.

> Proposals involving Interdepartmental/Interdisciplinary minors could be initiated by faculty/chairs/deans across various departments. At some point during the process depending on the minor—ideally prior to the submission of the Concept Proposal—it is strongly recommended that: a/a call be sent out to appropriate chairs about their potential interest in the minor; b/meetings with interested chairpersons take place; c/faculty from interested departments convene for continuing discussion on the minor. Consultation with appropriate parties must be documented in the proposal narrative. These Interdepartmental/Interdisciplinary Minor proposals are then submitted to the Office of the Provost for forwarding to the ICC for review and comment prior to final approval by the Office of the Provost. They will then be registered by the Office of the Registrar and activated.

## **Minor Concept Proposal**

A unit proposing a minor should first complete a Minor Concept Proposal. The concept for a particular minor should also be shared with appropriate faculty, chairpersons and deans, and their participation and support noted in the Concept Proposal. This proposal should indicate

acknowledgement that appropriate consultation has taken place with various entities and that the necessary support is in place. The Concept Proposal should then be forwarded to the Office of the Provost and the ICC. For a Program Minor, the Concept Proposal should also simultaneously be forwarded to the Dean's Office of the school in which the Program Minor would reside.

The minor should be prepared in accordance with the following guidelines:

- The undergraduate minor should consist of at least 15 credits and no more than 21 credits;
- Generally, 100-level courses may not be used toward the undergraduate minor. However, given the necessity of acquiring certain foundational technical skills for particular minors, a minor proposal may argue for the inclusion of up to 3 credits at the 100 level. The rationale for this inclusion must be made in the Concept Proposal (or change proposal) and in the final minor application forms;
- Generally, at least 40% of the credits in the minor must be at the 300 level or higher;
- The unit(s) sponsoring the minor may set requirements for eligibility;
- Elective courses, which fulfill requirements for a major, may also be used to fulfill course requirements for a minor.

Subsequent to the approval of the Concept Proposal, the Proposal to Establish a Minor form should be completed and forwarded to appropriate entities.

### **Proposal to Establish a Minor Form**

After a Concept Proposal has been approved, initiators of a new undergraduate minor must complete the Proposal to Establish a Minor form, which should include the following:

1. A *bulletin description*: a short narrative summary of the program for publication in the Bulletin, including minor requirements (75 words maximum);
2. A *narrative description* of the minor;
3. *The rationale* for offering the minor and for the combination of courses in the minor. The rationale should indicate how the set of required courses for the minor provides a systematic understanding of the field of study;
4. A list of three to five *student learning outcomes* targeted in the minor;
5. A *course list and curriculum table*. This curriculum table and list of courses should be attached to the proposal. This is a list of courses that define the minor with specific requirements and electives menus, along with the number of credits required in each area. This list should include:
  - a. Courses' names and numbers;
  - b. Semester the courses are offered, along with student caps per section, if applicable;
  - c. Prerequisites for listed courses.Please note that syllabi are NOT required with the proposal form. Any new proposed courses must be included in the list, and so designated.

A course that is a requirement for a minor may be proposed concurrently with the minor. The minor's passing will then be contingent on the approval of the course, in addition to the other elements of the minor. New courses must be approved through the regular course approval process.

6. *Special requirements*: special restrictions or requirements for admission and completion such as GPA, course grades etc. should be noted.
7. *Administration of the Minor*: information on faculty/staff who will be responsible for the administration of the minor, including name and title, should be described in this section.
8. *Summary of consultations with other departments*: if a Program Minor includes courses from other departments, a brief narrative confirming the support of appropriate parties/chairs/deans of those departments should be included. As well, if the minor is an Interdepartmental/Interdisciplinary Minor, a brief narrative confirming the participation and support of appropriate parties/chairs/deans of departments with courses must be included. This section can also include the process of conceptualization and design of the minor, along with a description of the participation of various parties.

### **Procedures for Revising a Minor**

For a change to a Minor Program, the following information is required:

1. Program Revision Tracking Cover Page
2. One-page overview of why the revisions are necessary, including:
  - A justification/rationale for the changes;
  - The responsible coordinator contact information;
  - A summary of consultations with departments likely to be affected, and responses from those departments, if applicable.
3. Side-by-side comparison of OLD and NEW list of courses for the minor.

Syllabi are not required for minor proposals or revisions, except in the cases of required new courses.

The minor will have to go through the curriculum approval process if:

- there are any changes in the total number of credits required for the minor; and/or;
- there is any permanent change to the required course(s) of the minor. (Note: any changes to the number of credits of a required course constitutes a permanent change.)

If there are non-content changes (i.e. a course name change or course number change), and/or there are changes to the electives in a minor, the new minor goes directly to the Office of the Provost as well.