



GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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US.005 – Guidelines for Developing Academic Programs

Contact:

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GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Approved by College Curriculum Committee on November 3, 2006

To assist departments that are thinking about new majors or about revising already existing majors, the Office of Academic Affairs has developed these “Guidelines for Developing Academic Programs.” We hope they will be of use to you as a way of refining your ideas and assessing the viability of the new programs and program revisions you may be contemplating. Before undertaking program development or revision, chairs or faculty should contact the Office of Undergraduate Studies and arrange to meet with the Dean and the Academic Director of Undergraduate Studies.

CURRICULUM

- The major has a mission statement that clearly reflects the curricular goals of the college and not only of the department proposing the major.
 - The major is based on the current state of scholarship in the discipline, in terms of substance and methodology.
 - The major identifies a set of learning objectives that are mapped to particular courses, where they will be introduced or reinforced.
 - These learning objectives include the development of student literacy skills, including writing, speaking, critical thinking, technological literacy, information literacy, and graphical representation of data.
 - The major exposes students to the research methods of the discipline or to the practical application of academic knowledge through participation in internships, fieldwork, or service learning.
 - The major lays out a clear program of study, which includes:
 - A common core of courses required of all majors;
 - A progression of courses, beginning with a gateway course, which build on each other (200, 300, & 400 level courses are required);
 - A capstone experience, enabling students to demonstrate their mastery of the learning objectives of major.
 - If the major has concentrations, these are kept to a minimum and a rationale is given for each concentration.
 - If the discipline has a national association, the major would meet the certification standards of the association.
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ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT (FOR ENROLLMENT DATA CONSULT THE ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT)

- The major will attract sufficient numbers of students (based on enrollment data for comparable majors at other colleges, historic growth trends in other majors at the college, or on documented student demand).
- Courses in the major are or will be regularly offered on a predictable schedule at times that students can take them so that a student can complete the major in four years. (A sample four-year program of study is provided.)
- If the major intends to have an evening or weekend program, in addition to a day program, major courses will be offered in all these time periods. There is a demand for the program at all these time periods and full time faculty available to teach in these periods.
- The major has an appropriate number of pre-requisites, and all prerequisites are clearly identified.
- There is a local and national demand for the major, documented by articles, statements from professional organizations, letters from potential employers, and the like.
- The curriculum of the major prepares students with the academic skills and knowledge base relevant to the job market and/or graduate school.

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES (CONSULT WITH THE APPROPRIATE OFFICES IN ACADEMIC AFFAIRS)

- There is an adequate number of full time faculty to teach in the major and to reduce the need for adjunct faculty, or the proposing department needs only a modest increase in full time faculty for the major to be successful.
- There is at the college or in the proposing department the proper mix of faculty expertise, and there is documentation that these faculty will participate in the major and that they have the support of their department chairs.
- There are adequate library resources and facilities (e.g. labs, equipment) for the major or the college is committed to providing necessary resources.
- Given that any new major will need a start-up period, the cost of the major will eventually be balanced or exceeded by the revenue it generates. In the meantime, the college has sufficient resources to support the major.