



DECLARATION OF MAJOR PROPOSAL

Policy Id:

US.013 – Declaration of Major Proposal

Contact:

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Approved by the College Council, April 18, 2007

Resolutions Regarding Declaration of Major

Resolved:

That beginning in fall 2008, John Jay College will require enrolled students to file a declaration of major form between 45 and 60 credits;

That beginning in fall 2008, John Jay College will require transfer students entering with 60 credits or more to file a declaration of major form before the end of their first semester in attendance;

That the requirement to declare a major and the procedure for doing so will be published in the college bulletin; and

That beginning in fall 2008, the admissions application will include an “undeclared” category in the list of majors from which students choose their prospective major.

Explanation

Background:

Currently, we ask incoming students to indicate their choice of major on their admissions applications and give them a list of titles to choose from. The list does not include an “undeclared” category, so in essence we are forcing students to select a major though they may have no information about the major and little or no sense of what major might best serve their goals. Further, it is often the case that students pursue a major other than the one they selected on their admission application. We often become aware of this only when they come for their graduation audits. Thus, the numbers generated by OIR based on information from admissions applications may not be an accurate representation of the number of students actually pursuing a major. Major coordinators do not have accurate lists of their students.

Proposal:

To include an “undeclared” category on the admissions application and to require John Jay College students to file a declaration of major form between 45 and 60 credits.

Rationale:

We propose to include an “undeclared” category on the admissions application for the following reasons:

- To signal to students that it is perfectly acceptable not to know what you wish to major in before being admitted to the college.
- To prevent students from feeling pressured into making an uninformed decision about a major.

We propose to institute a declaration of major requirement for the following reasons:

- To ensure that the selection of a major is an informed decision, made after a period of study at the college;
- To generate accurate data about the number of upper division students in a major;
- To facilitate the implementation of Degree Works as a program planning tool;
- To lay the groundwork for the development of upper division academic advisement, which can be keyed to the declaration of major stage of an undergraduate’s career.

Implementation:

The Undergraduate Standards Committee approved the following resolutions for transmission to the College Council via its Executive Committee. The requirement to declare a major, the process for doing so, and some guidance about how to go about choosing a major will be added to the college bulletin in the section on degree programs and other sections as appropriate.