

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

October 28, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors and Chairpersons

FROM: Linda O. Stanford, Associate Provost for Academic Services

RE: Two New Policies Relating to Unique Content in a Minor and Eligibility to Enroll in a Minor

The Office of the Provost is pleased to announce approval of two new policies related to minors and undergraduate degree programs. Academic Council approved these new policies at its October 21, 2008 meeting . The following motions were approved by Academic Council:

1. "Specify that at least 12 credits counted toward the requirements for a student's minor must not be used to fulfill the requirements for the student's major. Twelve credits must be unique to the student's minor."
2. "Establish that students may not pursue a minor in the same field of study in which they are pursuing a major."

1. Unique Content

Benefits of Adoption of the Proposal:

Because there was no policy in place previously, there was a great deal of uncertainty on the part of students and advisers about whether or not requirements had been met with the courses a student completed. Clarifying how courses are eligible to be applied to requirements provides greater confidence to students and advisers that the student is making progress toward degree completion.

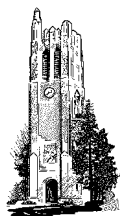
There is no upper limit on the number of credits that can be required for a minor and there is no proposal to require a maximum number. Specifying that a minimum number of credits be unique allows greater flexibility for students pursuing a minor that requires more than the minimum of 15 credits because they can reuse some courses applicable to both requirements of the minor and the major.

Rationale for Change:

The presence of a credential on a student's transcript is an indication that specific, additional work was completed. This is the practice at Michigan State University, all schools in the CIC and most schools in the AAU.

Previous Policy

There was no policy in place governing the number of credits that can be used to fulfill requirements both in the major and the minor.



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2. Eligibility to Enroll in a Minor

Benefits of Adoption of the Proposal:

Establishes a clear policy where there was none before, clarifying for students and advisers who is eligible to enroll in which programs

Rationale for Change:

A minor at Michigan State University is defined as “a secondary field of study at the undergraduate level” (*Academic Programs*, p. 86). By definition, students should not be able to pursue a major and a minor in the same field of study. For example, a student with a History Major could not also pursue a History Minor.

Previous Policy

There was no policy in place restricting a student’s enrollment in both the major and minor in the same field of study.

You may view *Academic Programs* for the updated language with regard to the approved changes:

Selecting a Minor –

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/UCC/Updated/undgredselminor.pdf>

For additional information on the policies and procedures for minors, including how to propose a new minor:

Policy and Procedures for Minors -

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/Read/UCC/minorguidelines.pdf>

For information on how minors relate to other academic programs:

Academic Program Terminology Chart–

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/UCC/terminology.pdf>

Specific questions regarding minors may be directed to Joy Speas, University Curriculum Administrator, jspeas@msu.edu or 5-8420.

cc: Kim Wilcox, Provost
Doug Estry, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Dugald McMillan, Acting University Registrar
Linda Good, Chairperson, University Committee on Curriculum
Sekhar Chivukula, Chairperson, University Committee on Academic Policy
Doug McKenna, Associate Registrar for Certification Services
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