Proposals for Minors at Rice University

Proposal I – Interdisciplinary Minors

A. The Purpose and Scope of the Interdisciplinary Minor

An interdisciplinary minor is a program of study that draws on the intellectual resources of more than one academic department. The intent of the interdisciplinary minor is to foster new ideas and creativity in the curriculum and to provide additional value to students over and above current departmental and other program offerings.

1. Interdisciplinary minors will be created by a group of faculty from different academic departments and must include courses from more than one academic department.

2. In fields of study in which there are currently interdisciplinary majors or second majors, interdisciplinary minors can be created, however, to be approved, these minors will have to be sufficiently different from current offerings in objective, in course offerings and emphasis, or in general educational experience.

B. Proposals and the Approval Process

1. New interdisciplinary minors will be initiated by a group of faculty members who must submit a written proposal to the Dean of Undergraduates.

2. Proposals for interdisciplinary minors must include a list of participating faculty members and a list of the courses that will count toward the minor. This course list may include new courses and/or existing courses. It is incumbent upon those proposing the minor to show how the course list represents an integrated course of study that will provide some value added over and above existing course offerings.

3. The proposal must include letters of support from the deans of the schools and from the departmental chairs or program heads of each department or program that appears in the proposed course list. These letters must include a commitment by the department that the relevant courses will be offered with sufficient frequency that all students registered will be able to fulfill the requirements within a four-year period.

4. Proposals for interdisciplinary minors will be evaluated by the Curriculum Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Faculty Senate that the proposed interdisciplinary minor either be approved or rejected. The Faculty Senate will give final approval.

C. Re-approval and Elimination of Interdisciplinary Minors

1. Interdisciplinary minors must be re-approved every five years. The re-approval process is the same as the approval process described above, except that the proposal for re-approval must contain relevant enrollment statistics as well as a record of when each course in the course list has been offered over the previous five years.

2. If there is insufficient demand for an interdisciplinary minor, the faculty teaching in the minor, with the approval of the Dean of Undergraduates, may suspend new enrollment in the minor and the minor will be phased out when the current enrollees graduate.
3. If the Dean of Undergraduates cannot find a sufficient number of faculty willing to administer the minor under the provisions of Section D below, he or she may suspend new enrollment in the minor and the minor will be phased out when the current enrollees graduate.

D. Administration of Interdisciplinary Minors

1. Each interdisciplinary minor will be administered by a committee of faculty members who will:
   a. Specify the courses contained in the minor
   b. Work with departments to insure that necessary courses are offered on a regular basis
   c. Recognize the students who have declared the minor
   d. Advise students
   e. Report back to the registrar at degree audits.

2. Each committee will appoint a chairperson. This person will be ultimately responsible for administering the minor.

3. Each committee will appoint an undergraduate advisor. This person will have primary responsibility for advising students.

4. The Dean of Undergraduates will be responsible for monitoring and maintaining a record of the chair and membership of each minor committee. The Dean of Undergraduates will be responsible for filling vacancies in these committees as they arise.

5. The Dean of Undergraduates will have a general oversight role in the administration of the minors. He or she will monitor the programs, and when necessary and possible will secure resources for the minors.

E. Relationship of Minors to Curriculum and Other Issues

1. The addition of interdisciplinary minors will have no effect whatsoever on University graduation requirements.

2. Completion of interdisciplinary minors will be reflected on students’ transcripts.

3. Interdisciplinary minors will generally consist of at least six 3 or 4 hour courses.

4. Interdisciplinary minors may consist of a specified group of courses, all of which must be completed in order to earn the minor, or they may consist of a larger group of courses from which students may choose a subset.

5. Interdisciplinary minors will be listed in the general announcements.

Proposal II – Minors in Schools, Departments, Centers and Programs not offering Undergraduate Majors in that Program of Study

Objective: to allow schools, departments, centers and programs not currently offering a major to offer a minor which may consist of courses solely in that school, department, center or program.

The proposal, approval, re-approval and elimination, and administration processes for these programmatic minors will be the same as for Interdisciplinary minors.
Proposal III– Departmental Minors

A. The Purpose and Scope of the Departmental Minor
   A departmental minor is a program of study that draws on the intellectual resources of a single academic department that already offers a major in that program of study. The intent of the departmental minor is to allow students a mechanism for gaining a broad overview of important areas of study other than their majors by mastering a core body of knowledge.

B. Proposals and Approval Process
   1. Their respective department chairs with approval of the deans may only propose departmental minors. These proposals must include the list of courses required for the minor.

   2. Proposals will be considered by the CUC and should only be denied in extraordinary circumstances.

C. Administration of Departmental Minors
   Departments will administer departmental minors.

D. Relationship of Departmental Minors to the Curriculum and other Issues
   1. The addition of departmental minors will have no effect whatsoever on University graduation requirements.

   2. Departmental minors will be reflected in students’ transcripts.

   3. Departmental minors will generally consist of at least six 3 or 4 hour courses.

   4. In general, departmental minors will have three or four required courses and a few courses chosen from a larger list.

   5. Departmental minors will be listed in the general announcements.