

Final Report of the Weinberg Curricular Policies Committee for 2015-2016

May 26, 2016

The Weinberg College Curricular Policies Committee studies and makes recommendations to the faculty about policy matters above the level of individual courses. These include degree requirements, systems of course credit and grading, the creation of department and program majors and minors, and rules and regulations affecting the College's academic programs. The committee met five times this academic year.

Major and Minor Requirements

Asian American Studies.

The committee reviewed a proposal from the Asian American Studies Program for the introduction of an Asian American Studies major. The proposal was approved by the committee, presented to the Weinberg faculty for a first reading in January 2016, and approved by the faculty in February 2016.

Business Institutions.

In Winter 2016, the Harvey Kapnick Business Institutions Program submitted to the Dean's Office a proposal for changes to the requirements for a Business Institutions minor. In consultation with the Dean, it was decided that this proposal should be reviewed by the Curricular Policies Committee. The committee voted to approve the proposed changes. Because this is an existing minor, no further review was required.

Legal Studies.

In 2014-15, the committee discussed a draft proposal from the Legal Studies Program for a stand-alone major in Legal Studies, designed to replace the current adjunct major. The program submitted a revised proposal this year. The proposal was approved by the committee, presented to the Weinberg faculty for a first reading in January 2016, and approved by the faculty in February 2016.

The Legal Studies Program also recommended revisions to the requirements for their minor. Proposed changes to existing majors and minors are typically reviewed by the Curricular Review Committee. Because these revisions were proposed as part of a larger package including the stand-alone major, the Curricular Policies Committee, as the parent committee of the Curricular Review Committee, approved the revisions.

School of Professional Studies - Interdisciplinary Majors in Humanities and in Social Sciences.

In Spring 2016, the School of Professional Studies submitted a proposal for the addition of two, interdisciplinary majors to their curriculum: a major in humanities and a major in social sciences. These majors will enable students to explore related disciplines and develop analytical, interpretive, communication, and research skills through study in a range of academic domains. This interdisciplinarity is expected to fit well with the interests and goals of potential SPS students. The Curricular Policies Committee approved the proposal, and it will be presented to

the Weinberg Faculty for a first reading and discussion, and then a second reading and vote, in 2016-17.

Weinberg College Policies

Transfer policies for international students studying in their countries of permanent residence.

A new University policy, effective in 2015-2016, allows international students to enroll (typically in the summer) in courses in their countries of permanent residence without going through Northwestern's standard study abroad approval processes. This change led to a question about whether students can count such courses toward Weinberg College Distribution Requirements. Courses taken at other U.S. institutions after matriculation at Northwestern cannot count toward these requirements, but a limited number of courses taken on approved Study Abroad programs can count. The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs asked the Weinberg College Advisers to prepare a proposal addressing this issue. The College Advisers proposed, and the Curricular Policies Committee approved, the following policy:

Students may not petition for distribution credit from courses taken in their country of permanent residence after matriculation at Northwestern unless these courses are part of a formal, full-time study abroad program.

Simultaneous enrollment at Northwestern and in non-Northwestern courses taught online.

The *Undergraduate Catalog* states the following: "Students may not register concurrently at Northwestern and at another institution and receive transfer credit for work taken at the other institution unless permission is granted in advance by the office of the dean of their school." In 2014-15, the committee discussed whether a student taking classes at Northwestern should ever be permitted to simultaneously enroll in an online course from another institution. The decision was that such enrollment should not be banned. Instead, as with other requests for simultaneous enrollment, these requests should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. One such request was made in 2015-16. The committee approved this specific request and again deferred consideration of a change to the general policy.

Grades in prerequisites for major and minor courses.

As stated in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences section of Northwestern's 2015-2016 *Undergraduate Catalog* (p. 39, bold added), "Students . . . must earn at least a C- in all major courses, all minor courses, all related courses for a major, **and all prerequisites for these courses** and for the major or the minor itself." The bolded part of this policy is inconsistent with the fact that completion of such courses is not regularly monitored--unless (as is often the case) the prerequisite courses are themselves counted toward the major or minor. The broad requirement is not enforced centrally (though some departments enforce prerequisite grade requirements for specific courses). The CPC voted to eliminate the requirement for a grade of C- or higher in *prerequisites for major and minor courses*. The rule will thus become:

*Students . . . must earn at least a C- in all major courses, all minor courses, all related courses for a major, **and all prerequisites for a major or a minor.***

School of Professional Studies Policy

Limit on credit for business coursework.

The website for the School of Professional Studies (<http://sps.northwestern.edu/program-areas/undergraduate/degree-requirements.php>) states the following:

No more than 11 total units of business courses may be applied toward a degree. Business courses consist of accounting, advertising, business law, finance, marketing and organization behavior courses. Courses in information systems and economics are not subject to the 11-unit limit.

This decades-old rule reflects a division between liberal arts and business courses less distinct than was the case when evening division “business” courses were offered through a separate school. In addition, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences offers a minor in Business Institutions, and Weinberg students can take an Economics Department course on corporate finance, a Psychology Department course on consumer psychology and marketing research, or a Sociology Department course on the sociology of organizations. The current rule also poses an obstacle for some returning students who are unable to transfer credits earned at earlier stages in their educations. The SPS administration requested that the limit on business courses be eliminated, and the CPC approved this request.

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