

Motion by the Academic Program & Curriculum Committee and the College of Letters & Science to Eliminate the Concentrated Study in Two Departments (or Curricular Areas) as an Option for Completing an L&S Major.

Rationale:

The Concentrated Study in Two Departments (or Curricular Areas) was created as part of the new set of L&S degree requirements that went into effect in Fall, 1977-1978 and was retained when the College Faculty revised the degree requirements effective Fall, 1986-1987 and again in Fall 1998-1999. In 1999-2000, the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee conducted the first "five-year review" of this major option, prompting the Course and Curriculum Committee to take a closer look at the option and whether it was serving the function for which it has been created.

L&S Faculty Document No. 82 included the following rationale for this new major option:

... we live in a society far too diverse, complex, and fast-changing to be fully understood; and we can predict only partially what kinds of men and women it will need in the future - even the near future. Yet amidst the murkiness two things are clear: no one kind of person is the right kind, and neither is any one kind of educational program. In fact the committee believed that, given the state of affairs just mentioned, no sort of educational program can be declared "wrong with complete certainty, either - at least for a particular student . . . Whatever we recommend, somewhere in it should be the chance for an individual student to make up almost any sort of program for himself - if the College advised him of the risk, and he decided to take it . . . The University (and College), we decided, was really a giant collection of resources. Our responsibility to students was to publicize what we had, give the very best advice about different ways to use it, and point out likely consequences of various courses of action. Having done that, we felt, the student should take charge of his own life, deciding or not to follow our advice. Given the usual fallibility of any advice, and our wish to be honest about it, this seemed the only moral thing to do. Furthermore it had the added attraction of making the student self-motivated, and of placing him in a university world more like the undirected one outside.

The Course and Curriculum Committee examined information on all students who had declared a concentrated study in two departments within the most recent five years. There was no evidence that either of these lofty goals was driving the selection of this major option by the small number of students who selected it. Rather, the data strongly supported the conclusion that most students choosing this option were doing so because of difficulty they were having in meeting course and/or grade point average requirements within traditional majors. Therefore, the Committee recommends elimination of the Concentrated Study option. Students interested in developing a unique program of study still may do so through the College's Committee Interdisciplinary Major.

PLEASE SEE REVERSE FOR MEMBERS

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