



Arts and Sciences

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October 28, 2009

W. Randy Smith
Vice Provost
Office of Academic Affairs
203 Bricker Hall, 190 N. Oval Mall
CAMPUS

Dear Randy:

The Arts and Sciences Committee on Curriculum and Instruction (CCI) unanimously approved a proposal for the institution of a **Pre-Major** for the **International Studies** Major on October 2, 2009. The main contact for this proposal is the Director of the International Studies Program, Anthony Mughan (mughan.1@osu.edu). Prior to CCI this proposal was approved by Rebecca Harvey, CCI Chair, and Executive Associate Dean Terry Gustafson, Vice Chair, of CCI. Please see transmittal history minutes at end of this proposal for details.

The attached cover letter clearly outlines the rationale for instituting a pre-major for International Studies (IS) majors (104 language proficiency with a C- or better grade.) When considering this proposal, the CCI noted that such pre-majors are common in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, to which International Studies is most closely connected. The external review of the International Studies major recommended the institution of a pre-major. Also, the creation of a pre-major for International Studies is a follow-up to the annual assessment plan designed by Professor Mughan for the major. As such, the effectiveness of the pre-major on student learning outcomes will be monitored and the data will be fed back into the major's future assessment reporting for the purposes of improved student learning.

In response to feedback at CCI, the Curriculum and Assessment Office investigated the possible use of SIS technology in addition to advising to help enforce the pre-major requirements. Unlike other majors with pre-majors, such as those in Engineering, International Studies does not have a common gateway course in which the pre-major requirements can be stated as pre requisites for entry into the course and hence the program. In addition, the Director felt that students should be allowed to take other IS coursework concurrently with the language sequences in order to complete the degree in a timely manner with maximum flexibility. It would not be reasonable to expect students to wait until their fifth term to begin with lower-level course work in the major; enrollments could also be negatively affected.

For the reasons above, in consultation with the Professor Mughan and Mary Ellen Jenkins, Assistant Executive Dean for Arts and Sciences Advising, it was agreed that the proposal to institute a pre-major could go forward with the following standard characteristics: A pre-major code would be created and upon inquiry or declaration of the pre-major, students would be advised of the pre-major requirements. While students can complete other IS course work, their pre-major code would not

change to a major code until the appropriate course requirements were satisfied, and until the required advising session with the Director was attended.

CCI felt that this programmatic change would help to add structure to this large major in a way that will be of great benefit to students as they progress through the major, and was impressed with the way the program was incorporating this component of program development into their assessment plan for the major.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance as CAA considers this proposal.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Hallihan
Director, Curriculum and Assessment

c: Randy Smith
Melissa Soave
Terry Gustafson



U ndergraduate
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MEMORANDUM

To: Terry Gustafson, Kate Hallihan & Mary
Ellen Jenkins
From: Anthony Mughan
Date: October 28, 2009
Re: Pre-major proposal

Dear Terry,

International Studies is proposing to introduce a pre-major whereby students have to satisfy certain conditions before they can enroll as full majors in the program. The conditions for full enrolment are two:

- they must have completed their GEC foreign language sequence (or equivalent) up to and including 104;
- they must have at least a C- (or equivalent) in 104, the last course in the sequence.

There are two reasons for this proposal, one experiential and the other aspirational. The experiential reason relates to the non-negotiable requirement that IS majors have to have completed 10 hours of a foreign language above and beyond the basic GEC requirement before they can graduate in the major. Our experience is that a number of students will leave satisfaction of this requirement till the very end of their undergraduate career and then try to have it waived or have some other, non-language courses substituted for it. When told that this is not possible, the students then have to take a two-course sequence that they have desperately tried to avoid given poor grades in language courses in the past or they have to switch majors. Either recourse is a recipe for prolonging their undergraduate career and undermining the university's goal of timely graduation for all students.

The aspirational reason was articulated in this year's assessment report and it is hoped that if majors complete their basic language sequence early in their careers, they will proceed expeditiously to complete the extra ten-hour requirement for the IS major and become more open to the idea of going on still further to complete a minor or second major in a foreign language. It will be remembered here that the external review questioned the rigor of the IS language requirement and encouraged that majors become more proficient in a foreign language than are those who currently graduate satisfying the minimum requirements. Another way we are trying to achieve this goal is

through the promotion of study abroad.

There are two other reasons to support this proposal. The first is that it is fully endorsed by the foreign language chairs. The second is that will force IS to institutionalize a pre-major orientation that all aspiring IS majors will have to attend. There is no need for such an orientation at the moment, and as such students can become majors without having had either an authoritative overview of the program or the opportunity to ask questions about it before making up their minds whether to major or not.

If this proposal is approved, my plan would be to design an orientation session with a view to introducing the pre-major as soon as possible. Once introduced, it would obviously only apply to new majors, although existing majors would be encouraged to go along with its spirit and, if they have not already done so, to complete the 104 sequence as quickly as possible. I have also been in touch with the Psychology and Sociology departments for information on the design of their pre-major orientations and am fully confident we will have no problem creating a first-rate one suited to the needs of the IS program.

Committee on Curriculum and Assessment
Approved Minutes
October 2, 2009

Informational Item: International Studies pre-major

- i. This is an administrative change; introducing a pre-major requiring students to fulfill Foreign Language requirements prior to declaring as Intl Studies majors. This will allow students to perhaps double major. This is not unheard of in Social Sciences and it certainly is commonplace in the Arts.
- ii. Can the new SIS enforce pre-majors? **Mary Ellen Jenkins might have the answer.** In Communications, pre-majoring requires face-to-face advising. Also this provides students with an informational item. In practice, students could still go around the back and take Language late. Is there a technological answer to this? **Ed McCaul in Engineering might have information. C&AO will pass information back to Tony Mughan.**
- iii. **MOTION TO APPROVE: Shanda, Vaessin. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**