

**13 March 2006\_ Motion 3**  
**Undergraduate Council Action**  
**Proposal for New Minor and New Certificate in Writing, Public Speaking, and Critical Reasoning in the English Department**

A motion to endorse the proposal for a New Minor and New Certificate in Writing, Public Speaking, and Critical Reasoning in the English Department was made. Suggestions for clarification were appended.

Moved: Herb Chereck  
Seconded: Kate Wagle

The motion with draft suggestions passed unanimously, with the understanding that a polished version of the suggestions would be circulated to Council members by e-mail for final approval.

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**Approved by the Undergraduate Council**

**March 20, 2006**

**Motion:**

The Undergraduate Council strongly endorses the proposal presented by the Department of English in cooperation with the Department of Philosophy for a new minor and a new certificate program in "Writing, Public Speaking, and Critical Reasoning."

**Suggestions:**

The Council also offers the following suggestions for refining and strengthening the proposal:

- 1) Explain more precisely how the creation of five new courses has no budgetary impact.  
  
More specifically (perhaps in an appendix) show how many sections of each course are planned each year to meet anticipated demand, who will teach those sections, and which courses or other duties these persons will no longer offer or no longer offer as often due to their reassignment. Council members with questions referred specifically to David Frank's two GTFs and to Suzanne Clark's teaching assignment, but there will probably be other zero-impact resource issues to clarify as well (i.e., faculty teaching, program support, program administration).
- 2) Clarify that the budget required to operate the program throughout the first four years does not depend upon the statement on p. 14 of the proposal, "to seek foundation grants in the future as the need arises."
- 3) Clarify how the English Dept. will both control demand and ensure that those students who declare the minor or who intend to complete the certificate will be able to do so in a reasonable amount of time. (Some Council members suggested adopting a cohort model, but the Council understands this may not be possible.)

- 4) Clarify whether Writing 123 will be a requirement or a choice for students in the minor and the certificate program and, in either case, explain how including Writing 123 impacts the UO general education requirement for writing and the already tight enrollments in Writing 121, 122, and 123.
- 5) Include all pre-requisites for all courses in the minor and certificate programs.

**Additional Issue:**

The Undergraduate Council identified a broader issue raised by this proposal that needs further discussion but does not prevent the Council from strongly endorsing the proposal.

Relation of Minor Programs to Major Programs

Students typically cannot earn a minor in the area of their major. While the Undergraduate Council strongly supports the development of interdisciplinary programs, several members of the Council recommended that the University set an upper limit on the number of courses that could count both toward a major and a minor for students majoring in fields included within an interdisciplinary minor. It would not be optimal, for example, if a student only needed to take two courses beyond his or her major requirements (including upper-division electives) to earn a minor. In general, the Council did not object to allowing a very low number of courses to count for a major and a minor but emphasized rigor and breadth rather than overspecialization at the undergraduate level.

The Council asks the English Department and the Philosophy Department to consider this issue as they move forward with this proposal but offers no recommendation at this time pending further discussion.

Since the above issue will present some complications for the DARS system and, therefore, for advising more generally, the Council also encourages the English Department to meet with the DARS staff to work through difficulties in the ways courses in this minor and certificate program would count for a major, a minor, a certificate requirement, and/or a general education requirement.