Signature Routing Log

General Information:

Current Degree Title and Major Name: <u>BA Degree College of Arts and Sciences</u>

Proposal Contact Person Name: <u>Associate Dean Anna Bosch</u>   Phone: <u>257-6689</u>   Email: <u>bosch@uky.edu</u>

INSTRUCTIONS:

Identify the groups or individuals reviewing the proposal; note the date of approval; offer a contact person for each entry; and obtain signature of person authorized to report approval.

Internal College Approvals and Course Cross-listing Approvals:

Reviewing Group	Date Approved	Contact Person (name/phone/email)	Signature
Educatuonal Policy Committee	3/30/10	Dr. Ruth E. Beattie / 257-7647 / rebeat1@uky.edu	*Ruth E Beattie*
College of Arts and Sciences Faculty	4/27/10	Associate Dean Anna Bosch / 257-6689 / bosch@uky.edu	*ARBosch*
		/	
		/	
		/	

External-to-College Approvals:

Council	Date Approved	Signature	Approval of Revision[3]
Undergraduate Council	3/1/2011		
Graduate Council			
Health Care Colleges Council			
Senate Council Approval		University Senate Approval	

Comments:
____

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[3] Councils use this space to indicate approval of revisions made subsequent to that council's approval, if deemed necessary by the revising council.

1. General Information

College: __A&S__   Department: __N/A__

Current Major Name: __A&S BA degree requirements__   *Proposed Major Name:* *same*

Current Degree Title: __BA__   *Proposed Degree Title:* *same*

Formal Option(s): __n/a__   *Proposed Formal Option(s):* _____

Specialty Field w/in
Formal Option: __n/a__   *Proposed Specialty Field
w/in Formal Options:* _____

Date of Contact with Associate Provost for Academic Administration[1]: __1/25/11__

Bulletin (yr & pgs): __2-10/2011, pgs 110 - 112__   CIP Code[1]: _____   Today's Date: __January 25, 2011__

Accrediting Agency (if applicable): __n/a__

Requested Effective Date: ☐ Semester following approval.   OR   ☒ Specific Date[2]: __Fall 2011__

Dept. Contact Person: __Associate Dean Anna Bosch__   Phone: __257-6689__   Email: __bosch@uky.edu__

2. University Studies Requirements or Recommendations for this Program.

	Current	*Proposed*
I. Mathematics	Will be replaced by new General Education requirements	_____
II. Foreign Language	_____	_____
III. Inference-Logic	_____	_____
IV. Written Communication	ENG 104 or Honors	_____
V. Oral Communication	Suspended through Fall 2009	*Suspended through Fall 2009*
VI. Natural Sciences	_____	_____
VII. Social Sciences	_____	_____
VIII. Humanities	_____	_____
IX. Cross-Cultural	_____	_____
X. USP Electives (3 must be outside the student's major)	_____	_____

3. Explain whether the proposed changes to the program (as described in sections 4 to 12) involve courses offered by another department/program. Routing Signature Log must include approval by faculty of additional department(s).

No change

4. Explain how satisfaction of the University Graduation Writing Requirement will be changed.

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[1] Prior to filling out this form, you MUST contact the Associate Provost for Academic Administration (APAA). If you do not know the CIP code, the (APAA) can provide you with that during the contact.

[2] Program changes are typically made effective for the semester following approval. No program will be made effective until all approvals are received.

Current
☒ Standard University course offering.
    List: _____

☐ Specific course – list: _____

Proposed
☒ *Standard University course offering.*
    List: _____

☐ *Specific course) – list: _____*

5. List any changes to college-level requirements that must be satisfied.

Current
☒ Standard college requirement.
    List: The following current College requirements for the BA degree will be changed.

1. A&S major programs must include at least 6 pre-majors credit hours

2. 100-level courses cannot count towards the major

3. Must include at least 14 credit hours of cognate 'related field" courses

4. Majors must regulate a minimum of 48 credit hours at least 24 credit hours would need to be 300+ level and at least 18 credit hours would need to be 200+ level courses in the major discipline

5. Programs must offer both a B.S. and a B.A. in every major

All other College requirements for the B.A. degree are unchanged

☐ Specific required course – list: _____

Proposed
☒ *Standard college requirement.*
    List:

1. The minimum number of permissible pre-major hours is zero

2. 100-level courses can count towards the major

3. Requirement removed

4. Majors must regulate a minimum of 39 credit hours of which at least 24 credit hours would need to be 300+ level and at least 18 credit hours would need to be 200+ level courses in the major discipline

5. Programs are not required to offer a B.S. and a B.A in every major.

All other College requirements for the B.A. degree are uunchanged

☐ *Specific course – list: _____*

6. List pre-major or pre-professional course requirements that will change, including credit hours.

Current
Minimum 6

Proposed
minimum zero

7. List the major's course requirements that will change, including credit hours.

Current
a minimum of 48 credit hours at least 24 credit hours would need to be 300+ level and at least 18 credit hours would need to be 200+ level courses in the major discipline

Proposed
a minimum of 39 credit hours of which at least 24 credit hours would need to be 300+ level and at least 18 credit hours would need to be 200+ level courses in the major discipline

8. Does the pgm <u>require</u> a minor AND does the proposed <u>change</u> affect the required minor? ☐ N/A ☐ Yes ☒ No
If "Yes," indicate current courses and proposed changes below.

Current   *Proposed*

_____   _____

9. Does the proposed change affect any option(s)?   ☐ N/A ☐ Yes ☒ No
If "Yes," indicate current courses and proposed changes below, including credit hours, and also specialties and subspecialties, if any.

Current   *Proposed*

_____   _____

10. Does the change affect pgm requirements for number of credit hrs outside the major subject in a related field?   ☐ Yes ☒ No
If so, indicate current courses and proposed changes below.

Current   *Proposed*

_____   _____

11. Does the change affect pgm requirements for technical or professional support electives?   ☐ Yes ☒ No
If so, indicate current courses and proposed changes below.

Current   *Proposed*

_____   _____

12. Does the change affect a minimum number of free credit hours or support electives?   ☐ Yes ☒ No
If "Yes," indicate current courses and proposed changes below.

Current   *Proposed*

_____   _____

13. Summary of changes in required credit hours:

		Current	*Proposed*
a.	Credit Hours of Premajor or Preprofessional Courses:	<u>6+</u>	<u>0+</u>
b.	Credit Hours of Major's Requirements:	<u>48</u>	<u>*39*</u>
c.	Credit Hours for Required Minor:	<u>n/a</u>	<u>*n/a*</u>
d.	Credit Hours Needed for a Specific Option:	<u>n/a</u>	<u>*n/a*</u>
e.	Credit Hours Outside of Major Subject in Related Field:	<u>14</u>	<u>*0*</u>
f.	Credit Hours in Technical or Professional Support Electives:	<u>n/a</u>	<u>*n/a*</u>
g.	Minimum Credit Hours of Free/Supportive Electives:	<u>n/a</u>	<u>*n/a*</u>
h.	Total Credit Hours Required by Level: 100:	<u>varies with program</u>	<u>*varies with program*</u>

Rev 8/09

200:	varies	*varies*
300:	varies	*varies*
400-500:	varies	*varies*

i. Total Credit Hours Required for Graduation: <u>120</u>   <u>*120*</u>

14. Rationale for Change(s) – if rationale involves accreditation requirements, please include specific references to that.

     <u>See attached documentation</u>

15. List below the typical semester by semester program for the major. If multiple options are available, attach a separate sheet for each option.

YEAR 1 – FALL:	<u>Not applicable - varies with</u>	**YEAR 1 – SPRING:**	_____
(e.g. "BIO 103; 3 credits")	<u>program</u>		
YEAR 2 - FALL :	_____	**YEAR 2 – SPRING:**	_____
YEAR 3 - FALL:	_____	**YEAR 3 - SPRING:**	_____
YEAR 4 - FALL:	_____	**YEAR 4 - SPRING:**	_____

Proposed Overhaul of the Regulations Governing Arts & Sciences Majors

submitted by:
A&S Educational Policy Committee
12 April 2010

The Arts & Sciences Educational Policy Committee began reviewing A&S Degree Requirements in 2004, with the intention of determining how requirements would need to adapt in response to planned alterations in UK's core curriculum. The review continued sporadically during the intervening years, as different general-education plans rose and fell, and to date no change in the requirements imposed *directly* on students has attracted a consensus inside and outside the EPC.

However, the EPC membership discovered in the course of this review that programs operate under a bewildering array of regulations dictating the requirements that each major may, and in some cases must, impose on undergraduates.[1] These *indirect* requirements vary in the extent to which they actually shape the curricula set up by departments/programs and pursued by students. They vary in their origins, with some originating from beyond the College and others stemming from the College itself. The original intent behind some of the regulations is fairly clear, whereas for some of the regulations their original purposes are lost to institutional memory and we are forced to guess why they might have come about.

What the rules targeted by this proposal have in common is that they appear to convey minimal benefits today. Furthermore, when combined with the direct A&S degree requirements – as well as with UK's core curriculum, old or new – these rules end up governing a much greater number of credit hours than is typical of majors at UK's benchmark institutions.[2] A bit of housecleaning appears in order.

It is important that we be very clear at the outset: *Upon adoption, the proposals to follow would not change a single requirement in a single department or program.* In no case do we propose adding more rules to majors, nor does the proposed deregulation automatically cut out any of the requirements that departments and programs have established. As a starting point, the text that appears in the University Bulletin describing each major would remain the same, and any changes that departments and programs wish to make would still need to pass through the normal faculty approval process before they took effect.

Rather, the only immediate effect of adopting these proposals would be to offer departments and programs greater flexibility should they wish to take advantage of it. It serves as an invitation for programs to think more creatively about the curriculum that would best suit their majors, permitting them to keep the requirements that they consider helpful but to jettison ones that they

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[1] They are too lengthy to list here. We summarize the important ones in this document, but the remainder appear in the University Bulletin. See pp. 109–112, and especially pg. 111, of the 2009-2010 edition for most of them.

[2] See the benchmark study conducted by the College, which appears in the EPC archive along with other public documents produced by the committee. If you go to the archive just hit "Cancel" when asked for a password.

view as nuisances imposed from the outside. Given the widespread programmatic reconsideration underway, in preparation for SACS review and in response to the revamping of General Education, now seems the perfect time for such an invitation to go out.

Background

A&S majors must include at least 6 "pre-major" credit hours and at least 42 hours of "major requirements." Implicitly, then, majors must regulate a minimum of 48 credit hours. However, the "major requirement" is partitioned in various ways, including:
1. At least 24 credit hours must consist of 300+ level ("upper-division") courses.
2. At least 18 credit hours must consist of courses from inside the major discipline.
3. At least 14 credit hours must consist of courses from outside the major discipline.
4. None of the courses may be 100-level courses.

Having these various overlapping partitions – between pre-major and major requirements, between courses inside and outside the discipline, and among the different course numbers – does more than just create a body of complicated regulations. It also adds pressure for majors to control more hours. When a program exceeds the minimum in a particular partition – and all of them exceed at least one – it may not compensate by justifiable reductions in another.

Additionally, every A&S major also must offer both the B.A. and the B.S. degree. The University Bulletin lists both versions of the major in full, so this regulation greatly increases the length and complexity of the Bulletin listing for each department/program.

The Proposals

We propose simplifying the framework discussed above by instituting the following changes:

PROPOSAL #1a: Change the minimum number of permissible "pre-major" hours to zero, thereby removing the requirement that majors be partitioned into two sets of courses

PROPOSAL #1b: Drop the restriction against counting 100-level courses toward the major

In some fields, especially pre-professional programs outside of A&S with selective admissions, there may be a specific set of courses that students must take either to show that they are qualified for admission into the major or to set the necessary groundwork to launch them into the major. It may make sense for these preliminary steps to be set up as 100-level courses, and to require that everything taken afterward be numbered at the 200 level or above.

However, these partitions do not fit many of the programs in Arts and Sciences. A&S students may declare a "major" before they've taken the "pre-major" courses. And while some programs are fairly sequential, such that one can identify the feeder courses that students should take first versus the ones they would save until later, many undergraduate majors take on a more diffuse structure, such that it is not uncommon for a student to have completed all of the "major" requirements but still have one or more "pre-major" courses left over. Thus, contrary to the prefix, courses falling into the "pre-major" category in fact may not precede anything but

graduation. Confusion is not uncommon.

Furthermore, the distinction between pre-major and major courses maps out poorly with the distinction among course levels. Representatives from more than a half-dozen A&S programs reported to the EPC that the dividing line between 100-level and 200-level courses in their discipline was either hazy or defined by substance more than by rigor. Restricting 100-level courses to the pre-major category therefore gives power to a numeric distinction that may be irrelevant, forcing programs with a broad introductory curriculum into a variety of regrettable choices.[3]

Thus, removing the requirements that programs establish "pre-major" courses and exclude 100-level courses from their major would align the rules with actual institutional practice and remove artificial partitions that contribute little other than confusion – thereby allowing programs to identify the best way to communicate the structure of their program to students as well as to the rest of the university. We propose allowing this flexibility.

No one need worry that these changes would result in programs of study suddenly being filled up with 100-level courses. Not only would any programmatic change need to pass through the standard approval process, *a rule would remain in place requiring that students take at least 18 hours of course work at the 200+ level from their major department.* Furthermore, insofar as many programs have reported that the key distinction in their curriculum lies between the 200-level courses and the 300-level courses, between "lower-division" and "upper-division" offerings, the partition that matters would remain in place. *The EPC is not recommending any alteration in the requirement that students complete 24 credit hours of course work at the 300+ level to earn a B.S. and 39 credit hours to earn a B.A.*

PROPOSAL #2: Remove the mandate that each major must include among its requirements at least 14-credit hours of cognate "Related-Field" courses.

Every major currently must require their students to take courses from other disciplines, regardless of whether the faculty members in the department believe that the external courses are in any way essential to, or even useful for, mastery of the major's subject matter. For a few departments, this requirement is not a burden because they have specific outside courses that they apparently wish all of their majors to experience. But representatives of many A&S programs have told us that their faculty members do not have an identifiable set of outside courses that they see as essential to the undergraduate program.

Departments in which this requirement is purely artificial, and not a meaningful part of the program of study, already have the ability to prevent the rule from restricting student choice. Leaving aside the power to grant exemptions, departments may define the requirement so that it

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[3] Examples include: numbering courses with the same basic function at different levels, regulating more credit hours than they really feel is necessary because too many needed intro offerings are 100-level courses, numbering introductory courses at the 200-level and spreading them artificially across partitions, and requesting exceptions to the rule.

allows students to take just about any 200-level course outside the major. Sometimes this permissiveness is explicit; several departments in the College accept courses from any other department or program. More often it is less explicit, in that the list of eligible courses includes more than a hundred options.[4] Either way, the effect of the requirement is neither to give students in the major a common body of knowledge nor to ensure that the courses are delivering identifiable learning outcomes needed to supplement disciplinary course work.

While the requirement may do nothing appreciable to restrict student choice if it lacks support from the relevant departmental faculty, it is not irrelevant. The rule creates a significant amount of work for advising staff and students trying to get degree audits squared away. These massive lists of approved courses must be altered and updated regularly, as courses appear and disappear. Transfer courses without an immediate equivalency in the UK catalogue may have to be introduced as exceptions so that they can count toward this requirement, depending on how the list is structured. Then there's the confusion they can cause. These lists, when expanded, take up lots of space in degree audits. They take up space in the University Bulletin description and sometimes force the inclusion of confusing partitions within the major. And they make it hard to discuss requirements, as an advisor must parse out the distinction between major requirements *in the major* vs. major requirements from *outside the major* – categories that, even after months of evaluating these proposals, EPC members were still struggling to keep straight!

The appropriate place to decide whether achieving undergraduate-level mastery of a discipline requires supplemental course work from other disciplines is in the relevant program. Otherwise, a top-down mandate of this sort simply adds another category of elective credit; it does not improve the quality of education in the major itself. We propose removing the mandate.

PROPOSAL #3: Drop the number of credit hours that must be regulated by a major from 48 to 39.

This proposal grows directly out of the previous ones. Currently, a major structures 48 hours of a student's curriculum, but that number is not an explicit rule: It represents the accumulation of specific requirements. If we allow the pre-major to drop to zero without making any other change, then the minimum number of credit hours to regulate would automatically drop to 42. The question would remain, though, whether the removal of the related-field requirement should cause the number to drop more – or whether reducing that requirement must be compensated by the addition of courses from within the discipline.

Given that those related-field hours did not have a clear place in many programs of study, some members of the EPC endorsed removing them from the mandated total as well, with the possibility of having the number of regulated hours drop as low as 28. Other EPC members were reluctant to see the number of regulated hours decline much, despite the fact that such reductions would bring UK more in line with some of the benchmarks.

This proposed figure of 39 credit hours represents a compromise between the two positions. It

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[4] See the breakdown by department in the EPC archive, hitting "Cancel" when asked for a password.

means that the major would still regulate roughly 1/3 of the 120 credit hours needed in order to graduate. Practically speaking, the implication is that programs could eliminate some but not all of the related-field requirement without having to replace it. A program that both eliminated the related-field requirement and took the pre-major requirement down to zero would need to replace 11 of the credit hours with new major requirements.

PROPOSAL #4: Eliminate the requirement that students be allowed to earn both a B.A. and a B.S. in every College major, thereby permitting individual departments or programs to suspend either the B.A. or the B.S. as appropriate.

Individual programs do not grant degrees; the College does. Earning a B.S. requires completing 60 credit hours in what we'll call, for simplicity, math and science courses. Earning a B.A. requires completing at least 39 (rather than 24) credit hours at the 300+ course level, as well as taking additional distributional "Area Requirements." Thus, the distinction between the two degrees may have nothing to do with differences in the program of study that students pursue within their major. The distinction may be defined entirely by elective courses.

Given the burden of taking 60 credit hours of electives with minimal application to one's major field of study, the B.S. is not a viable route for the vast majority of students in the Humanities and Social Sciences. For some students in Math or the Natural Sciences, meanwhile, their major may consist of too many lower-division courses to make pursuit of the B.A. feasible. In an analysis of degrees that were granted by the College from Summer '95 to Fall '06, fewer than one student per semester earned each of the following degrees (with totals for the period in parentheses):

<u>B.S. in...</u>
Anthropology (13)	Political Science (9)
Classics (1)	Sociology (9)
EASC (19)	Spanish (9)
English (6)	
FLIE (1)	<u>B.A. in...</u>
Geography (14)	Biology (12)
History (7)	Geology (10)
Linguistics (4)	Math (24)
Philosophy (3)	Physics (11)

Of course, some of these programs represent valid, if infrequently pursued, alternative approaches to the disciplinary subject in question. But in other instances, these options exist because the College requires that they exist, and the occasional student who strays into them does so after the fact as a matter of convenience rather than as part of any coherent program of study designed by the department named in the degree description.

Given that over the course of a decade, at least one student opts to use every degree option on the books, why not just leave the situation alone? The answer is that the minimal benefit of all these degree options seems outweighed by the costs. Having two long options for each department or

program, listing almost identical sets of requirements, adds to the length and the complexity of the University Bulletin, thereby increasing confusion. Students sign up for the B.S. thinking that it is a meaningful program of study – a more scientific approach to Sociology, say, than the parallel B.A. delivers – and then must go through the hassle of changing to the B.A. when they are disabused of the notion that the B.S. designation has any connection to their disciplinary subject matter. To the extent that people outside A&S have some concept of how a "scientific" approach to a subject would differ from the "liberal arts" approach – as they might in Political Science, given that several benchmarks confer B.S. degrees that differ substantively from the B.A. degrees – they too would be deceived by the labels.

Thus, individual departments and programs should be permitted to decide whether it is appropriate for the College to continue providing both a B.A. and a B.S. in that major, or instead whether they would prefer for one of the two options to be suspended indefinitely.

Conclusion

Under this package of proposals, the regulatory framework for a major would be simpler. Majors would need to regulate at least 39 hours, of which at least 24 credit hours would need to be 300+ level courses and at least 18 credit hours would need to be 200+ level courses in the major discipline. The major might sustain an active B.A. degree, an active B.S. degree, or both. Stripping away the other rules should encourage program designers to focus on the question of what their majors should be learning and what set of requirements will ensure that they do so.

That being said, the purpose of these proposed changes is not solely to aid departmental planners. Some of the requirements we describe above do constrain undergraduate students indirectly. They may create artificial partitions in the curriculum that slow down student progress toward graduation or that prevent students from pursuing programs of study beyond their primary major. By adding unnecessary layers of complexity to the degree requirements, they can confuse students, which increases the demands on advising resources and increases the risk of mistakes when students try to make curricular decisions on their own. These rules can complicate the transfer process from other institutions, as well as the efforts of students struggling to reconcile degree requirements with the options available when they study abroad. And even in cases when all of these other difficulties are overcome through the submission of "exceptions" and waivers, unnecessary rules add to the time that students, faculty, and staff must spend completing and submitting paperwork. Our hope is that, over time, the invitation represented by these proposals will result in programmatic changes that help alleviate, at minimal educational cost, problems that have been thoroughly documented elsewhere – such as low student retention and slow progress to degree.