



Office of the Chair
University Senate Council
10 Administration Building
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky 40506-0032
(606) 257-5872; FAX (606) 323-1062
Senate Website: <http://www.uky.edu/USC/>

29 March 2000

TO: Members, University Senate

FROM: University Senate Council

RE: AGENDA ITEM: University Senate Meeting, Monday, 10 April 2000.
Proposal to revise the cross-disciplinary requirement in the general education program (USP)

Introduction:

At its meeting on March 6, the University Senate acted on two recommendations brought forward by the University Studies Committee. A third recommendation, dealing with the cross-disciplinary requirement, was withdrawn by the USP Committee for further study. The results of that study follow below with a specific recommendation. It has been approved by the Senate Council.

Background:

The USP Committee has once again deliberated on the proposal to change the Cross-Disciplinary requirement. We have decided that the best option for now is to *amend* the requirement. We propose to maintain the current options for satisfying the requirement, but to also make available the opportunity for programs to add courses. The USP Committee will approve all new additions. The criteria to be used to judge the adequacy of new course options is included in the proposal statement. This approach is much less aggressive than the original proposal, which was to abandon the Cross-Disciplinary requirement. It does provide a mechanism, however, with which to address the course-bottleneck problem, which is one of the major problems with the current requirement. The basic principle underlying the original requirement is also preserved. New courses, just as with current course options, would expose students to the boundaries and nature of disciplinary thinking by study within at least two different disciplinary perspectives. The more lofty ambition, having students examine a topic from two different disciplinary perspectives, is not maintained, but it should be recognized that this principle has failed with the current requirement. Students have not always taken paired courses in succession nor has there been any attempt for instructors to ensure that the same topics have been covered. We hope the Senate will find the new proposal satisfactory. We believe that the present proposal benefits our students and improves our general education curriculum.

Recommended Change in USP Cross-Disciplinary Requirement:

Change the Cross-Disciplinary Requirement of USP to allow students to take, in addition to paired courses and clustered courses currently listed under the Cross Disciplinary Requirement, two courses from among options prescribed by their major degree program and approved by the USP Committee. The criteria for approving each new course will consist of the following: (1) each course must involve disciplines outside that of the student's major; (2) in addition to substantive topics, each course must expose students to a disciplinary perspective; and (3) there must be evidence that sufficient sections and seats will be available for such courses to meet demand.

If a student meets the cross-disciplinary requirement while enrolled in one major, the student has met the cross-disciplinary requirement for graduation.

Implementation: Fall Semester, 2000

Notes: If approved, the relevant sections in the Senate Rules will be codified by the Rules Committee

US Agenda: USP, 4.10.00