

## ACADEMIC DEGREES AND CURRICULA

### ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL PROGRAM/INTERDEPARTMENTAL CURRICULA

Areas of knowledge and research activity which, although they relate closely to established curricular patterns, may fall outside the competence of single departments and even single colleges. It is important that the university recognize these areas and neither reject them nor limit them simply because they do not fit conventional, time-honored patterns and structures. A random, uncritical acceptance of special programs, however, could well endanger both the programs and the established system of which they should be a part. Special programs are defined as programs which envisage (1) an individual budget, (2) an administrative officer, and (3) a set of courses (perhaps with a newly designated prefix) leading to a degree.

In developing interdepartmental and intercollege programs of study, the interested faculties or their representatives should meet to determine the courses which are to comprise the total program and the faculty member who is to administrate the program. Each curricular program should be made the responsibility of a committee. The administrative officer and the complexion of the committee should be determined upon the following bases: (1) the subject matter of the courses in the program and their preponderance, (2) the teaching time required of the faculties involved, (3) the source of teaching assistants involved, (4) the source of facilities provided, (5) the interests of the students. These determinations are to be made through free and full discussions of the faculties involved.

The consideration for such special programs will be based on the following set of criteria:

1. Because special programs are proposed on the assumption that their content, equipment, faculty, and research needs go beyond the competence of a single department, it should be required of all such programs that they be truly interdepartmental and usually "intercollege."

They should demonstrate the need to draw on faculty competencies from various departments and colleges. It is undesirable educational policy to encourage and approve special status for programs which can succeed within an existing department. Faculty in special programs are required to maintain a departmental affiliation.

2. Special programs should be established only for those studies that are generally consistent with the university's educational aims. Proposals for special programs should show clearly the reasons for the suggested level of the program. The relationship of the special study to undergraduate training should be clear, and unconventional offerings themselves should not become the sole argument for graduate level designation.
3. Special programs should show clear lines of authority within the present administrative structure of departments and colleges. Care should be taken lest the number of special programs become disruptive of departmental integrity. Although the notion of a special program should not shift from a grounding in a philosophy of educational necessity to a device for seeking independence by way of a new department, under certain circumstances coherent bodies of knowledge may be developed through special programs into departmental status.
4. When special programs are proposed in areas which have a history of providing a particular service to the institution, it would seem good policy to inquire into the effect of the proposed program on the service function, and to make the satisfactory disposition of the service function a condition of approval.

5. The effects of new expenditures for special programs on established programs of the institution must be carefully considered when a program is submitted for approval.

Proposals for new special programs should have the approval of all staffs involved and the cognizant dean(s) and will follow the normal routing procedure set for new degree proposals.

#### **STATEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO CURRENT STUDENTS WHEN AN ACADEMIC PROGRAM OR DEGREE IS DISCONTINUED**

*(Faculty Senate 3/31/83)*

As a general rule, undergraduate students who are certified majors or graduate degree candidates can assume that a degree will be granted if they maintain continuous enrollment and meet all requirements as listed in Academic Regulations, Rules 114-118. However, because of serious reductions in financial support, loss of faculty, or for other significant reasons, the university may, from time to time, find it necessary to discontinue a degree program. When this occurs, further admission into the degree program will be frozen effective with the official action dropping the degree, and every effort will be made to allow currently enrolled majors and graduate degree candidates to complete their degrees within a reasonable period of time. To facilitate this process, department and program chairs (or the appropriate dean) have the obligation to provide for the individual needs of these students, e.g., (1) students may be encouraged to complete their requirements in similar or related degree tracks; (2) although General Education Requirements (GERs) and the minimum total hours for the degree may never be waived, the student's major department/program may waive or substitute departmental degree requirements (approval of the Graduate School required for graduate students); (3) undergraduate students may be allowed to complete remaining requirements at another institution under Academic Regulations, rule 114(a). Graduate students may be allowed to take courses or conduct research at another institution when approved by the student's graduate committee and the Graduate School. In all cases, all financial obligations are the responsibility of the individual student involved, except as otherwise noted in the *Washington State University Catalog* or the *Graduate Studies Bulletin*.

#### **FOUR YEAR DEGREE AGREEMENT**

*(Faculty Senate 2/29/96)*

A four-year degree agreement is available to any first-time freshman entering WSU who meets the necessary conditions (including being prepared, maintaining adequate progress and good academic standing, seeking and following academic advice) and chooses a four-year degree program. Each student is responsible to continue to meet the necessary conditions in order for the agreement to remain valid. On its part WSU is responsible to provide adequate advising, available courses, and options for completion.

#### **MINORS AND SECOND MAJORS**

*(Faculty Senate 5/23/74)*

Departments may petition for a minor or second major by submitting the proposed schedule of studies or list of requirements to the Catalog Subcommittee. The requirements for a second major should be the same as those for a major (excluding GERs). A minor should consist of a minimum of 16 semester hours, half of which must be upper-division. (Also see Academic Regulations, Rules 53 and 54.)

## TO-DO LISTS FOR COMPLETION OF UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

The process of certifying the graduation requirements for each undergraduate student requires action by the student, the Registrar's Office and the student's department. Depending on the student's postsecondary enrollment date, students may be cleared for graduation through a manual process or by the automated Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS). The following steps outline the details of the process.

1. When the student has completed 70 semester credit hours the student completes an undergraduate degree application form. The form is completed and signed by the chair or adviser for the degree program being completed. The student pays the graduation fee and submits the form to the Registrar's Office. The graduation date indicated on the form by the student remains in effect unless the student submits a request to change the graduation date to the Registrar's Office.
2. The Registrar's Office completes the General Education Requirements portion of the "Preliminary To-Do List", either on the manual form or on the DARS report, and sends it to the student's major department.
3. The major department will fill out the departmental requirements on the bottom of the manual "Preliminary To-Do List" or will check requirements and make any necessary exceptions if using DARS.
4. The major department will separate the manual "Preliminary To-Do List" (white copy only) from the "Final To-Do List" and give it, or a copy of the DARS report, along with the transcript copy and instruction sheet to the student **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER RECEIVING IT FROM THE REGISTRAR.**
5. The remainder of the manual "To-Do List" form will be retained by the major department for updating the departmental requirements as such requirements are met.
6. Petitions to waive or substitute general education requirements are reviewed by the General Education Office. Petitions concerning the additional sciences and arts requirements must be filed with the Dean's Office. Students must contact the Registrar's Office for appropriate forms for such a waiver or substitution.
7. As soon as possible after the student has enrolled in their final semester, and their performance during the previous semester is known, the major department will specify on the manual "Final To-Do List" any departmental requirements that remain. These should include the student's current enrollment and deficient major grade points, if any, required to meet the 2.00 GPA minimum. Departments within the Colleges of Sciences and Liberal Arts must also indicate the status of the Foreign Language requirement.
8. The major department will retain the "Preliminary To-Do List" portion (yellow copy) and return **ALL THREE COPIES** of the manual "Final To-Do List" to the Registrar's Office.
9. The Registrar's Office will complete the "Final To-Do List" and send one copy to the student, one to the major department, and keep one for the final check.
10. In the case of manual degree clearing, departmental changes occurring after the department has sent the "Final To-Do List" back to the Registrar's Office will be made on the waiver or substitution cards. Cards are available from the Registrar's Office. Students being cleared through DARS will have waivers, substitutions, or exceptions entered by the department for departmental requirements.

The "Final To-Do List" serves as an official contract with the student for completion of the undergraduate degree. At the end of the semester previously designated by the student for graduation, the Registrar's Office checks for the completion of requirements listed on the "Final To-Do List." Students are informed by letter of any requirements which have not been met. The department receives a copy of the letter in order to confirm the remaining graduation requirements.