

LSC Use Only No:	LSC Action-Date:	UWUCC USE Only No.	UWUCC Action-Date:	Senate Action Date:
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Curriculum Proposal Cover Sheet - University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

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Proposing Department/Unit Geography and Regional Planning	Phone 724-357-2250

Check all appropriate lines and complete information as requested. Use a separate cover sheet for each course proposal and for each program proposal.

1. Course Proposals (check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> New Course <input type="checkbox"/> Course Prefix Change <input type="checkbox"/> Course Deletion <input type="checkbox"/> Course Revision <input type="checkbox"/> Course Number and/or Title Change <input type="checkbox"/> Catalog Description Change	
<hr/> <i>Current Course prefix, number and full title</i> <i>Proposed course prefix, number and full title, if changing</i>	
2. Additional Course Designations: check if appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> This course is also proposed as a Liberal Studies Course. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (e.g., Women's Studies, Pan-African) <input type="checkbox"/> This course is also proposed as an Honors College Course.	
3. Program Proposals <input type="checkbox"/> New Degree Program <input type="checkbox"/> Program Title Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program Revision <input type="checkbox"/> New Minor Program <input type="checkbox"/> New Track <i>Track deletions</i>	
<hr/> <i>Current program name</i> <i>Proposed program name, if changing</i>	
4. Approvals	
Department Curriculum Committee Chair(s)	<i>Bob Begg</i> 11/17/07
Department Chair(s)	<i>John Benhart</i> 10/18/07
College Curriculum Committee Chair	<i>Wanda</i> 11/28/07
College Dean	<i>Tramm</i> 11/28/07
Director of Liberal Studies *	
Director of Honors College *	
Provost *	<i>Alf</i> 1/15/08
Additional signatures as appropriate: (include title)	
UWUCC Co-Chairs	<i>Gail Sechrist</i> 1/29/08

* where applicable

Received
FEB 12 2008
Liberal Studies

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JAN 29 2008
Liberal Studies

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NOV 29 2007
Liberal Studies

II. Description of Curriculum Change

1. As now constituted the Bachelor of Science in Regional Planning has four tracks: Environmental Planner Track, the GIS and Cartographer Track, the Economic Developer Track, and the Town Manager Track. We propose consolidating our resources and dropping the Economic Developer and Town Manager Tracks. The revised program will eliminate the following two tracks.
2. Summary of Changes: Elimination of Tracks and revision or deletion of accompanying catalog descriptions.

Current Catalogue Description:

Geography—Economic Geographer Track **Regional Planning—Economic Developer Track**

The Economic Track provides a broad framework of ideas and theories in addition to a task-oriented approach to location analysis. Site planners articulate the needs of the community for economic space, the demands for convenient transport, the role of private enterprise, and the management of growth. This interrelated group of courses is useful to students, because economic geographers and developers are expected to analyze the interactions of concepts and variables. Market analysis for the location of new shopping centers, for example, requires understanding of economic principles, population characteristics, and the local political milieu, all in a spatial context.

Regional Planning—Town Manager Track

The Town Manager Track is designed to prepare planning students for careers in local government and graduate work in public administration. Students electing this track will become familiar with the structure, operation, and actions of municipal government and the political, organizational, and institutional basis of municipal management and decision making. Skills acquired with this track will enable students to undertake a variety of analytic activities designed to describe, project, and prescribe courses of action for municipal improvement.

Proposed Catalog Description:

Geography—Economic Geographer Track

The Economic Track provides a broad framework of ideas and theories in addition to a task-oriented approach to location analysis. Economic geographers analyze community and regional requirements for economic space, the demands for convenient transport, and the role of private enterprise. This interrelated group of courses is useful to students, because economic geographers are expected to analyze the interactions of concepts and variables. Market analysis for the location of new shopping centers, for example, requires understanding of economic principles, population characteristics, and the local political milieu, all in a spatial context.

3. Rationale for changes.

As part of an on-going effort at self-assessment and continuous improvement, the Regional Planning program of the Geography and Regional Planning Department during the Spring of 2007 invited an outside evaluator to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the program and concomitantly the department's chances of successfully becoming an "accredited" planning program. Accreditation of planning programs is done by the National

Planning Accreditation Board. The board is composed of members of the American Institute of Certified Planners, the American Collegiate Schools of Planning, and the American Planning Association. Accreditation brings national recognition and ongoing external evaluation; it requires significant continuing education for faculty and immediately improves the employability of our graduates. At present there are only two accredited planning programs in Pennsylvania: The University of Pennsylvania and Temple University.

In his pre-evaluation of the Bachelor of Science Regional Planning program, Paul Rollinson, AICP, concluded that:

“Overall, my assessment of the B.S. in Regional Planning Program at IUP is positive and I would recommend moving forward in your efforts to receive PAB approval (sic).

In spite of an overall positive report, Dr. Rollinson recommended some curricular changes to both focus the program and to bring it into compliance with PAB standards. On page 2 of the report, he tells us that:

“While the program has 4 different tracks ... the vast majority of the current students were in the GIS/Cartographer Track. The department needs to leverage its strength (i.e. land use planning, GIS), and avoid unnecessary fragmentation of its curriculum.”

A review of current students and graduates over the past four years shows that there have been 13 students in the Environmental Track, 12 in the GIS Track, 5 in the Economic Developer Track and only 3 in the Town Manager Track. Currently there is one senior in both the Town Manager and the Economic Developer Track and four other students in the Economic Track (3 seniors and 1 junior). After careful consideration of the evaluator's recommendations the department has decided that both the Environmental Track and the GIS Track are viable and hold strong synergies with the Geography Program. The Town Manager Track does not now attract, nor has it historically attracted, enough interest to warrant continuation. Additionally the Political Science courses in the track are rarely offered. Although the Economic Development Track does attract some students, it is not as strong as the GIS or Environmental Tracks. In order to strengthen it, the department would have to rely on several courses in business and economics. In taking the consultant's report seriously, we have decided that specialization is in the best interests of the department and its students and propose to drop this track as well.

III. Implementation

1. Students already in the program or entering this year will be given the option of finishing under the present requirements and with the present tracks. All students new to the program in 2008-9 will be expected to follow the new curriculum.
2. Faculty resources are adequate, no new courses are being added to the program.
3. No new physical resources will be required.
4. One of the strong rationales for seeking accreditation, the driving forces behind these changes, is to increase the visibility and enrollment in our planning program. At present some of our upper-level planning courses are under-enrolled. The strategy we are following mimics that of Missouri State University that doubled its planning majors after receiving accreditation. The demand for public and private sector planners both regionally and nationally is growing and accreditation gives a strong advantage to our graduates.

IV. Periodic Assessment

- 1. The Department of Geography and Regional Planning engages in constant quality improvement. In addition to the 5-year planning cycle mandated by the University, we hold annual retreats to review enrollment, curriculum, and external context. The curricular changes proposed here are the result of an external evaluation completed during the Spring of 2007. During the 2007-2008 school year, in preparation for an external evaluation team, we will do a program self-study. During the 2008-2009 school a team of external evaluators will do an accreditation study. Accreditation mandates ongoing internal evaluation and 5-year external reviews. Criteria are complex, but include: student interviews, an advisory board of program graduates that meets annually, consulting with professional planners, and measuring the program against national curricular and performance standards.**
- 2. Internal evaluations are on-going with annual reports. External evaluations are every 5 years.**
- 3. Internally the Planning Program faculty and the inchoate Planning Graduate Advisory Board review the program; externally the Planning Accreditation Board described above.**