

1999-2000 Audit and Review Report

Arts and Communication Individually Designed Major and Minor

As was noted in the 1994-95 audit and review report, the individually designed major and minor is maintained in order to offer needed breadth of programming for arts and communication majors and minors who wish to pursue a program of study other than one of those encompassed by the established array of majors and minors. It is not intended to be a widely patronized program, and applications are closely scrutinized by faculty and administration. Students applying for permission to pursue an individually designed major or minor are required to submit a rationale that demonstrates the common thread that runs through the proposed courses and clearly indicates why the established menu of majors/minors does not fit their particular educational or career goals.

The individually designed major includes two options. Option one requires at least a 36 credit program. While the second option mandates a 54 credit minimum, however no minor is required with this option. The individually designed minor requires at least a 24 credit program. A 2.5 GPA is needed for admission to the program and a grade point average of 3.0 in the major is required for graduation. The student must submit an application that includes a strong rationale for the individually designed major or minor. This rationale must include an identification and explanation of the common theme that unites the proposed course of study. The student must also have the support of a faculty member who has expertise in the primary area of study. This faculty member serves as the advisor and mentor for the student. The student's application is then reviewed and approved or denied by a faculty committee and the Associate Dean of the College.

As the trend data indicates, enrollment in the individually designed major remains sparse. Over the last five academic years a total of 15 students have declared an individually designed major and only eight have graduated. During the 1998-99 academic year only one student declared an individually designed major. With regard to the minor, the numbers are higher but follow a similar pattern to that seen in the major. It should also be noted that while 63 students declared an individually designed minor over the five years, only two declared such a minor in 1998-99. During this five year period the most popular individually designed major or minor was advertising. Therefore, and not surprising, the decline in the number of students declaring either the individually designed major or minor corresponds directly to the introduction of the Advertising emphasis of the Journalism major and the Advertising minor. This decline actually confirms the value of the individually designed major and minor as the major and minor provide useful data regarding the interests of students and the need for new majors and minors.

The individually designed major and minor has no notable cost implications. Since no new courses are implemented as a result of its existence and the number of students remains small, the College and the University are able to absorb these majors and minors without significant budget implications.

Clearly, the individually designed major and minor enable students to pursue courses of study that are not presently available to them. In addition, the individually designed major and minor provide a valuable source of data that assists the College in developing new majors and minors.

The College of Arts and communication recommends the continuation of both the individually designed major and minor. The benefits for students and the University are clear and given the rapidly changing nature of society, as well as within many of our disciplines, such a flexible option is worthwhile.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER FORMAT FOR AUDIT AND REVIEW SELF-STUDIES

I. Academic Assessment

A. Highlights/Initiatives

1. Overview the current curriculum, including options available within the program (e.g., discussion of the different emphases).

An example of an individualized major and minor are attached.

2. Highlight any new academic assessment initiatives you anticipate for the upcoming review period.

Note attached apr (s) and program proposals.

(Attach the program's APR(s) as Appendix A.)

B. Educational Objectives and Assessment Techniques

1. State the subject matter, cognitive development, and skill objectives for the program, indicating what students will know and be able to do upon completion of the program.

Subject matter depends on the individual programs. Other than successful completion of the courses noted in the program there are no other indicators to note. The students are required to identify a title, goals and rationale for the minor or major and to note how each course relates to the goals and rationale of the major or minor. We are unaware of any attempt to determine whether the students achieved the objectives and goals other than through the successful completion of their coursework.

2. Describe the data collection techniques used to determine if the program has been successful in achieving the desired outcome for each objective above.

Exit interviews are conducted with individualized majors. No data collection occurs with minors.

3. Explain how individual courses are related to the student outcomes that are part of the program's assessment plan.

Because the student must demonstrate a rationale for the selection of courses, individual courses are monitored for consistency and relevancy.

4. List any dual-level courses and indicate how course content, pedagogical processes, assignments, etc. create different educational experiences for graduate and undergraduate students.

(Attach a list linking courses to assessment objectives as Appendix B. Attach a list of any dual-listed courses delineating graduate expectations as Appendix B1.)

C. Assessment Data

1. Summarize the assessment data gathered during the review period. If it is helpful to include data from previous years for comparison purposes, then do so. (Use tables where necessary).

Exit interviews are routinely conducted with graduating majors. However, most students select the individualized minor and no data has been collected with regard to them.

D. Program Improvement Resulting from Assessment Efforts

1. Highlight some of the important changes to the curriculum, the assessment objectives, and/or the data collection techniques/processes that have occurred during the review period. Make sure to link the changes to the data collected during the review period.

While the individualized major and minor have not been reviewed in recent years with the intent of modifying or upgrading the program, the recent experience in the College with the development of the Advertising major and minor reaffirmed the value of the individualized major and minor. The Advertising major and minor were developed, in part, because of the clear student demand that was demonstrated through the Advertising majors and minors that were declared as Individual majors or minors. Thus, an ongoing advantage of the individualized major and minor involves the ability of the college to identify new student interests.

2. Indicate how the program has responded to recommendations relevant to assessment from the most recent Audit and Review Evaluation Report.

(Attach Audit and Review Evaluation Report from last review as Appendix C.)

E. Information Shared with Constituencies

1. Discuss how the assessment information has been shared with important constituencies, including students, staff, advisory boards, etc. In particular, indicate systematic efforts-e.g., regularly scheduled orientation meetings, departmental newsletters, etc.

No regular assessment has been conducted in this area partly because of the small number of majors.

II. Strategic Purposes and Performance

A. Centrality

1. Describe the centrality of the program to the mission and strategic plan of the University of Wisconsin- Whitewater.

The option of an individualized major or minor enables the College and the University to respond to unique student interests and new trends in academic areas or professions that are central to the mission of the University.

2. Explain the relationship of the program to other programs at the University.

This program provides an opportunity for experimentation and innovation in the curriculum. It also provides a means for select students to meet their academic expectations within the existing course offerings at the University.

B. Goals and Objectives

1. Describe the current (non-assessment) goals and objectives of the program, plus any stated mission for the program itself.
2. Summarize the progress in fulfilling any stated goals and objectives for the program beyond the assessment program. Explain failure to fulfill specific goals and objectives.
3. Describe how the program contributes to meeting specific state and societal needs.
4. Explain any changes in goals and objectives that have occurred since the previous audit and review, indicating how the program has responded to the recommendations listed in the previous audit and review report. Refer to the Appendix C as necessary.

Depends upon the individual proposal. Each student must provide a title, rationale and goals.

C. Enrollment

1. Trend Data: Respond to the following trend data for the program:

- a. Number of students enrolled each fall for each of the past five years. (Data provided from the University's fact book.)
- b. Number of degrees granted each year for the past five years. (Data provided from the University's fact book.)
- c. Average number of total credits completed by those earning degrees for each year for each of the past five years if the program is an undergraduate major. (Data provided from the University's fact book.) Undergraduate majors with a consistent pattern of students graduating with more than 120 credits should provide an explanation of the program elements that require credit accumulation in excess of that number.
- d. SCH/FTE for the department, if relevant, for each of the past five years. (Data provided from the University's fact book.)
- e. Student placement information. (Data to be provided by the department/program.)

(Attach trend data from the University's Fact Book as Appendix D.)

D. Demand for Graduates: Identify career opportunities available for graduates of the program. Placement statistics to be considered may include:

1. Acceptance into graduate programs and employment.
2. Employment projections by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and/or state agencies; and/or
3. Other indicators of employment trends.

No data available

E. Accreditation

1. Identify the role of program accreditation for employment of graduates or program continuation.
2. If accreditation is not required for graduates' employment or program continuation, but provides a competitive edge for the program, provide a brief explanation of the advantages of holding this accreditation.

F. Location Advantage. Explain any advantages or disadvantages the program has due to the location of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and its access to opportunities and resources in the region.

G. Comparative Advantage

1. Identify any unique features that set the program apart from other competing programs in the UW System or other colleges or universities in Wisconsin, and/or elements that contribute to the program having a competitive edge. Factors to discuss may include:
 - a. The program's content or special emphases;
 - b. Its focus on a specific population;
 - c. The expertise of the faculty and staff in specific areas
 - d. The availability of practicum or internship experiences; and/or
 - e. The lack of duplication of the program at other institutions in the University of Wisconsin System.

H. Community Impact

1. Discuss the impact that the program has on the community and/or region. Factors to discuss may include:
 - a. The involvement of students and/or faculty in the region;
 - b. The utilization of the program by consumers (i.e., performances and/or services); and/or
 - c. Support by regional constituencies.

I. Strategic Planning

1. Discuss potential revisions to the curriculum (e.g., the development of new academic emphases, new courses, etc.) that you foresee over the next review period in view of projected trends in employment and the development of new technologies, etc.

IV. Resource Availability and Development

A. Faculty and Staff Characteristics

1. Discuss the characteristics of the faculty and staff responsible for the program. Factors to be discussed include levels of professional preparation; appropriateness of expertise to the needs of the program; unit cohesiveness in enhancing program quality; and success in meeting affirmative action goals.

2. Indicate the courses in the curriculum for which each faculty and staff member is responsible.
3. Identify anticipated staffing changes or areas of need, and the projected impact of these changes and needs on the program.

(Attach a table of faculty and staff as Appendix F.)

B. Teaching and Learning Enhancement