

Title: Interdisciplinary Programs/Majors – Curricular Issues	Policy No: 3.13
Category: Academic Administrative Processes	Effective: Fall 2010

Policy Statement:

Interdisciplinary Programs/Majors are programs in which multiple disciplines contribute to the major coursework with no discipline contributing more than 50%* of the overall major course requirements. There are two types of interdisciplinary programs/majors – intracollege interdisciplinary programs/majors and intercollege interdisciplinary programs/majors.

A. Intracollege Interdisciplinary Program/Major is one in which the majority of the courses making up the major reside in one college; however, no discipline within that college houses more than 50%* of the major courses. The standard college policies and processes will govern intracollege interdisciplinary programs and majors.

B. Intercollege Interdisciplinary Program/Major is one in which the courses making up the major reside in more than one college with no college housing more than 50% of the major courses.

*Deviations from the 50% maximum cannot exceed one course.

Background:

Following national trends and the 2004 Academic Affairs long-term academic goal of supporting learning collaborations, new interdisciplinary programs and majors were created. These programs brought together coursework from a multitude of disciplines even though the university lacked a formal structure to review, determine funding priorities, or create processes to address the unique issues created when a program significantly crosses college lines.

In 2008 the provost created an Interdisciplinary Action Team to determine if formal guidelines and policies for interdisciplinary programs were needed, and, if so, what those guidelines should contain. Recommendations from that action team were incorporated in this policy.

Purpose: To define and formulate guidelines and policies for developing, implementing and successfully supporting interdisciplinary programs/majors.

Implementation Date: Fall 2010

Procedures:

Interdisciplinary programs/majors can be initiated in three different ways:

- A. When the president or provost identifies a needed program, he/she can initiate the creation of the program. The curriculum of the program will be vetted through Academic Affairs Curriculum Committee. When a program is initiated this way, the funding issues must be addressed by the office initiating the program.

- B. When a group of faculty members wishes to create an interdisciplinary program which will be housed within an established department, the faculty will follow the established guidelines for creating a new program. (New Program Proposal information can be found on the AA Policy Manual [website](#)).
- C. When a group of faculty members wishes to create an interdisciplinary program which will NOT be housed within an established department, the faculty will follow these guidelines:
 - a. The proposing faculty member will ask faculty from the represented disciplines to form a proposing committee which will craft the New Program Proposal. A representative from each discipline will sign the New Program Proposal.
 - b. Copies of the signed proposal will be sent to each college curriculum committee for review and recommendation.
 - c. If the proposal is recommended by all concerned college committees, the proposal will be submitted via the New Program Approval Proposal process. Included in the New Program Approval Proposal process will be a separate budget impact statement from each dean whose college is involved in the proposal.

The Provost will select a director for each approved intercollegiate interdisciplinary program. Reassigned time, if appropriate, will be determined by the provost and the dean of the director's home college.

This director will serve a four-year term and will:

- a. report to the provost or his/her designee;
- b. remain a member of his/her home college and subject to college promotion and tenure requirements;
- c. undergo an annual evaluation by the provost or his/her designee and a mid-term evaluation by the faculty teaching in the program;
- d. work with other directors and department chairs to create the class schedule for the program;
- e. provide input on faculty teaching and service to each faculty member's home department annually.
- f. be responsible for the SSCII report.

Related Procedures: Faculty Handbook, Team Teaching, Interdisciplinary Policies

Coordinating Offices: Academic Affairs, Colleges, Departments

Academic Affairs Point of Contact: Vice Provost/Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Policy approved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs June 7, 2010

Key Words: