**Double Majors across Colleges**

**Possible Impact on CLAS**

Under current university requirements, a student can only earn a dual degree across colleges. To do so, a student must meet all requirements for each degree’s school/college. The two degrees also require at least 30 credits more than the degree with the highest minimum credit requirement. The minimum total of credits earned must be 150.

Under the new Senate Resolution, students will have the option to complete a primary major from one school and a second from another. That is, students may opt to declare a primary major at another school while completing a second major in CLAS or vice versa.

This prospect will certainly require changes at the university level (e.g., registrar processes, revisions/re-wording of by-laws) before implementation. It will also impact CLAS curriculum, enrollment, degree conferrals and existing governing policies.

Therefore, the CLAS CC&C committee needs to anticipate, discuss and approve needed curricular changes prior to the effective date of this senate resolution.

Below are areas where CLAS will specifically be impacted by this new policy.

**Curriculum**

1. A student with a second major in CLAS may graduate without all CLAS general education requirements if less general education is required in the primary School/College (e.g. ENGR). In CLAS, there is an expectation of a broad liberal arts education (five Content Areas I courses – A through E), language through the intermediate level of language, and a third Q course.
2. Students who elect to earn BS degrees in CLAS as second majors may not be expected to meet our current BS requirements without significant updates to CLAS major requirements.

Several examples are provided below to better illustrate why these curriculum changes will be necessary.

* 1. If the primary degree program is a BS degree at another school (e.g., Business), and the second major is a BS major in CLAS, the student could leave the University with a BS degree in Marketing and Biological Sciences without completing the CLAS required BS curriculum (e.g., CHEM, BIOL, PHYS or MATH course sequences).
  2. The past couple of years, the Department of Economics has worked to create a quantitative Economics curriculum that leads to a Bachelor of Science. Students are expected to take a particular major program of studies that provide students with a more quantitative undergraduate experience.

By allowing double majors across colleges, students whose primary major is in CAHNR or Business could earn a Bachelor of Science in Economics by only taking courses designed for students pursuing a BA in Economics. There would not be a way to differentiate which students followed the BS Economics curriculum program approved for CLAS students, and which students by default earned a BS in Economics as a second major from another college.

A similar situation could happen across all of our BS programs such as Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics related majors, Actuarial Sciences, and Psychological Sciences etc.

* 1. Another example, CAHNR only confers BS degrees. A student could leave the University with a BS in Resource Economics and a second major in PNB without the required course sequences in Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics. Similarly, a student in Chemistry could earn a BS in Chemistry by only taking 28 credits in Chemistry (35 is required for BS students in CLAS) and never taking a course in Biology.
  2. Students may also elect to double major as a mechanism to evade the depth and breadth attributed to a Liberal Arts education (i.e., five CA -1 classes, an additional Q class and language through the intermediate level) and potentially leave the institution with a BS degree without these key courses.

For example, it would become more appealing for a student to seek a primary major in Art History with a second major in American Studies (or English or Journalism or AFRA - or any major in CLAS) to either avoid the completion of additional CLAS requirement or benefit from the perceived marketability of a double major versus a single major.

That is, students who elect to double major would not have to take the additional Q, three courses in CA1 and two semesters of language. In total, these are 6 classes that a student could be taking but could instead elect to meet the requirements of another major. As a result, students who complete through the School of Fine Arts (or any other school) would essentially fulfill fewer required courses than other CLAS students.

1. Without changes to existing curriculum and governing policies, many of the current CLAS academic expectations may no longer hold if the primary major resides in another school.
2. The current proposal will likely create a “turf-war” among schools and colleges as each will prefer to have students who opt for the double major designate their particular school/college academic plan (major) as the primary major.
3. The School of Business does not allow double majors. It is uncertain how the Senate Resolution will impact their academic plans.
4. Students in programs such as HRTS or in other interdisciplinary programs may find it attractive to potentially earn a “double major” with Business or Engineering as a primary and Human Rights as the second. This option will, however, have a negative impact on the HRTS number of degree conferrals.

**Policy & Curriculum Exceptions**

1. Policy exceptions such as late withdrawals or dismissal decisions, and curriculum exceptions such graduation exceptions or substitutions will be impacted in many cases because they currently all fall under the purview of the primary major School/College
   1. For example, curriculum decisions may be made by a student’s primary major School/College that may conflict with certain CLAS programs’ accreditation or requirements.

**Conferrals & Enrollment**

1. Dual degrees under existing by-laws would likely become obsolete since earning a double major across colleges within the 120 credit-requirement will become a more attractive option for students. In the last four years, the university had an average of approximately 500 dual degree students at Storrs, and roughly 60% of these students had one of their majors in CLAS. Within the same timeframe, the university had an average of close to 800 double major on average and more than 92% of these double majors were in CLAS.
2. This new option will lower the number of CLAS graduates since many of these double-major degrees will no longer be conferred by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The school where the primary major resides will confer the degree.
3. Programs like English or LCL are among CLAS disciplines with a significant number of dual degree students. These programs will likely experience a significant decrease in their number of conferred degrees.
4. From a course enrollment perspective, an increase in the number of students who elect to double-major will primarily and exclusively put pressures on CLAS course offerings and seat availability. For example, most Engineering majors already require a significant number of Mathematics courses prior to graduation. Adding a double major in Mathematics will certainly become very appealing to engineering students. However, if 10% of students in the School of Engineering elect to pursue double majors with one or any of the major areas in the Mathematics Department, significant instructional support will need to be provided to Mathematics in order to ensure degree completion.