

Proposed change to the Academic Minor Policy
Adopted by Academic Affairs 12-04-2014 and presented to Faculty Assembly for consideration

Summary:

The purpose of this proposed change is to clarify the meaning of **clause five** in the current policy (see below). As currently written, clause five does not clearly address whether courses that constitute electives within the degree program but whose credits are required in order to meet degree requirements may be utilized to meet the requirements of the minor. The current practice is that electives utilized to meet requirements of the degree program cannot be “double-counted” towards the eight credits that “must not be required courses in the major.” The proposed change clarifies this interpretation.

Discussion:

This proposed change is in response to conflicting interpretations of the existing Academic Minor Policy. It takes into consideration feedback from the November 2014 meeting of Faculty Assembly. In particular, it clarifies what constitutes a requirement for the earning the major as distinct from what is required for earning the degree. It also extends the policy to address students earning multiple majors.

In its earlier discussions on the policy, the committee considered the following issues:

1. The purpose and value of academic minors.
2. The distinction between an academic minor and a concentration or emphasis.

The consensus of the committee is that academic *minors* recognize the achievement of students who elect to develop expertise in a field outside of their major discipline. Academic *concentrations* recognize the achievement of students who choose to develop expertise within their major discipline. Based upon this consensus, the committee recommends maintaining existing practice and clarifying the current policy to remove the conflict in interpretation.

Implementation:

As the purpose of this change is to clarify existing practice, this recommendation does not require any changes in practice be implemented. The change in language, if approved, should be included in the next revision of the academic catalog.

Current Policy:

Academic Minors

Matriculated students at SUNYIT can obtain an academic minor in an area of study that is different from the area of the major and that has been approved by the Curriculum Committee and the Provost. Approved minors are described in the catalog. Application for an academic minor must be made through the department offering the minor. Specific courses must be identified in consultation with a faculty member in the minor. A statement of successful completion of the minor will appear only on the student’s transcript at the time of graduation.

The following additional criteria must be satisfied for approval of the minor:

1. The minor must consist of a minimum of 17 credit hours.

2. The minor must be in a different discipline from the student's major. "Different discipline" signifies a discipline other than the discipline comprising the majority of the courses in the student's academic major.
3. At least eight credit hours must consist of advanced level courses. "Advanced level" signifies courses beyond the entry-level sequence in the discipline; these courses normally carry prerequisites.
4. At least eight credit hours must be taken at SUNYIT.
5. At least eight credit hours must not be required courses in the major.
6. A student must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 (average of "C") in the minor.

Proposed Change:

At least eight credit hours must not be from courses used by the student to fulfill the requirements of the student's major(s). Requirements of the major are defined as courses utilized to meet the credit-hour requirements for that major and/or that are identified by the program major as specific and necessary for earning that major.

Additional Clarification (if necessary):

The following example illustrates the definition of "requirements of the major".

For example, General Education courses, while necessary for meeting general degree requirements, are not specific to the major. However, if a major requires that a specific general education requirement be met by taking a specific course that fulfills a requirement for that major, then that course is considered a required course.

Reference: <http://www.sunyit.edu/apps/catalog/undergrad/academic-requirements-policies/minors/>