

Approved by University Council May 17, 2007

## **Adoption and Oversight of Cross-College Minors**

**Presented by:** Academic Programs Committee of Council

***Rationale:***

Students are interested in a wider variety of options and combinations of courses that will appear on their official academic record and that demonstrate the study within a particular area or field of specialization (see Appendix Two). Academic units (departments and colleges) are seeking to support this interest by providing increased flexibility in course offerings for students and support the concept of allowing students from one college to complete a minor in a field of specialization offered by another college as part of the degree. The opportunity to provide students a broader education is exciting for students, the university and employers, alike.

Because each college has oversight of the academic programs of its students, there is a need to be clear where the academic authority rests when the field of specialization in a student's program is attached to a department in a different college. A few cross-college minors have now been proposed to the Academic Programs Committee (APC). Clarity is needed regarding which college (that is, the college responsible for the student's program, or the college where the field of specialization is housed) has authority over the academic content of the minor and is responsible for advising students and for ensuring that students can complete a program.

It is expected that an effective and efficient approval process, demonstrating the university's support for the concept of cross-college minors, will spawn numerous other minors in the near future.

The development of cross-college minors will make efficient use of university teaching resources, reducing duplication in course content, while allowing students exposure to a broader array of academic fields of specialization. The adoption of a cross-college minor must ensure that the academic authority for the minor continues to reside within a single academic unit (college, department or interdisciplinary unit).

***Consultation:***

These procedures were drafted by the Chair of the Academic Programs Committee of Council following meetings with representatives from the Colleges of Agriculture & Bioresources and Arts and Science. Following discussion and refinement of the procedures at the Academic Programs Committee, including discussion with the Registrar and the AVP for Student and Enrolment Services, the attached document was developed and was circulated to college deans and associate/assistant deans for their input.

***Purpose:***

The purpose of these guidelines is to acknowledge and formalize the role of the department and/or college with academic expertise and resources in a specific field of specialization (the resource unit) in the approval process for minors to be offered to students in another college.

***Principles:***

- Students are interested in a wider variety of options and combinations of courses which will appear on their official academic record and which demonstrate the study within a particular area or field of specialization.
- Academic units (departments and colleges) have an interest in providing increased flexibility in course offerings for students and supporting the concept of allowing students from one college to complete a minor in a Field of Specialization offered by another college as part of the degree.
- The same field of specialization should not be assigned to two different academic units.
- The University should avoid a proliferation of minors with the same name but with very different course content, which could lead to confusion on the part of administrators, students and employers and ultimately to a loss of confidence in the integrity of U of S programs.
- Minors within a single field of specialization may be customized for students in different colleges. However, because the content of the minor will be overseen by a single academic unit, all minors within a single field of specialization will be expected to include a common core of academic content.

***Scope:***

These procedures are in effect for all undergraduate degree programs at the University of Saskatchewan, and complements the Nomenclature policies of University Council, as approved by Council in December, 2001, as well as the program approval authority structure approved by Council in April, 2002.

***Procedures:***

These procedures outline the approval and oversight authority for cross-college minors in a field of specialization. The adopting college must approve the cross-college minor as a field of specialization at the minor level of concentration. The integrity of the minor is maintained, with academic authority residing within the resource unit; the resource college must also approve the offering of the minor.

***New Definitions:***

**Resource unit:** The resource unit may be a college, department, school or interdisciplinary group, and is the academic unit with primary expertise for a Field of Specialization.

**Resource college:** The resource unit, in the event that it is a department or interdisciplinary group, will reside within an identified resource college.

**Adopting college:** The adopting college is the college responsible for the degree program to which the minor is attached.

***Responsibilities***

The resource college will retain academic authority for all related minors within this field of specialization. In most cases, the resource unit will have academic, resource and administrative responsibilities for the majority of the courses included in the minor, and will be the sole academic authority for this field of specialization.

The resource college will approve any minors prior to their being presented to the Academic Programs Committee.

The adopting college will work with the resource unit to define the specific content of the minor that will be completed by students within the adopting college.

When a new minor is being proposed for a degree program, the adopting college and the resource college will forward a joint submission to the Academic Programs Committee of Council. Under procedures approved by Council in April, 2002 ([www.usask.ca/university\\_council/acad\\_prog/reports/04-25-02.shtml](http://www.usask.ca/university_council/acad_prog/reports/04-25-02.shtml)), minors in new fields of specialization are approved by the Academic Programs Committee. For the purposes of this policy, a cross-college minor would be considered as a new field of specialization, as a minimum within the adopting college.

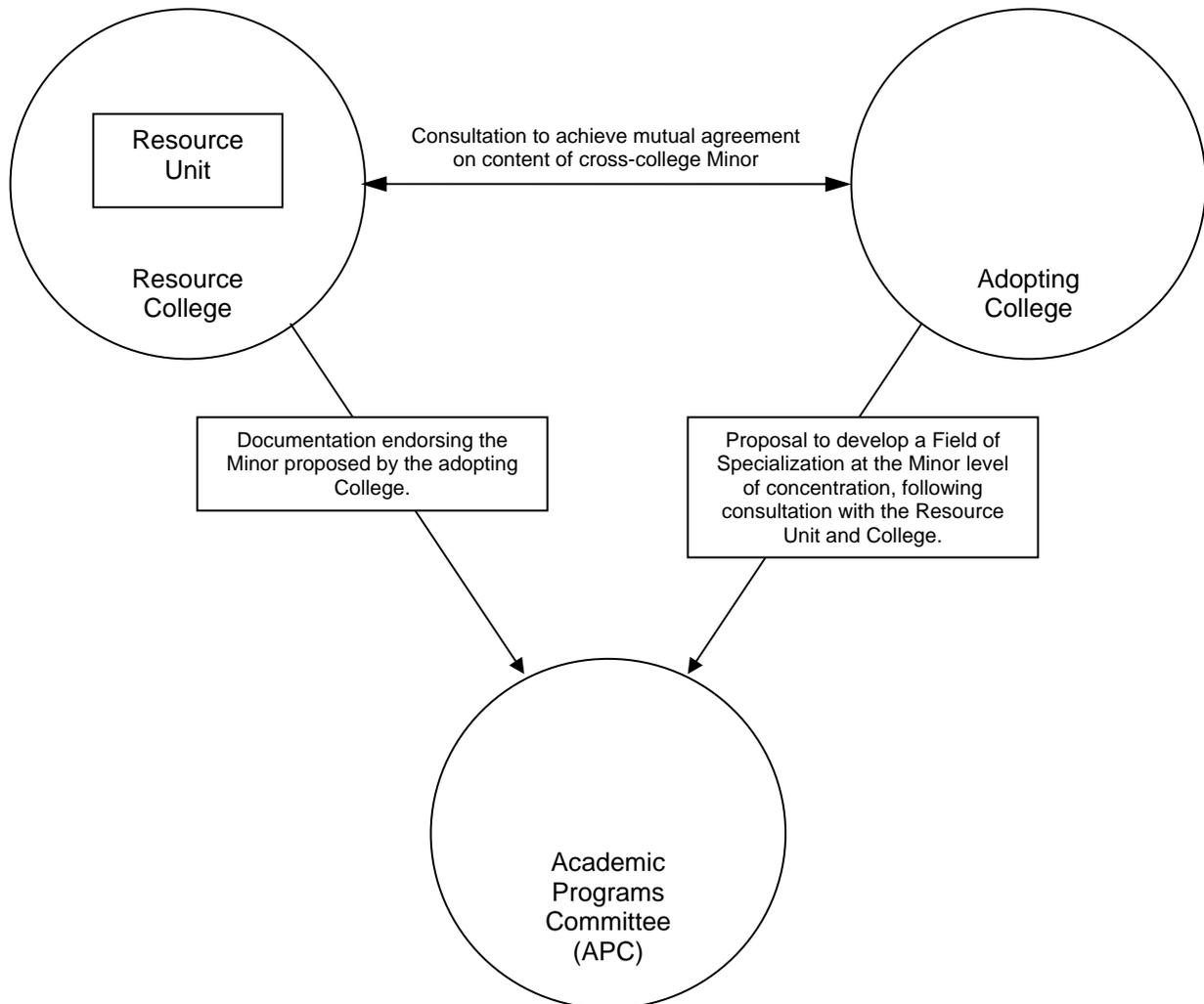
Figure 1 illustrates the process for development of a cross-college minor.

1. For each potential cross-college minor, a resource unit must be identified. The resource unit, in consultation with the adopting college will identify the appropriate courses to fulfill the requirements of the minor. All colleges contributing resources (i.e. teaching courses) to the cross-college minor must agree to provide the noted resources. The resource unit will also gain approval of the cross-college minor from the resource college. A resource unit comprised of an interdisciplinary group, for the purposes of the cross-college minor, will be represented by a single resource college.
2. In the case of a new minor, the resource unit will also identify whether this minor will be available to students within the resource college. If so, the resource college must also submit a proposal for approval of the minor, following existing program approval procedures.
3. The adopting college must submit a proposal to the Academic Programs Committee of Council, seeking approval for the cross-college minor. The proposal must clearly show that consultation has occurred and that the resource unit and resource college have agreed to the adoption/creation of the minor.
4. After adoption of the minor the formal list of academic programs available on the APC website will be updated to show the adopting college, the resource unit, and the resource college.
5. After initial adoption of the minor, any changes (addition or deletion of courses) to the minor, initiated by the resource unit/college or the adopting college must be approved by both the resource college and the adopting college. Proposals for adoption of these changes must be submitted to APC to ensure that appropriate consultation has occurred.
6. A minor-program advisor will be identified in the resource unit and will provide the day-to-day management for the minor. As an example, students from colleges who have adopted

the minor will consult with the program advisor when requesting course substitutions for approved courses in the minor.

The adopting college must still approve the cross-college minor as a field of specialization at the minor level of concentration. However, the academic authority for the cross-college minor will reside within the resource unit and the academic integrity of the cross-college minor is maintained.

**Figure 1. The development and approval process for a cross-college Minor.**



**Appendices:**

[Nomenclature Report](#)

[Fields of Specialization at the U of S](#)