

Proposal regarding Minors

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At present, the management of the Minors programme is left to the SUGC, and to the individual Departments. However, the Minors programme, as originally envisioned was meant to allow interdisciplinary Minors. However, although two batches of undergraduate students have graduated since the Minors programme was effective, there has been no attempt to introduce an interdisciplinary Minor.

Primarily, this is because of a lack of an existing procedure to introduce an interdisciplinary Minor, a lack of any entity taking ownership of the Minor, and restrictive rules being implemented on the courses that comprise the Minor. In particular, the various decisions with respect to Minors require that courses that are part of a Minor must be offered every year, and the entry course of a Minor must be open to a substantially larger audience than the course was originally meant for.

This proposal contains a two-pronged approach aimed at remedying this situation, and as such, contains two independent proposals regarding the Minors programme. Either proposal, if approved, will make it easier for the Institute to offer interdisciplinary Minors.

Proposal to loosen restrictions on Minor courses

At present, there are various restrictions on Minor courses, in order to ensure that all the Minors approved by the Senate do, in fact, get offered to students. These rules are based on distributing the responsibility of the success of the programme on the individual academic Departments, and essentially requiring all of the Departments to (a) offer at least one Minor, (b) allow students from outside their Department to take Minor courses and (c) offer enough courses from the basket that comprises a Minor to ensure that students get an opportunity to complete their Minor.

The proposal to loosen this requirement is as follows: these restrictions should only apply on *one* Minor that is being offered by a Department (this Minor, called the flagship Minor for the rest of this proposal, should ideally be the most generic Minor that the Department can offer). For other Minors, including interdisciplinary Minors, there should be no requirement that the courses comprising

these Minors should be offered every year; if a course from a non-flagship Minor is offered, however, it should be open to as many non-Departmental students as possible, and the faculty member offering the course should not have a Department-only policy. Such a loosening will not affect most existing Minors too much as a lot of the courses which comprise the current Minors are part of the Department Compulsory template of the offering Department, and will thus be offered on a yearly basis anyway. Furthermore, this will allow the introduction of new Minors that are based off of Department Elective courses, such that the faculty members who teach those courses are not under an obligation to necessarily offer those courses every Academic Year, and hence may be more willing to include those courses in a Minor basket.

As interdisciplinary Minors will include courses from multiple Departments, all interdisciplinary Minors should ideally be non-flagship Minors.

Proposal to constitute a Standing Committee for Minors

At present, the nodal authority that coordinates Minors on behalf of the Senate is the SUGC: all proposals for new Minors, as well as changes to existing are submitted to the SUGC for further action. However, as the SUGC has several other designated responsibilities, it is not the appropriate forum to interface with the Departments for the offering of new Minors, whether interdisciplinary or Department-specific. It is hence proposed that a Standing Committee be set up as a subcommittee of the SUGC to interface with the Departments. The mandate of the committee should be review all matters pertaining specifically to the Minors programme before it is considered by the SUGC, as well as to regularly invite proposals for new Minors from Departments and groups of faculty members who might be willing to offer an interdisciplinary Minor.

The proposed constitution of the committee is as follows:

- One Faculty Member of the SUGC (Convener)
- One Senator
- Associate Dean, Undergraduate (*ex-officio*)
- One Student Member of the SUGC

Furthermore, it is proposed that the non-*ex-officio* members of the committee shall be proposed by the Chairperson, SUGC for the approval of the SUGC, similar to how the APEC is constituted.