

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

March 3, 2006

To: Ralph Putnam, Chair UCAP  
Jon Sticklen, Chair ECAC  
Jeremy Hernandez, Chair UCSA

From: Michael G. Schechter, Chair UCC

Re: UCC's Commentary on UCAP Recommendation Relating to the Establishment  
of an Undergraduate Academic Minor

The full committee of the UCC met today and unanimously supported the concept of academic minors for undergraduates at MSU. But it had some concern with the specifics of the UCAP recommendation.

Specifically there was concern with points 3c and 3d in your proposal. We believe that academic units should be allowed to require Tier II writing courses for those enrolling in minors. Some units may want to require writing in addition to that required by the student's major; plus the substance of some "W" courses may be deemed integral to the requirements for a minor. The latter point, of course, suggests that point 3c may be in tension with your point 3b. We recommend a dropping of point 3d entirely and remain silent on the Tier II issue. In terms of 3d, we note that college level requirements are only relevant to majors and thus this statement is superfluous. Again, there may be some college level requirements (e.g. a methodology course) that an academic unit might consider integral to the minor. So we wouldn't want to exclude that. Thus we recommend the dropping of 3d as well.

We would hope that UCAP would consider these suggestions before putting forth the recommendation to ECAC to take to the Academic Council.

We also recommend that a clear definition of an undergraduate academic minor be part of the material to go forward to the Academic Council, a definition that could be included in the University's catalog. To try and expedite the process, I am attaching herewith UCC's recommended language for such a definition and for what might be considered the proposal to be voted on by the Academic Council.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions about this.

Attachment as Stated

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## *Undergraduate Academic Minors at MSU*

### Definition for the Catalog:

A secondary field of study at the undergraduate level.

### Elaboration of the Definition:

A minor is a coherent set of courses that provides students with an understanding of the major concepts of the field of inquiry represented by the minor. A minor offers an introduction to the breadth and in-depth knowledge of a field of inquiry

### Possible Motion for the Academic Council:

Departments, schools and colleges with administrative responsibility for offering academic programs may decide to offer a minor in a particular field. Minors require no less than a third, and no more than two thirds, the number of credits required for a major.

Approval of the student's completion of the requirements for the minor occurs at the time of degree certification.