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Administrative Section

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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Action of the Board of Regents
at its 1342nd Meeting on _____

APPROVAL

ROBERTO M.J. LARA

Secretary of the University
and of the Board of Regents

MAR 01 2019

Proposed Guidelines for the Implementation of Minor Programs at the Baccalaureate Level in the University of the Philippines System

Minor degree programs are an established system in universities that provide students the choice and opportunity to study a secondary field or discipline in addition to their major degree program, which is the primary focus of the undergraduate degree. Consisting of a coherent set of disciplinal or interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary courses that are either related to the major field or to a totally different field of knowledge, minor programs allow students to expand and enrich their major program, gain knowledge and training in a related or other field, or pursue their personal interests.

In recent years, the development of interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary problem and task-oriented mindset among students has led a number of universities to develop minors in thematic fields.

In the University of the Philippines, minor programs are currently offered differently across the constituent universities. For example, UP Baguio offers a formal minor program in the Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences, while in UP Diliman, the Bachelor of Arts in European Languages offers what may be described as an informal minor, such that when a student takes 12 units of courses, say, in English, then the student has a minor in English, even if this is not recognized by the English Department.

The description "formal" in this sense means that the minor degree program is officially recognized and indicated in the student's official transcript of records, in contrast to "informal," which is not indicated in the official transcript of records.

Furthermore, it has been observed that some academic units have been permitting their students to take the electives in their degree program in one other discipline or area of concentration, thus essentially creating an "informal" minor program that allows students to have a good enough grounding in the area or discipline and enrolling in a number of course units that may be equivalent to a minor, even if it was not formally designed as such.

This proposal firstly, submits the need to **formally institutionalize** an option for a minor degree program in all the constituent universities of the UP System. Secondly, it aims to provide a general framework for minor degree programs in the UP and guidelines on program institution and administration, including standards for admission, progress, retention and completion of the minor degree.

The original proposal of UP Diliman was tackled in the 1335th BOR meeting on 31 May 2018. The BOR asked UP Diliman to revise the proposal and make it applicable to all

constituent units of the University. The revised proposal went through the usual channels of curricular approval.

CRBT
Maria Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista
Vice President for Academic Affairs

Action of the Board of Regents
at its 1342nd Meeting on MAR 01 2019
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Page 1 / 7

1 March 2019 BOR

1 **Proposed Guidelines for the ~~Implementation of Minor Programs~~ at the**
2 **Baccalaureate Level in the University of the Philippines System**

3
4 **Background and Rationale**

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6 This proposal responds to the call to “revisit, recreate, or reinvent” UP’s baccalaureate program
7 by instituting the minor degree program (Pacheco 2015), which itself is a response to current
8 realities and challenges such as rapid technological change, disruptive technologies, the
9 demands of economic globalization, ASEAN Integration, and the changing national academic
10 landscape that includes the implementation of the K-12 curriculum in 2016 and the adoption
11 of the 2017 UP General Education Framework.

12
13 The present global system requires graduates with 21st century skills and a more diverse set of
14 proficiencies in order to adapt to the “evolving requirements of the labor market” and better
15 master “the changing time-frames and rhythms of individual existence” (Delors, J. et al., 1998)
16 and to better understand and resolve many of society’s interconnected and intersecting
17 problems. One way of addressing this is through the development of an interdisciplinary or
18 multidisciplinary problem and task-oriented mindset among students (Sternberg 2008).
19 Interdisciplinary minors bring together courses from different departments to provide insight
20 into the synthesis or integration of different disciplines while multidisciplinary minors focus
21 on particular themes or topics from various disciplinary perspectives. The case for such thematic
22 minors has been argued as early as the 1980s (Weaver, 1984).

23
24 Instituting multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary minor degree programs more widely in the
25 baccalaureate level of the University of the Philippines System together with disciplinary minors
26 may be a definite and systematic approach to consider in pursuing the goal of having graduates
27 who are well-prepared to face today’s myriad and intersecting challenges.

28
29 Minor degree programs are an established system in universities that provide students the
30 choice and opportunity to study a secondary field or discipline in addition to their major degree
31 program, which is the primary focus of the undergraduate degree. Consisting of a coherent set
32 of disciplinary or interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary courses that are either related to the major
33 field or to a totally different field of knowledge, minor programs allow students to expand and
34 enrich their major program, gain knowledge and training in a related or other field, or pursue
35 their personal interests.

36
37 Many universities offer a mix of disciplinary and interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary
38 programs. They differ in the number of courses needed to constitute a minor degree; the way
39 credit for these courses are measured and the leeway students have to choose the courses,
40 among others. The number of courses in many universities vary and may range from four (e.g.
41 Harvard University) to six or more courses (e.g. University of California, Berkeley). Course
42 credits may be specified in terms of credit units (e.g. usually lecture or supervised tutorial hours
43 (e.g. University of Malaya) or modular credits which measure the expected effort of a typical
44 student in managing his/her workload that includes attending lectures, tutorial hours, laboratory
45 hours, hours for projects and preparatory work (e.g. National University of Singapore).

46
47 The flexibility of students to choose their courses differentiates minor programs in universities.
48 Harvard University, for instance, allows students to customize their academic or professional

1 minor by choosing four courses that meet their learning goals from a list of undergraduate
2 courses by minor. The University of Chicago, on the other hand, “permit(s) students to use
3 their free electives with intellectual effectiveness and precision—to take a cohesive set of
4 courses that complement studies in one’s major or to explore an unrelated area of intellectual
5 interest.” Some universities prescribe courses while others offer a combination of electives or
6 of electives with prescribed courses.

7
8 In the University of the Philippines, minor programs are currently offered differently across
9 the constituent universities. For example, UP Baguio offers a formal minor program in the
10 Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences, while in UP Diliman, the Bachelor of Arts in European
11 Languages offers what may be described as an informal minor, such that when a student takes
12 27 units of courses, say, in English, then the student has a minor in English, even if this is not
13 recognized by the English Department.

14
15 The description “formal” in this sense means that the minor degree program is officially
16 recognized and indicated in the student’s official transcript of records, in contrast to “informal,”
17 which is not indicated in the official transcript of records.

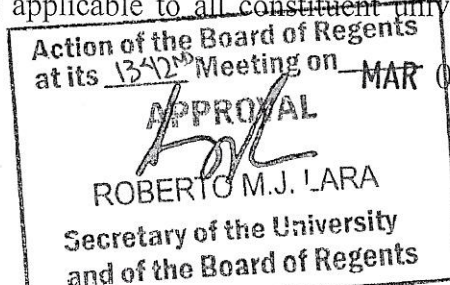
18
19 Furthermore, it has been observed that some academic units have been permitting their students
20 to take the electives in their degree program in one other discipline or area of concentration,
21 thus essentially creating an “informal” minor program that allows students to have a good
22 enough grounding in the area or discipline and enrolling in a number of course units that may
23 be equivalent to a minor, even if it was not formally designed as such.

24
25 Because of these cases, especially in UP Diliman, it was suggested in the UP Diliman General
26 Education Committee meeting of 26 August 2014 that it was time to review the
27 conceptualization and procedures of the minor degree programs in Diliman. This idea was
28 further pursued in the 09 March 2015 Executive Committee meeting when Vice Chancellor for
29 Academic Affairs Benito M. Pacheco, presented the “Curricular Framework and Curriculum
30 Structure” that spurred the discussion for the institutionalization of minor degree programs in
31 UP Diliman, which was further supported by Chancellor Michael L. Tan and Vice Chancellor
32 for Academic Affairs Evangeline C. Amor in 2017, when the UP Diliman Committee on Minor
33 Programs was constituted on 03 October 2017.

34
35 The Committee held a series of meetings to discuss the issues and concerns about instituting
36 the program and identifying academic units that intend to offer the program. A survey was
37 conducted in November 2017 in which 17 academic units in Diliman expressed willingness to
38 offer a minor degree program, pending the approval of the guidelines for implementation. The
39 Diliman proposal had since been circulated, reviewed and adapted by all the CUs.

40
41 In line with the University’s curricular approval process, the UP Diliman proposal to formalize
42 the offering of disciplinal or multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary minor degree programs was
43 endorsed at the level of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Presidential Advisory Committee
44 and the Executive Committee to President Danilo Concepcion for endorsement to the Board of
45 Regents. In its 1335th meeting on 31 May 2018, the Board of Regents asked UP Diliman to
46 revise the proposal in order to make it applicable to all constituent universities in the UP
47 System.

48



Action of the Board of Regents
at its 1342nd Meeting on **MAR 01 2019**
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1 This proposal, which went through the usual channels for curricular approval, now reflects the
2 results of all these discussions and consultations. It is premised on the fact that University of
3 the Philippines is in a very good position to offer opportunities for students to enrich their
4 academic experiences and cultivate critical thinking, being a comprehensive university with a
5 rich variety of courses and some space for electives opening up in the respective curricula of
6 many of our bachelor’s degree programs because of the recent curricular revisions.
7

8 This proposal then, firstly, submits the need to formally institutionalize an option for a minor
9 degree program in all the constituent universities of the UP System. Secondly, it aims to
10 provide a general framework for minor degree programs in the UP and guidelines on program
11 institution and administration, including standards for admission, progress, retention and
12 completion of the minor degree.
13

14 In order to accommodate the diversity and uniqueness of each discipline, and to recognize the
15 comprehensive roster of major fields in the university, this proposal also advocates for the
16 expansion of the definition of Minor Program that is currently available in the Curriculum
17 Nomenclature (University of the Philippines Diliman, 2003). In this nomenclature, “a minor
18 is a subfield or sub-specialization with fewer units; may be in the major field or in another
19 discipline”.
20

21 **1. Definition of a Minor Degree Program**
22

- 23 • A Minor Degree Program is a coherent course of study that experts in the field have
24 determined as either a sub-field in the major discipline or an area of specialization from
25 other academic units or academic clusters.
26
- 27 • A Minor Degree Program design has two options.
28
- 29 Option A – It is a subfield in the major field and taken within the Home Unit.
30 Option B – It is an area of specialization taken outside the Home Unit.
31

32 **2. Features of Minor Degree Programs**
33

34 A Minor Degree Program is developed and offered by any academic unit from among existing
35 major degree programs or areas of concentration upon the approval of the University Council.
36

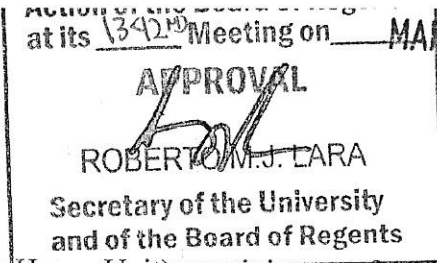
37 A Minor Degree Program is an optional program, with the following prescribed number of
38 units, including prerequisites as specified by the faculty of the [academic unit offering the
39 minor program] Minor-offering Unit¹:
40

- 41 • Option A (within Home Unit): a minimum of 12 units and a maximum of 24 units, or

¹ In case of Option A, the Minor-offering Unit is also the Home Unit. In case of Option B, the Minor-offering Unit is the academic unit with a bachelor’s degree program that is hosting the minor program. It is where students take the required courses for their Minor Program. In case two or more units co-offer a minor program, one unit has to have a bachelor’s program, will offer a plurality of the minor courses and, for purposes of administration, will serve as the Minor-offering Unit.

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1 March 2019 BOR

- Option B (outside one's Home Unit): a minimum of 18 units and a maximum of 21 units.

These courses, in the form of electives, should be within the normal length of the program as specified in the curriculum. The number of units of these courses, in the form of elective courses, should be within the existing total number of academic units prescribed for the undergraduate degree program. In the future, if resources will allow, this can be made more flexible to allow students to freely choose a Minor. This set of options is not limited and may be increased in the future, depending on the availability of academic resources, to allow more customization according to students' potential career requirements or interest.

The number of units for Option A, 12 to 24 units, takes into account the range of units of existing Minor Programs in the University. For instance, the Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences of UP Baguio has 24 units of minor courses.

For Option B, 18 to 21 units are considered regular load of undergraduate students in a semester. With this, taking of Minor Program courses under Option B can be distributed in six semesters or three academic years, with approximately three units per semester of minor courses. Benchmarking with other Universities (University of Chicago: 5 to 7 courses, University of Southern California: 16 to 24 units, University of California, San Diego: 20-28 units), show a range in the number of units in their minor programs.

After successful completion and upon the recommendation of the Home Unit, the Minor Program will be reflected in the student's transcript of records and certificate of graduation.

3. Admission Requirements

Students can be admitted to Minor Programs through an application process that involves both the Home Unit and the Minor-offering Unit with the following general requirements, which may be known at the point of admission to the University:

- 3.1 Completion of at least two semesters of residency
- 3.2 Good academic standing or a General Weighted Average (GWA) grade identified by the Home Unit.
- 3.3 Endorsement by the Home Unit. A student will only be given one endorsement to enroll in a Minor Program throughout the duration of the bachelor's degree.
- 3.4 Acceptance by the Minor-offering Unit. The admission requirements may include test of specific talent, skill or theory.

4. Retention Rules

- 4.1 Students should maintain good academic standing.
- 4.2 The Minor-offering Unit may state additional retention rules consistent with University rules.
- 4.3 Students must be informed of the retention rules during application and admission to Minor Programs.
- 4.4 The retention rules will be reflected in the Program of Study, and subject to conform by the student.

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Page 5 / 7

1 March 2019 BOR

1 4.5 Students who are not retained in their chosen minor programs shall be deemed to
2 follow the no-minor option and shall be required to complete the specified total number
3 of units of electives in their respective bachelor's programs.
4

5. Administration and Management of Minor Programs

5.1 Roles and Functions of the Minor-offering Unit

- 5.1.1 Develops and offers Minor Programs from the existing undergraduate courses upon the approval of the University Council.
- 5.1.2 Determines the prescribed courses or provides a list of courses which the students can choose from to be credited towards the student's Minor Program of a minimum of 12 units and a maximum of 24 units for Option A or a minimum of 18 units and a maximum of 21 units for Option B, in both cases including prerequisites.
- 5.1.3 Names the Minor Program as it sees fit. The title of the Minor Program can either be a theme or a discipline. For example, "Minor in Biological Structures and Systems" or "Minor in Biology" may be used (Summary of Decision of the UP Diliman Committee on Minor Programs, 16 January 2018). Such name shall not be changed within ten (10) semesters from the most recent implementation.
- 5.1.4 Ensures that the program name does not resemble another degree program or combination of degree programs, and the courses included shall always be from the approved undergraduate degree programs.
- 5.1.5 Reviews specific courses included in the minor program every five (5) years with the approval of the UC Curriculum Committee.
- 5.1.6 Enters into an agreement with a Home Unit as part of Minor Programs, and commits to offer the prescribed courses, subject to demand in order for students to complete their Minor Programs within the prescribed number of years for their bachelor's programs.
- 5.1.7 Determines the number of slots for Minor Programs.

5.2 Roles and Functions of the Home Unit

- 5.2.1 Advises the student on the appropriate Minor Program that the student will pursue, subject to acceptance of the Minor-offering Unit, and adopts the Program of Study for Minor Program including consultation with, and conforme by the student.
- 5.2.2 Enters into an agreement with the Minor-offering Unit to endorse students for admission into Minor Programs.
- 5.2.3 Ensures that the Minor Program is within the normal length of the bachelor's program as specified in the curriculum.
- 5.2.4 Informs its students of the availability of Minor Programs upon their admission to the University of the Philippines, emphasizing that the said program is optional.
- 5.2.5 Coordinates and formally informs the Minor-offering Unit as to the number of students enrolling in the prescribed courses at least one semester before registration.

- 1 5.2.6 Implements policies, guidelines, admission and retention rules of the Minor
- 2 Programs
- 3 5.2.7 Monitors student progress in the Minor Program.
- 4 5.2.8 Recommends the graduation of students with Minor Programs.
- 5

6 **6. Process of Instituting a Minor Program**

7
8 The Minor-offering Unit shall follow the usual processes observed by the University Council
9 where the proponent submits the proposal to the University Council Committee on Curriculum
10 through channels.

11
12 The Home Unit shall follow the usual process by the University Council where the Bachelor's
13 Program curriculum is proposed or revised, as the case may be, in order to include electives –
14 a minimum of 12 units and a maximum of 24 units for Option A or a minimum of 18 units and
15 a maximum of 21 units for Option B – as may be used in the option for a Minor Program.

16
17
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[Signature]
ROBERTO M.J. LARA
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Action of the Board of Regents
at its 342nd Meeting on MAR 01 2019
APPROVAL

ROBERTO M.J. LARA
Secretary of the University
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Noted:


EVANGELINE C. AMOR, Ph.D.
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
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