Suggestions for Revising Definitions of Undergraduate Majors, Minors, Certificates

**MAJOR**

**Definition**
Courses in designated primary subject areas or disciplines in which a student commits to gaining in-depth knowledge, skills, competence, and attitudes through a coherent pattern of courses. A footnote accompanies the major definition: Divisional major programs emphasize a general and integrated approach to learning, with the student’s major program broadly inclusive of work in several of the discipline or subject areas within the specific division within which the student’s degree program lies (i.e., humanities, social science, science). For instance, a divisional major program in the social sciences would call for the student to include within his or her major work from several of the disciplines or subject areas in the social sciences (such as sociology, political science, or economics). Because of the breadth of disciplines or subjects included in the major, the student has less opportunity to delve in depth into a single subject area such as sociology, political science, or economics, than they would be able to do were they in a “departmental major” program in a single one of these disciplines or subject areas.

**Minimal Requirements**
36 credits, of which a minimum of 24 must be upper division. Departments should consider setting minimum residency requirements.

**MINOR**

**Definition**
Courses in a designated secondary subject area or discipline distinct from and usually outside the student’s degree major in which knowledge is gained in a coherent pattern of courses.

**Minimal Requirements**
24 credits, of which a minimum of 12 must be upper division. Should be within a discipline that already has a preexisting major or is sponsored by a department. Departments should consider setting minimum residency requirements.

**CERTIFICATE**

**Definition**
An approved academic award given in conjunction with the satisfactory completion of a program of instruction requiring one year or more, but less than four years, of full-time equivalent, postsecondary-level work. The conditions and conferral of the award are governed by the faculty and ratified by the governing board of the institution granting the certificate.

**Minimal Requirements**
36 credits—24 upper division with 12 minimum at 400 level. The sponsoring department must provide guidance—a template or check list and the name of an adviser, with notice that the student must consult an adviser to apply for the certificate at least two terms prior to graduation.