

July 17, 2012

Linda Bisson, Chair
Davis Division of the Academic Senate

Subject: Disestablishment of the Program in International Relations and transfer of the major in International Relations to the Department of Political Science

Dear Professor Bisson,

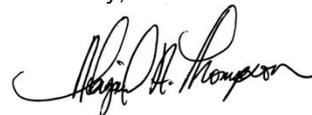
The L&S Executive Committee has carefully reviewed and approved at the college level the attached proposal to disestablish the Program in International Relations and transfer authority to offer the existing undergraduate major in International Relations (IRE) to the Department of Political Science. The proposal was jointly authored by IRE Program Director, Daniel Kono, and the Chair of the Department of Political Science, John Scott, and has received nearly unanimous support in votes of the Political Science faculty and the faculty comprising the IRE Program Committee. The proposal additionally was vetted by Dean George R. Mangun-Division of Social Sciences, who actively supported the action during discussion by the Executive Committee.

In their proposal, Professors Scott and Kono make a persuasive case that the revised administrative structure they are requesting will produce improved delivery of the curriculum and administrative efficiencies, while remaining largely invisible to the students enrolled in the program. No curricular changes in the IRE major are being proposed as part of this action. The Executive Committee requested review by the L&S Committee on Educational Policy, which also supported the proposal, agreeing that it was almost entirely administrative in nature.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I am hereby forwarding the proposal to you for review and action by the Davis Division.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Abigail Thompson, Chair
Executive Committee
College of Letters and Science

cc: D. Trask, Assistant Dean

DAVIS: COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE
Department of Political Science

TO: Abigail Thompson, Chair
L&S Executive Committee

FROM: John T. Scott, Chair, Department of Political Science
Daniel Y. Kono, Director of the International Relations Program

RE: Proposal to transfer the International Relations major to the Department of Political Science

November 28, 2011

This memo outlines a proposal for disestablishing the Interdepartmental Program in International Relations (IRE) and transferring authority to offer the existing IRE major to the Department of Political Science (POL).

We are aware that since this proposal involves formal changes in academic programs, it must be considered as a curricular matter. However, this proposal is in actuality almost entirely administrative in nature, for two reasons. First, we are not proposing any curricular changes in the IRE major, but are only proposing to move it administratively fully into POL, that is, under the supervision of the POL faculty. Second, the IRE Program has always been administered within POL in terms of staffing (with regard to both the IRE Director and the MSO/CAO and other staff). This close relationship that has become even closer with the recent “clustering” of administrative functions of departments and programs within the DSS and the University as a whole.

In sum, the goals of this proposal are:

- To improve the delivery of the curriculum to both the POL and IRE majors in order to ensure that students can obtain their necessary coursework and graduate in a timely manner
- To formalize administratively what has also occurred de facto, given that POL already administers the IRE program and that POL is by far the largest supplier of required and elective coursework for the IRE major, and to realize administrative efficiencies
- To make the administrative transfer of the IRE major as invisible as possible to all constituencies, and in this regard:
 - We are not proposing any curricular changes in the IRE major
 - We would continue to advertise and treat the IRE major as a distinct major
 - We would continue relationships with alumni, donors, etc., by likewise treating the IRE major as a distinct major

Background

The IRE Program is an undergraduate degree-granting program established over forty years ago. The IRE Program's only role is to administer the IRE major, which is an interdisciplinary major that includes a number of "tracks" in which students can focus their coursework. The IRE Program has a Director (appointed by the Dean) and a program committee drawn from faculty in several departments (e.g., POL, ECN, HIS), reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the program and coursework taken by the students. Nonetheless, in light of the fact that upwards of half of the required and elective coursework for the IRE major is drawn from POL course offerings, the IRE Director has always been a member of the POL faculty and a plurality of the program committee faculty have traditionally been drawn from POL.

In terms of curriculum, over time IRE has increasingly overlapped with POL. For example, since the introductory course in IRE (IRE 1) has never been regularly offered (since the IRE Program has no dedicated faculty), IRE majors take the introductory course in international relations (POL 3) for their required coursework. Likewise, POL 51 (a lower-division course on research design and methods) is now required of IRE majors, just as it is required of POL majors. Finally, recent curricular changes in the IRE major will further increase the number of upper-division POL courses taken by IRE majors even beyond the 50% or so of their coursework.

Administratively, in terms of staff support, IRE shares almost total overlap with POL. The IRE Program has since its inception shared a top-level staff administrator with POL, with the MSO and now CAO in charge of both POL and IRE. While IRE has had separate undergraduate advising staff, all other administrative support for IRE has come from POL staff. Over time, and especially with the recent "clustering" of administrative services, IRE has de facto merged administratively with POL.

This proposal for reconstituting the IRE major under POL was conceived of during the 2010-11 academic year under the leadership of the Chair of POL (John T. Scott) and the Director of IRE (Scott S. Gartner) and in consultation with the POL faculty, IRE program committee, and the SSD Dean's office. In June 2011, both the faculty of the POL department and the IRE program committee formally voted in favor of this proposal. The vote of the POL faculty was unanimously in favor. The vote of the program committee of the IRE was unanimously in favor with one abstention. The abstention came from a faculty member who was generally favorable, but who wanted more information about the role of a program committee in a reconstituted major. We are currently researching other programs at Davis to find a model for how such a program committee might be constituted and operate. Finally, the chair of POL and the previous IRE Director (Scott Gartner), along with the CAO overseeing both units (Cynthia Simmons) have discussed this proposal with the Dean, Associate Dean, and Assistant Deans in DSS to obtain their advice and approval. These discussions have continued with the current IRE Director, Daniel Kono.

The Proposal

On campus there are departments without majors, majors without departments—such as IRE, and departments with multiple majors—such as POL, which has two separate majors (Political Science and Political Science-Public Service). With the merger, POL would therefore be administering three separate majors, as it already effectively does administratively. In short, this proposal to disestablish the IRE Program and to transfer responsibility for administering the IRE major to POL.

Goals

- To improve the delivery of curriculum to both the POL and IRE majors

Both POL and IRE are very large majors: POL currently has about 900 declared majors and IRE currently has about 700 declared majors. Given reductions in faculty size (including in POL), among other things, delivering the necessary curriculum to both majors has been very challenging and will continue to be challenging in the future. One reason for our current challenges has been lack of full coordination between POL and IRE, resulting in numerous oversubscribed courses or courses that are not regularly offered, thus creating “bottlenecks” for the students—particularly in IRE—and preventing students from graduating in a timely fashion. Putting both POL and IRE majors under the administration of POL will enable us to coordinate the delivery of our curriculum in order to better serve the students.

- To formalize administratively what has also occurred de facto and realize administrative efficiencies.

As noted above, the IRE Program has always been joined administratively with POL, with its Director coming from the POL faculty and sharing staff administration with POL. With recent administrative “clustering” within the DSS, this relationship has been formally completed with the formal administrative merger of POL and IRE. Formally transferring the IRE major to POL would further increase efficiencies for both the administration of the IRE major as well as for the POL department. As for budget and other resources, the DSS Dean’s office has agreed to having POL receive the resources currently received by IRE (e.g., administrative support budget, budget for hiring TAs, etc.) as part of its annual budget. This is already de facto how these budgets for POL and IRE operate.

- To make the administrative transfer of the IRE major as invisible as possible to all constituencies

The IRE major would remain a distinct major and students would continue to receive the same diploma, etc. We are not proposing any curricular changes to the IRE major. We would retain the equivalent of an IR Director and separate advising staff, although perhaps over the long-run we could realize administrative efficiencies by cross-training POL and IRE advising. Some administrative issues are not yet clear, such as the role of the advisory committee, but the overall goal would be to keep IRE as it is: a distinct major.

Administrative Procedure for the Transfer

Our understanding is that formally speaking the proposed merger of IRE into POL requires, first, formally disestablishing the IRE Program and, second, transferring authority for offering the IRE major to the POL faculty. We are happy to work with the necessary Representative Assembly, Senate, and other interested parties to make this change.