

**COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS
STANFORD UNIVERSITY**

Date: February 1, 2009

To: Karen Cook, Chair
XLI Senate of the Academic Council

From: Ian Hodder, Chair, Committee for the Review of Undergraduate Majors

Re: Recommendation to Renew Degree-Nominating Authority for the Interdisciplinary Program in Public Policy

C-RUM reviewed the Interdisciplinary Program on September 26, 2008, and then again with IDP Director Bruce Owen, Associate Director Greg Rosston, and Program Administrator Niki Calastas, on November 7, 2008. In the last several years, with the advent of Owen as Director, the IDP has grown in size and strength. It is now housed within SIEPR (Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research); it is more integrated with Stanford in Washington; and the number of students doing honors and internships in the program is quite large.

C-RUM was concerned with the scheduling of courses in the major, which had made it difficult for students to understand the best pathways through the required and elective courses. Owen and his colleagues responded with several templates that demonstrated how students could proceed through the program, including the term at Stanford in Washington, even allowing for different declaration times. All of the units required for the major (87) are pre-determined: 44 are prerequisites, 25 are core courses, 15 are concentration (there are choices here), and the final 3 are the Senior Seminar.

Public Policy also demonstrated for C-RUM how its senior seminar, offered all three quarters, serves as the capstone for the major in order to bring together all the skills that the students have learned along the way. The teamwork students apply in doing consulting work for local government agencies stretches the complex interactions that go into an IDP; the tools and methodology students apply at this time can be used for all approaches to the discipline. About half of Public Policy majors take the senior seminar; the others complete this requirement with the IDP's honors program. (The latter has not been listed as an acceptable alternate to the senior seminar; it will be added to the IDP's degree requirements in future.)

A new development is to offer classes in Stanford in Washington that can be taken simultaneously by students on the Stanford campus: the new SIW building has a well-equipped distance-learning facility that can "see" Wallenberg Hall, so both locations are completely interactive. This will be employed more extensively in the future, and classes taught at Stanford could also be seen by the SIW students.

Most students say that they are declaring the major for the theory and for the flexibility the major offers; so the focus for undergraduate education is not professional (students who want to be public policy analysts need graduate training). In terms of career advising, however, there is more information available now for our majors: the Public Policy handbook, a spreadsheet on

alumni career paths to date, lists of career opportunities, names of alumni who are willing to mentor current students, a newsletter with extensive alumni notes, and a career dinner for students.

C-RUM appreciated the care taken by the Public Policy leadership to respond to its concerns about progress through the major, course offerings on a more solid schedule, the capstone experience, and advising. The membership therefore voted unanimously to approve a renewal period of five years for the undergraduate Interdisciplinary Program in Public Policy.

The Committee for the Review of Undergraduate Majors therefore recommends to the Faculty Senate a five-year renewal for the Interdisciplinary Program in Public Policy, with degree-nominating authority for its major, minor, and honors, effective September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2015.

**COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS
RECOMMENDATION TO RENEW DEGREE-NOMINATING AUTHORITY FOR THE
INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM IN PUBLIC POLICY**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Letter from C-RUM to the XLI Faculty Senate, dated March 1, 2009.

- II. Memo from Richard Saller, Dean of the School of Humanities & Sciences, and Susan Stephens, Senior Associate Dean in Humanities & Sciences, to C-RUM, dated October 28, 2008.

- III. Self-study of the Interdisciplinary Program in Public Policy.