

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation
Decision
Discussion/Direction
Information

DATE: 28 February 2023

FROM: Undergraduate Studies Committee

SUBJECT: Major Program Modification – Changes to the degree requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities (Communication and Digital Media Studies, Criminology and Justice, Forensic Psychology, Legal Studies, Liberal Studies, Political Science, and Psychology (BA))

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) Terms of Reference, USC has the responsibility “to examine proposals for new undergraduate degree programs and major changes to existing programs and to recommend their approval, as appropriate, to the Academic Council”.

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:

That, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modifications to the to the Degree Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

The common first year was introduced at a time when there were few programs in FSSH and few electives available. With the introduction of new programs and specialized minors, there is a need for more flexibility in program maps.

The Faculty is proposing to include in the first year of each program a mix of courses within the following groupings:

- Major discipline course(s)
- Social Science Foundation course(s)
- Social Science Breadth course(s)
- General Electives

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

No additional resources required.

TRANSITION PLAN:

The new 1st year requirements will be in place by September 2023. This change will only impact incoming new students. Other students may continue with the current slate of required courses or apply to be considered for this change. Their needs will be considered on a case by case basis in consultation with Academic Advising. Students who have already completed the existing common first year will not be impacted. No changes have been made to the upper year requirements.

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:

- Undergraduate Studies Committee: 17 January 2023
- Faculty Council: 20 December 2022
- Curriculum Committee: 6 December 2022

Consultation with the Dean, Associate Deans, Undergraduate Program Directors, Academic Advisors, and faculty members occurred over an 18-month period. This has included broad discussion at a Faculty Retreat, as well as individual discussions with each program director. Academic Advisors recommended these changes as a result of discussions with students. Additionally, during program reviews, changes such as this were recommended by the external reviewers and students.

NEXT STEPS:

- Pending the approval of Academic Council, the changes will be included in the 2023-2024 Academic Calendar.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- [Major Program Modification Proposal](#)