Overview of Proposals to Revise the Secondary Education Majors in History and Social Sciences

Department of History and Non-Western Cultures

Department of Social Sciences

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Background:
Undergraduate students interested in pursuing a teaching career in middle and/or high school social studies can major in Secondary Education/History or in Secondary Education/Social Sciences at WCSU. As a consequence, the Department of History and Non-Western Cultures and the Department of Social Sciences have partnered to serve these majors by providing the necessary content coursework, reviewing applications and interviewing prospective candidates for the Professional Development Semester (PDS), staffing courses such as ED 441-Teaching Methods of Social Studies and ED 342-Student Teaching in addition to gathering, analyzing and reporting student data for CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) which was formally known as NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Certification).

Summary of Proposals:

1. Eliminate the major in Secondary Education/Social Sciences

2. Revise the major in Secondary Education/History to require ANT 100, SOC 100 and ECO 100/211.

3. Revise the Secondary Education Major in History to include a new Minor in Social Studies for Secondary Education.

Rationale:
Because students in both majors complete the same coursework in Education and Educational Psychology, must successfully complete the same Praxis II exam ( #5081/computer or #0081/written) in Social Studies Content Knowledge and obtain the same teaching endorsement in History and Social Studies, 7-12 (#026) from the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and our programs are evaluated by the same professional association, the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS), we propose offering only one major, rather than the currently
existing separate majors in Secondary Education/History and Secondary Education/Social Sciences.

1). Eliminate the major in Secondary Education/Social Sciences

Because students will teach mostly history courses over the course of their careers and because there are significantly more majors in Secondary Education/History than in Secondary Education/Social Sciences, we propose eliminating the latter.

2). Revise the major in Secondary Education/History to require ANT 100, SOC 100 and ECO 100/211.

In preparation for their teaching careers and successful completion of Praxis II, Majors in Secondary Education/History currently are required to take four courses in social and behavioral sciences under the current general education requirements:

PSY 100-Introduction to Psychology
GE 100-Introduction to Geography
PS 102-American Government
ECO 100/ECO 211(renumbered as of fall 2015)-Principles of Macroeconomics

OR

ECO 101/ECO 213(renumbered as of fall 2015)-Principles of Microeconomics

We propose that the following courses also be required:

ANT 100-Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
SOC 100-Introduction to Sociology

These additions will better prepare students to successfully teach electives at the high school level and complete the social and behavioral science components of the Praxis II exam. Furthermore, the addition of these courses will allow us to more accurately assess student content knowledge in NCSS Standard 1.1 Culture and NCSS Standard 1.5 Individual Groups and Institutions for accreditation purposes as ANT 100 and SOC 100 respectively, more closely align with these standards.

We also propose that students no longer have a choice in their economics coursework and instead be required to take ECO 100/211.
ECO 101/213 covers approximately seventy-five percent of the economics topics on the Praxis II exam while ECO 100/211 covers all topics. Our students often perform poorly on this part of the exam and we believe that this is because they tend to enroll in ECO101/213. Requiring ECO 100/211 will better prepare our students for the economics component of the Praxis II exam.

3). Revise the Secondary Education Major in History to include a new Minor in Social Studies for Secondary Education

Because Secondary Education majors in History will be required to complete a total of eighteen credits in social and behavioral science, we propose that they be awarded a new Minor in Social Studies for Secondary Education. The addition of this minor to their major in history will more officially acknowledge the expansive content knowledge necessary for a teaching career in this field.

Description: To prepare for a teaching career in middle and high school social studies, Secondary Education Majors in History also complete a minor in Social Studies for Secondary Education. This minor will provide students with a broad introductory background in a variety of social studies fields they will be responsible for teaching and will allow them to prepare for their licensure exam. Requirements: PSY 100, GEO 100, PS 102, ECO 100/ECO 211, ANT 100 and SOC 100.

Impact on Staffing:

With the elimination of the major in Secondary Education/Social Sciences, the new Minor in Social Studies for Secondary Education can be administered entirely through the Department of History and Non-Western Cultures. The added requirements of ANT 100, SOC 100 and ECO 100/211 will not affect the number of sections offered by faculty in the Department of Social Sciences, as we do not anticipate an increase of more than six to eight students per year. The inclusion of GEO 100 and PS 102 under the new minor will not affect the number of sections offered as our majors have always been required to take these courses. Similarly, inclusion of PSY 100 under the new minor will not affect the number of sections offered by the Department of Psychology, as our majors have always been required to take this course.