



November 29, 2009

To: Robert J. Birkenholz
From: Terry L. Gustafson
Jessica Mercerhill

Re: Leadership Minor

Arts and Sciences has made a preliminary review of the proposed Leadership minor. While there is general support for the minor to continue in the approval process, the following comments are provided for your consideration:

1. The purpose of the minor is not quite clear. Will experiential learning and skill development be the basis of the leadership studies program? Or will students receive an academic/theoretical understanding of leadership which will inform their choice of behaviors in their post-graduate pursuits? Is there evidence that students have been disadvantaged by not having this option? Is there anecdotal or other evidence that there is student demand?
2. Related to the first comment is the issue of “truth in advertising” associated with the minor. However the minor is constructed, it will be important not to make promises that cannot be kept. Taking this minor will not necessarily make a student a leader and that needs to be communicated clearly.
3. If communication is critical, the development committee should consider having Communication courses that are required, not just elective.
4. The following statement is included in the proposal “A practicum experience is also required and students would be expected to enroll for the practicum within their home department and receive supervision from their academic advisor or another faculty member in their discipline.” We are concerned that costs associated with this minor are being imposed upon departments without departmental approval.
5. Also with regards to advising, it would be beneficial if there could be a single advisor to oversee the program. (*cf.* Public Policy minor with Alan Wiseman, a faculty director of the program.) This cost belongs to the program and, more importantly, better serves students.

As with all minor proposals, the Leadership minor proposal will have to be approved by the Arts and Sciences Committee on Curriculum and Instruction before Arts and Sciences students may declare the minor.