

**The Ohio State University
Colleges of the Arts and Sciences Program Concurrence Form**

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A. Information from the academic unit *initiating* the request

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences 5/3/05

 Initiating Academic Unit Date

Public Policy: Social and Behavioral Science Perspectives

 Program Title

Minor U

 Program Type (Major or Major Track/Minor or Minor Track/Certificate) Level

Type of Request (Circle): New Program Program Change

The John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy

 Academic unit asked to review the request

5/17/05

 Date response is needed

B. Information from the academic unit *reviewing* the request

The academic unit **supports** the proposal.

The academic unit **does not support** the proposal. (Comments are **required** if the unit does not support the proposal.)

Attach your comments.

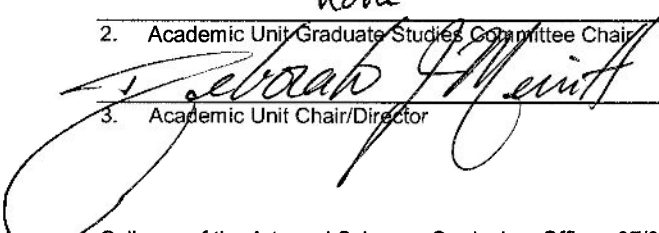
Signatures

1. none none

 1. Academic Unit Undergraduate Studies Committee Chair Printed Name Date

2. none

 2. Academic Unit Graduate Studies Committee Chair Printed Name Date

3.  Deborah J Merritt 5/13/05

 3. Academic Unit Chair/Director Printed Name Date



THE JOHN GLENN INSTITUTE
FOR
PUBLIC SERVICE & PUBLIC POLICY

May 13, 2005

Dr. Edward H. Adelson
Associate Executive Dean
Colleges of the Arts and Sciences

Dear Ed,

Thank you for sending the Institute a copy of the proposal from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences to establish a minor in "Public Policy: Social and Behavioral Science Perspectives." I have reviewed the proposal at length and discussed it with both the Institute's staff members and its Board of Directors. I regret to tell you that the Glenn Institute strongly opposes this proposed minor. I also oppose the minor from my individual perspective as a senior chaired professor with appointments spanning three Colleges (Law, Humanities, and Social and Behavioral Sciences) and extensive teaching, research, and administrative experience in Public Policy. I summarize here the reasons why the Institute does not concur in establishment of this minor; we would be happy to provide additional input if desired.

Public Policy is an inherently interdisciplinary field with essential insights drawn from both inside and outside the social sciences. Academically, the most exciting work being done in Public Policy today integrates social science perspectives with those from the humanities, natural sciences, arts, medicine, engineering, and other disciplines. Practically, the greatest need in today's policy world is for individuals from these different disciplinary clusters to communicate with one another about social solutions, not to remain isolated within their fields. By limiting its scope to the social and behavioral sciences, the proposed minor fails both to engage students in the academic richness of Public Policy and to prepare them for its practical applications.

Equally important, Public Policy is an academic and professional field centered on particular expertise in quantitative skills, program evaluation, and organization/management theory. The proposed minor lacks significant components of this triad. Skills and knowledge considered essential for Public Policy either do not appear in the sample syllabi for the core courses or are present in a weakened form suggesting that these perspectives are rooted exclusively in Political Science or Economics.

As a faculty member with a courtesy appointment in Sociology, I applaud the College's interest in creating a minor that encourages students to integrate different social science perspectives. Many universities have a major or minor of that nature, sometimes called "Social Studies." A minor that featured a core course comparing the perspectives and methods of *all* the social sciences (not just Political Science and Economics), then allowed students to integrate those perspectives as applied to a particular area of social concern (such as those outlined in the proposed minor) would have great appeal and pedagogic value. But that is not a minor in Public Policy—and should not be labeled as such.

We at the Glenn Institute are sympathetic to the College's point that it is difficult to encompass the entire field of Public Policy in a five-course minor. For exactly that reason, however,

it is essential to create a minor that gives student both the foundation elements of the field (which are missing from the proposed core courses) and a sense of the field's breadth and potential (which is missing from the exclusive focus on social science perspectives). Other universities have found excellent ways to do this, even within the confines of a minor. Dartmouth College and Duke University are just two institutions that have developed excellent undergraduate Public Policy minors or certificates that overcome this difficulty in different ways.

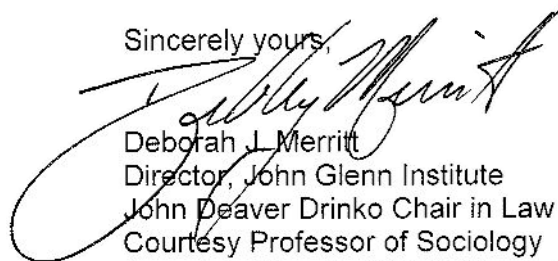
As currently formulated, we believe that the proposed minor is both misleading to students and harmful to Public Policy. Students who complete this minor will not have learned "Public Policy," they will have learned some social science perspectives on social problems. The minor, moreover, will balkanize a field that is inherently interdisciplinary—harming both pedagogy and practical applications. We are particularly concerned about the prospect of sibling minors in "Public Policy: Natural Science Perspectives," "Public Policy: Business Perspectives," "Public Policy: History and Philosophy Perspectives," etc. SBS seems to welcome this, but we think it is essential to encourage students and future policymakers to overcome these divisions. It will impair policymaking if we teach students to develop distinctively "social science," "natural science," or "humanities" perspectives on policy. As former policymakers, Senator Glenn and other members of our Board were particularly disturbed by this aspect of the proposed minor.

In addition to these difficulties in the substance of the proposal, we are quite troubled by the process used to create it. SBS has been fighting vigorously to keep the School of Public Policy and Management within the College, yet the committee creating this minor did not include a single member of that faculty. Although PPM teaches just a small number of undergraduate courses, and has not expressed an interest in expanding that number, its faculty are the campus experts on Public Policy as an academic discipline. This proposal might have avoided the serious defects identified above if the committee had included one of those faculty members.

We agree with the College that undergraduates at Ohio State would benefit from a minor in Public Policy. That minor, however, should include both the foundation elements of the field and the full range of disciplines essential to excellent policymaking. Any other approach is a disservice both to students and the field. If the College is willing to create and administer a more appropriate Public Policy minor, the Glenn Institute would enthusiastically support such a proposal. Likewise, we would enthusiastically support an appropriate Public Policy minor created jointly by the Arts and Sciences Colleges and administered under their umbrella. I am sure that my colleagues at the Glenn Institute and School of Public Policy and Management would be happy to help advise on creation of an appropriate minor in either of these contexts.

Please let me know if any of us at the John Glenn Institute can provide further information.

Sincerely yours,



Deborah J. Merritt
Director, John Glenn Institute
John Deaver Drinko Chair in Law
Courtesy Professor of Sociology
Associate Faculty, Women's Studies
Courtesy Professor of Public Policy & Management

Cc: Don Haurin
Lisa Keister



May 14, 2005

Professor Edward H. Adelson
Associate Executive Dean
College of the Arts and Sciences
105 Brown Hall
190 West 17th Avenue
CAMPUS

Dear Professor Adelson,

This letter is to inform you that the faculty of the School of Public Policy and Management does not support the minor proposal, Public Policy: Social and Behavioral Perspectives, from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

We welcome the College's efforts to begin the conversation regarding public policy offerings at the undergraduate level. This proposal, however, does not reflect the multi-disciplinary nature of the study of public policy. Our perspective is that public policy is a multi-disciplinary endeavor that draws upon and integrates perspectives from various disciplines that are not limited to the social and behavioral sciences. We also believe that a core background in public policy must include organizational theory and program evaluation and must be supported by the study of the appropriate use of research methods in an applied context. The proposed minor offers a good survey of some important social science perspectives on public policy issues. Our concern is that a student completing such a minor will not have the breadth of perspective to achieve the first two of the stated goals for the minor: a command of the fundamental tools of policy analysis and an appreciation for the context within which public policy is made. In that regard, labeling this effort as a Minor in Public Policy is misleading.

We recognize that attempting to capture the full range of issues that might be construed to fall within the purview of public policy is not a task that can be accomplished in a series of five courses. However, restricting the course offerings to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences sets a poor precedent in rejecting the inclusiveness that I suspect was the motivation behind the Provost's financial support for this activity. In particular, we argue that it is imperative to consult and, if possible, include potential future partners. I know that the History Department, the Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics, the School of Natural Resources and a number of other departments and centers have a specific interest in policy at the undergraduate level and provide important perspectives on policy issues. If consulting with other units outside the

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences becomes too unwieldy, then we think that it is best to label the minor as something other than a Minor in Public Policy.

It might seem odd that the School, with “public policy” in its name and with a home in the College making the proposal, should not be one of its most ardent supporters. Without getting into further details of our opposition, it should suffice to say that the proposal does not reflect the School’s concept of the nature and scope of public policy education. We were unable to influence the proposal content since faculty members from the School have played no formal role in the development of this proposal.

In not supporting the minor proposal at this stage, I do not wish to suggest that we are opposed to a Minor in Public Policy. On the contrary, we are very willing to bring over thirty-five years of experience in public policy education at the graduate level to participate in this endeavor. We look forward to working with all interested departments and colleges within and without the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences in developing such a minor that takes its rightful place at the center of the University’s multi-disciplinary offerings in keeping with the University’s land-grant mission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anand Desai".

Anand Desai
Acting Director and Associate Professor

Copy: Jennifer Lando, Director, Colleges of the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Office

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2. Academic Unit Graduate Studies Committee Chair Printed Name Date

3. Academic Unit Chair/Director Printed Name Date

Anand Desai **ANAND DESAI** *May 16, 05*

