Office of the Provost

Dissolution of an Existing Credit-Bearing (Major, Minor, Certificate, or Degree) Program Form

Proposed Dissolution of an Existing Program: Academic Components

1. Please provide the rationale for the proposed dissolution of the major or degree program:

The faculty of the Boston University Center for the Study of Asia (BUCSA) proposes dissolution of the current undergraduate major in East Asian Studies, contingent on approval of a new, successor major in Asian Studies. As detailed in the concurrently submitted new degree proposal, the successor major will subsume the major in East Asian Studies, maintaining its substantial requirements in both humanities and social science, and improving upon it, e.g., through the requirement of an integrating seminar and at least one additional semester of relevant language study. The pan-Asian scope of the new major reflects and reinforces BU’s balanced intellectual and administrative commitment to the whole region, including its global significance and the rich ongoing history (and increasing scholarly study) of interactions within and between its constituent countries and sub-regions. In particular, the new major provides a context for in-depth and comparative study of South Asia, now possible thanks to deliberate recent expansion of faculty expertise and relevant humanities, social science, and advanced language offerings. At the same time, students whose interests lie primarily in East Asia will remain able to pursue an East Asian focus, including study of Chinese, Japanese, and/or Korean, within the new Asian Studies major’s flexible interdisciplinary framework.

2. Please provide the proposed timetable for the phase-out of the dissolved major or degree program:

Assuming that the new Major in Asian Studies is approved for publication in the 2014/2015 bulletin and implementation beginning in or before September 2014, the East Asian Studies major will be removed from all listings and publications and cease taking in new students. Through advising, students who have not yet formally declared the East Asian major but express interest between now and final approval will be informed about the goals and structure of the
successor major and guided toward fulfillment of its requirements. The current Director/primary advisor of the East Asian major will also be a first point of contact for the new Major in Asian Studies. That continuity, as well as significant overlap between the two majors, ensures that, even were the new major not to be approved, these carefully advised students would not have misspent their time or increased their time to degree in their chosen area of study. The Director will also keep currently declared East Asian majors apprised of developments regarding the successor Asian Studies major, helping each student to confirm or modify his/her plan of study and, in the process, acquiring information needed to set a target date for official dissolution of with no negative consequences for any student.

3. Please describe the current student body (number of students by year) of the major or degree program and the trajectory of those student cohorts as it is dissolved:

Current majors in East Asian Studies will have the option of completing that major if, having been fully advised, they choose to do so. Of the 19 current majors, four are seniors tentatively scheduled to graduate in May 2014, four are juniors, three are sophomores, and eight are freshmen in their second semester at BU. A majority of students continuing in 2014/2015 and beyond will thus be able to accommodate and benefit from the new major’s requirements.

No additional costs will be incurred for maintaining the East Asian Studies major behind the scenes for as long as necessary, since its one specifically required course (CAS IR 275/PO 350: The Pacific Challenge) will continue to be offered annually. Students in potentially dwindling East Asian cohorts will be welcomed into the broader pan-Asian, BUCSA and Pardee School communities and, e.g., encouraged to enroll in the Asian major’s one-credit integrating seminar.

Note: The existing Minor in East Asian Studies will remain on the books and available for registration, pending thorough re-evaluation of future directions by the BUCSA faculty and their collaborators in the new Pardee School of Global Studies.

4. Please describe the budgetary impact that the proposed dissolution will have:

No budgetary impact. Modest funding currently associated with the East Asian major will be applied toward the new Major in Asian Studies.