

Requirement of Minors for Degree Completion (UAC):

UAC Chair Savitt presented the bill and UAC would like to get the bill distributed well in advance of the April Senate meeting but there would not be a vote until May. The bill does not eliminate minors but allows a student to elect a path to complete 24 credits at the 300 level or above. The bill is friendly towards transfer students in that courses at other institutions at the 300 level could be counted in the 24 credits. UAC has discovered that UAlbany is the only University Center in the SUNY system that requires minors. Chair Savitt stated that UAC sees the proposed bill as a continuation of general education at a higher level. It would allow students to explore another area without claiming a minor. It would also allow students to have some control over how they receive their college degree. Not all minors at UA require credits at the 300 level, and there is great disparity among the rules for minors at UA. UAC is proposing that there be some level of rigor in the 24 credits that would be required in the place of a minor by requiring that a UA degree that did not include a minor include at least 24 credits at the 300 level or above, an amount which exceeds the requirement in some majors and in many current combinations of majors + minors. When asked where these courses would come from, she said they could be additional courses in the major or from other departments. She said the number of credits taken at the 300 level would be consistent with what is required for some combined major/minor degree plans at UA.

Some SEC members felt it would be a good idea, especially if half of the credits were outside the major at the advanced level. UPPC Chair Delano stated that the implication seemed to be that 300 level courses would require prerequisites. He asked if that would be a requirement and if courses would be reviewed for rigor. He stated that identifying 300 level courses as rigorous and challenging is not always the case. Chair Savitt said the courses will be more specialized but the 300 level is the defining characteristic.

Chair Range asked to move the discussion to the Senate. Senate Secretary Collier said it would be beneficial to have the entire UAC attend the Senate meeting. He added that he did not believe the research done was adequate and questioned where the supply of 300 level courses would come from. ULC Chair Smith objected that smaller departments such as art, journalism and theater had not been part of the research and said that students use these courses to go forward in their careers. The policy would deflate the minor and limit career choices. Chair Range agreed that these would be good arguments to raise on the Senate floor.