Applied Ethics and Religion Minors

Faculty Senate
September 12, 2016
The Humanities are Essential

- Steve Jobs: “It’s in Apple’s DNA that technology alone is not enough — it’s technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the result that makes our heart sing.”
- U. of Pennsylvania Medical School’s Head of Admissions: “We need whole people.”
Applied Ethics Minor

• Applied Ethics minor
  – 3-Yr Average (2013-2016): 0
  – 8-Yr Average (2008-2016): 0

• Factors that affected the decision to suspend:
  – A philosophy minor also exists;
  – Students are opting for the philosophy minor rather than this one.
Applied Ethics Minor

• The minor began in Fall 2015.
• First student will graduate with the minor this December.
• 8 of our 19 CPE benchmark institutions offer an ethics minor.
• No other Kentucky comprehensive institutions offer such a minor.
Applied Ethics Minor

• Cost Savings?
  – One course taught every 2 years.
Applied Ethics Minor

• **Future Plans and Modifications**
  – Potential Curriculum Revision: eliminate PHI 360.
  – Time to advertise and promote this new minor.
Religion Minor

• Minor in Religion
  – 3-Yr Average (2013-2016): 4
  – 8-Yr Average (2008-2016): 5
Religion Minor

• We currently have 35 declared minors.
• 14 out of 19 CPE benchmarks offer at least a religion minor.
• All of Kentucky’s other comprehensives offer at least a religion minor.
Religion Minor

- **Factors that affected the decision to suspend:**
  - 1. **Significant number of courses in general education**
  - 2. **Not all courses offered in general education are needed for general education**
  - We believe that EKU should evaluate and make decisions based on the current general education program, rather than what it might look like in the future.
Religion Minor

• **Factors that affected the decision to suspend:**
  • 3. Heavy use of part-time faculty for religion courses in general education.

• **Sought a new line for 5 straight years.**
  – Because of this, we relied on some excellent part-time faculty (freed up full-time faculty for significant commitments to the Honors Program).
Religion Minor

• *Factors that affected the decision to suspend:*
  • 4. Upper-division major courses have consistently low enrollments.

• This is largely incorrect.
  – Fall 2012: 92% fill rate.
  – Fall 2015 (increased sections, large section): 69%
  – Fall 2016: 92% fill rate (adjusted for large section World Religions course that is being eliminated).
Religion Minor

- Upper-level religion courses that are not a part of general education, and are solely courses for our minor, have a fill rate of 87%. With our proposed modifications, that would go up to 89%.
Religion Minor

• Future Plans and Modifications
  – Eliminate large section of REL 301: World Religions.
  – Eliminate REL 302: Theories of Religion from the program due to low enrollment.
  – Continue to offer fewer sections of REL 370: Special Topics.
  – Decrease reliance on part-time faculty for REL courses.
Religion Minor

• Future Plans and Modifications
• Promote the religion minor.
• Streamline the religion minor.
  • Currently requires 18 hours, with at least 3 hours from 4 separate categories.
  • We propose requiring 2 courses—World Religions and any non-Western religion—plus any other 12 hours of courses in religion.
Religion Minor

• Secretary of State John Kerry:
  – “I often say that if I headed back to college today, I would major in comparative religions... because religious actors and institutions are playing an influential role in every region of the world ...”*