



## **MAJOR CHANGE AND MAJOR DECLARATION PROJECT CHARTER “CURRICULUM CHANGE PROCESS” PROJECT PLAN**

### **Project Group Membership**

**Chair:** Shawn Bascom (Admissions)

**Members:** Cynthia Hill (Academic Affairs, Project Sponsor), Tiffany Mitchell (College of Technology), Joann Trimmer (Office of the Registrar), Dan Woerner (Office of the Registrar), Adam Smith (Scholarships and Financial Aid), Cathy Kriloff (Mathematics & Statistics), Lisa Lewis-Mangum (Information Technology Services), Alicia Tauscher (Information Technology Services)

### **Project Group Charge**

Major Change and Major Declaration Project Group Charge - Conduct a review of the major declaration and major change process. Work to develop and recommend a streamlined process which is as student centric as possible.

### **Background Information**

In early 2019 the ISU Momentum Pathways Steering Committee gathered a subcommittee together to examine Academic Maps and the Momentum Year and the resulting impact on student success. The charge of the subcommittee at that time was to “develop strategies and recommendations to help students in their first year.” In addition, “This subcommittee sought to build recommendations that would help students make a purposeful choice about what they hope to study and then provide an integrated and coordinated approach for the university to more effectively deliver courses and administrative help to students.” The *Academic Maps and Momentum Year Project Plan* created by this subcommittee and dated September 16, 2019 provides specific strategies and recommendations in this regard.

One key recommendation outlined in the document noted above is in regard to Major Declaration and Academic Planning. The problem statement reads, “*ISU currently has an inefficient, cumbersome, and misunderstood major declaration and advisor assignment process that must be revised to better retain students and facilitate their graduation. Additionally, students who have not decided on a major upon admission are allowed to choose undecided/undeclared as their major without having a structured means to assist them in reaching a decision. ISU policy states students have until they earn junior class level standing (58 credits) to declare a major though currently there is nothing to prevent a student from*

*remaining “undeclared” indefinitely, at least until graduation. To graduate, a student must have an officially declared major in the system.”*

The problem statement goes on to state, *“The major declaration structure and process need to be improved at two distinct points: upon admission to the university and whenever a student wishes to change, add, or delete a major. Currently, students identify their major choice on the admissions application. When the application is processed, the major is officially recorded in the Banner system and CAA 23(Central Academic Advising) is assigned as the primary (and only) advisor of record. ISU considers the major “officially” declared at this time. This is the first point where the major declaration structure and process needs to be improved.”*

A second point of process improvement is also recommended. “Students who wish to change their major are directed to a faculty member in the desired department. The faculty must submit a Curriculum Change Request (CCR). The CCR process is nebulous, varies in use from department to department, and is further hampered by the need for students to go into Bengal Web and approve the change.”

## **Problem Statement**

Based on the initial recommendations and problems cited within the *Academic Maps and Momentum Year Project Plan* described above, the Major Change and Major Declaration Project Group was selected to examine the issues further. This Project Group identified several additional problems with this process:

- The Curriculum Change Request (CCR) form requires the Banner ID rather than the student’s Bengal ID. Students do not know their Banner ID.
- The CCR process currently can only be initiated by a department faculty member or department administrative assistant. The student cannot initiate a change of major on their own.
- When a change of major is complete, the department the student is leaving is not notified that they lost a student.
- Access to advisee lists for departmental advisors is not consistent across campus. Some departments have access to advisee lists through argos reports, while others either don’t know where to get them, don’t have access to argos or the requisite training to access an argos report, or get their lists from Institutional Research.
- The name of the process (Curriculum Change Process) does not make sense from a student perspective and is difficult to find in BengalWeb.
- There are sometimes gaps in inter-department coordination when working with special populations such as athletes, veterans with military benefits or international students with immigration regulatory requirements.
- The current Curriculum Change Request (CCR) process is not as streamlined as it could be.

## Recommendations

The committee recommends the following changes to the Curriculum Change Request (CCR).

1. We recommend a change to the name of the process to “Change of Major/Minor Request” (CMR)
2. The initiation of this change request should be available to both students and advisors. The new department must be involved in reviewing and approving the request. A student initiated CMR would need to trigger a notification to the appropriate departmental advisor and action taken by the department upon approval of the change.
3. In order for the student to initiate the change, the student ID will need to be changed to the student’s Bengal ID rather than the Banner ID.
4. The Effective Term field should be a required field.
5. Descriptive text should be added to the effective term field in the form as follows.  
“Effective Term means the semester the curriculum change is to take effect. Must be the current or future term. The new advisor will be effective at the time of effective term”
6. In cases where the request is initiated by the advisor, we recommend the process be easy for the student to review and confirm. Instead of the student having to go into BengalWeb to approve, provide an approval link perhaps within a confirmation email that is sent to the student. The email, or other straight-forward approval mechanism, would contain the details of the request and the student simply clicks an approval button preferably within the email.

## Stakeholder Notification and Coordination

We recommend the change of major form trigger an email notification to the student’s current department so that each department is notified when a student leaves their program.

1. We recommend a central and common system for departments to access their advisee lists. Whether this is in the form of a dynamically updated spreadsheet showing all of their majors and minors or one specific argos report, the following should be observed:
  - a. The advisee list should be easily accessible to all departmental advisors
  - b. Instructions for accessing the advisee list should be easily found
  - c. The process for gaining access to the advisee list should be easy to understand
  - d. The approval process for gaining access to the advisee list should be straightforward and streamlined.
2. International Students: A change of major for an international student requires a change to their I-20 immigration document by the International Programs Office. We recommend that any approved change of major request for an international student trigger an email notification to [ipomail@isu.edu](mailto:ipomail@isu.edu). International students are identified in Banner with the ‘INT’ attribute (STVATTS).
3. Students with Military Education Benefits: It is recommended that students with military education benefits receive the following notification as part of the Change of Major/Minor Request:

*The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and the Department of Defense (DOD) will not authorize payment for any coursework that is not specifically required for graduation from the program of education listed on your official student record for the term the course was certified. The program of education requirements are audited based on how they appear in the [Academic Catalog](#) published online. For this reason it is strongly recommended that changes in your program of education are NOT made after the start of the term, or after your schedule has been submitted to DVA or DOD for payment for the term. To minimize the risk of negative impact to your Military Education Benefits, these changes should be made in between terms before the 1st day of class whenever possible.*

### **Implementation**

We recommend that an implementation team be created that includes both technical and functional expertise. In addition to individuals from Information Technology, this team may include representation from Advising, the Registrar's Office, Admissions, or other departments involved in the process.