

Proposal to the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee

Minimum C- Grade Requirement for Biology Minor

Request: The Biology Program requests that a minimum grade requirement of C- be established for all courses applied to the Biology Minor.

Rationale: In recent years, students requesting Biology minors from the Program have presented transcripts with below average (e.g. “D”) grades in applicable biology courses. Since the granting of an academic minor is a certification of academic proficiency in a second discipline with minor emphasis, the Biology Program feels that this proficiency must be demonstrated to at least a C- level to be considered acceptable. If the University policy is to accept C- as a minimum standard for English proficiency, we feel that C- should be the acceptable minimum standard for demonstrating Biology proficiency for all students taking the core Biology courses, regardless of whether they are a Biology major or minor.

Precedent: This request from the Biology Program is by no means a precedent setting situation. At least six other academic programs have minimum grade requirements for their minor:

Communication Studies – (p. 170*) – “Students must **earn a grade of C or better in all courses taken for the minor.**”

English – (p. 209) – “A student earning an English minor must take 9 of the 18 credits at the 300-level or above **and must earn a grade of C (not C-) or higher in each course taken in the minor.**”

Journalism and Mass Communication – (p. 274) “To become a JI MC minor, the student must have achieved a score of 26 or higher on the ACT English Examination, 590 or higher on the SAT verbal exam, or have passed the School’s English Usage test **and have earned a grade of at least C+** in JIMC 201 and in either JIMC 202 or JIMC 206.”

Political Science – (p. 319) – “A student minoring in Political Science normally will be expected to take at least 9 credits in Political Science coursework at Iowa State University. Only 3 credits of Pol S 490 or Pol S 499 alone or in combination, and only 2 credits of Pol S 312-315 may be included in the total 15 credits required for the minor. All majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Science required a minimum of 6 credits in courses numbered 300 and above taken at ISU **with a grade of C or higher.** Credits taken in Pol S 499, offered on a satisfactory/fail basis only, will not fulfill; this requirement.”

Psychology – (p. 326) – “The minor requires completing 18 credits in psychology, including 101 and 301, **each with a minimum grade of C-**. At least 9 of the 18 credits must be in 300 level courses (or above), but no more than three credits total may be from Psych 490, 491, and 492. A C average or better is required in the courses used to satisfy the minor.”

Sociology – (p. 328) – “The department offers a minor in Sociology which may be earned by completing 15 credits in sociology, including: Sociology 130 or 134; 3 credits from 310, 380, or 420; 3 credits from 264, 305, or 381; an additional 6 credits in sociology courses. At least 9 of the 15 credits must be at the 300 level or higher, 6 of these must be taken at ISU **with a minimal grade of C.**”

* Page reference to 2005-2007 University Catalog