

Yale College

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Date:

To:

From: Dodie McDow, Secretary, Yale College Committee on Majors

Re: Review by the Committee on Majors

Each year, on the basis of instructions approved by the Yale College Faculty in 1972, the Committee on Majors reviews several of the undergraduate programs in Yale College. During the current academic year, the Committee is reviewing _____ majors, including _____.

These reviews allow the Committee to evaluate a major within a wide context of information and to assess strengths and gaps in the undergraduate curriculum. The Committee has also discovered that a review provides a valuable forum in which the department's Directors of Undergraduate Studies and Chair can fruitfully discuss the strengths, challenges, and aspirations of their programs.

As part of the review, the Committee interviews the DUS, the Chair, and any other faculty designated to represent the views of the program. It also interviews students who are majors in the department. In preparation for the review, the Committee gathers as much information as possible on the program's educational activities, resources, and goals. To assist with that task, the Committee asks the DUS and the Chair to consider certain specific questions listed below; you may of course raise additional matters as well. To make the process more efficient, the Committee also asks the DUS and Chair to furnish written answers to the Committee's questions before its scheduled meeting so that copies may be distributed in advance to its members. You may send your written replies to Clare Schlegel, Senior Administrative Assistant, Yale College Dean's Office, 110 SSS, or to me via email at george.levesque@yale.edu. **If your schedule permits, we would like to meet with you in person on _____, and so it would be helpful if you could provide your written responses by no later than _____.**

Please arrange your presentation to the Committee by answering to whatever degree is possible or relevant the following general questions, which relate specifically to five general areas of concern. Some departments find it easier to answer each question one at a time; others prefer to combine questions and answers. Feel free to do whatever is most convenient and appropriate for your department. Again, you are welcome to respond in the text below and send the document back to me as an email attachment.

I. The Overall Educational Objectives of the Curriculum:

1. What is the educational aim of your program for your majors? What do you hope that a student majoring in your program will have achieved by completing it?
2. What are the core and/or required courses of the major and why, and how were they chosen?
3. How does your program respond to the differing levels of preparation of entering students?
4. Which courses in the program are restricted to student majors?
5. What is the senior requirement, and why and how was it chosen?
6. In what proportions (i.e., share of term courses offered) is your curriculum designed to meet the needs of majors and prospective majors?
7. Which of your courses are intended for students in Yale College at large? Which, if any, are “service courses” intended for students in other fields?
8. What are your educational objectives for non-majors participating in your offerings?
9. How, if at all, do non-majors gain access to upper level courses?
10. Do other departments offer “service courses” to your majors? If so, are they adequate for your majors?
11. How does your program interact with departments that support your teaching? What promises or commitments do you have with departments that provide courses or instructors?
12. What determines an instructor's affiliation with your department? What continuity of instruction has there been?
13. What is the system by which courses that originate in other departments or programs but count towards the requirements of your major get approved? Is there continuity in such offerings over the years? What agreements are in place to assure continuity in such offerings, especially those that can be presented as part of the senior requirement in your major?
14. Which, if any, of your courses are offered Cr/D/Fail?
15. How and by whom are courses and requirements initiated and established?
16. What is the role of the Student Advisory Committee in your program?
17. Are there any serious gaps in your offerings? What resources would be needed to fill them?
18. Are your curricular objectives adequately served by current physical facilities, equipment, or support services? Specifically, what use does your program make of Academic Media & Technology (e.g., A/V, classes.yale.edu)?

II. Advising:

1. How do you advise prospective majors?
2. How do you advise current majors?
3. What advising do you provide for fellowships and study abroad?
4. How do you advise seniors doing the senior requirement?
5. How do you advise graduating seniors on their future plans?

III. The Instructional Faculty:

1. How is the teaching load in your program divided between full-time junior and senior members of the faculty? How much of your teaching is done by graduate students or other non-ladder instructors?
2. How are graduate students and other non-ladder instructors selected and assigned to courses? How are they prepared to teach, and how are they supervised? How are they evaluated?
3. Who teaches what kind of courses: advanced, introductory; lectures, seminars; sections, workshops, etc.?
4. Is your program severely limited by inadequate total faculty? In what particular fields is your faculty inadequate?

IV. The Development of the Major:

1. How has the major changed in the last 10 years? How do you see it changing in the next five?
2. Are there any recent trends or changes in numbers of students in the major or in non-major enrollments?

V. Additional Information:

1. What else should we know about the major? Please provide us with any additional information that may help us understand the current state and future prospects of the major.