

## **Exploratory Studies Program Expansion**

During the [November 2012](#) Academic Affairs Council (AAC) meeting, the council discussed a proposal advanced by SDSU to develop five Exploratory Studies tracks for undecided students (see Attachment I). SDSU's program includes the following five tracks noted below, breaking each program down further by listing potential majors/degree programs under these tracks, and then also notes general education courses that would pertain to these tracks. This topic was discussed during the last High School Dual Credit (HSDC) conference call as a potential opportunity to provide students with advising assistance and a framework for selecting appropriate courses that would align with their designated courses of study. Potentially, it could also be used to curb unnecessary electives once students do decide on a major.

- 1) Education, Social Sciences and Management
- 2) Humanities, Fine Arts and Design
- 3) Health Sciences
- 4) Engineering, Technology and Math
- 5) Agriculture and Natural Sciences

Currently, BHSU is exploring the development of similar Exploratory Studies options that align with their respective degree programs with the potential expansion across the other Regental institutions.

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM: 5.C**

**DATE: November 8, 2012**

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**SUBJECT: SDSU's Proposed Exploratory Studies program**

SDSU is developing an Exploratory Studies Program to improve student success. A group has been working on this project for some time and the plan is to pilot this in the Spring of 2013. As part of this proposal, the campus has asked that the admissions form/process be modified to add a set of approved program codes for the interest tracks and deleting the undecided program code. Since there have been ongoing discussions about this topic over the past few years, this is being presented for broader discussion.

On the following pages please find the e-mail from the campus as well as a draft of the campus plan.

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

**Discussion.**

**From:** Helling, Mary  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 09, 2012 10:24 AM  
**To:** Gingerich, Sam  
**Cc:** Nichols, Laurie; Corbett, Keith; Kuebler, Michelle; Helmbolt, Shawn  
**Subject:** SDSU Exploratory Studies program

Sam:

Attached please find the draft description/plan for a program that is currently under development at SDSU and will be piloted in Spring 2013. You are probably aware that Exploratory Studies (or something similar to) are in place at more and more college/universities and have realized some positive results in terms of retention and graduation rates for students who begin their college career as deciding/undeclared.

In addition to letting you know about this program, we also wanted to ask for your support of how we would prefer to manage this from an entering student perspective. When a student applies to SDSU and is undecided, he/she selects "undecided". We need to change this program code to accommodate prospective students being able to select the interest track within Exploratory Studies that best fits their interests. We are requesting to be able to build 5 different program codes (i.e., Exploratory Studies – Humanities, Fine Arts and Design) to replace the undecided program code. This will allow us to capture the intent of each undecided applicant's direction of study to better serve the student in being successful in ultimately declaring a major.

Let us know if you have any questions. Thanks.

Mary Kay H. and Keith Corbett

# South Dakota State University

## Exploratory Studies Program

*“All who wander are not lost.” (J.R.R. Tolkien, Lord of the Rings)*

Fall 2012

### Executive Summary

Each year hundreds of students are admitted to South Dakota State University (SDSU) without having identified a major field of study. For the current fall term (2012), 631 students are currently coded as “undeclared” and in fall 2011, 368 students were coded as “undeclared”. In addition, throughout the academic year, approximately 150 students who previously had a declared major, change their status to “undeclared”. To assist these students in selecting a major, SDSU has developed an Exploratory Studies (ES) program. The use of Exploratory Studies (ES) programs is increasing at public and private universities as one of the ways to assist deciding students in the selection of a major.

Research on deciding students indicates that the majority of students (including those who have selected a major) remain uncertain or tentative about their career or major choice. Thus it is important for the ES program to focus on how students go about making a decision related to career/major, provide opportunities to gain self-knowledge and more experience with the college curriculum (Cuseo, 2001). <http://www.uwc.edu/administration/academic-affairs/esfy/cuseo/>

ES programs move students toward making a decision on a major in part by requiring the student to select a track upon entry to the University and requiring all deciding students to select a major no later than the end of the second term/or completion of 30 credits.

### Exploratory Studies Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Based on interests, abilities, values and goals, make educated decisions regarding course selection and degree program.
2. Select a major no later than the end of the second term of study or by the time 30 credits are earned and know the degree requirements for the selected major field of study.
3. Pursue a balanced and thought-provoking education both in and out of the classroom.
4. Be an active and self-directed learner who challenges oneself.

## Exploratory Studies Program Tracks

- 1) Education, Social Sciences and Management
- 2) Humanities, Fine Arts and Design
- 3) Health Sciences
- 4) Engineering, Technology and Math
- 5) Agriculture and Natural Sciences

## Majors by tracks

### 1) **Education, Social Sciences and Management**

- Agriculture and Resource Economics
- Agriculture Business
- Agriculture Education, Communication and Leadership
- Consumer Affairs
- Early Childhood Education
- Economics
- Entrepreneurial Studies
- Family and Consumer Science Education
- Global Studies
- Hospitality Management
- Human Development and Family Studies
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- PETE (Physical Education Teacher Education)
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Sports Recreation and Park Management
- Also, pre-professional programs in secondary education content areas

### 2) **Humanities, Fine Arts & Design**

- Advertising
- Architectural Studies
- English
- Graphic Design
- History and History Education
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- Interior Design
- Mass Communications and Journalism
- Modern Languages
- Music
- Music Education
- Speech Communications
- Studio Arts
- Theatre

**3) Health Sciences**

- Athletic Training
- Dietetics
- Exercise Science
- Health Education (new major Fall 2012; designed with Pre-PT/OT students in mind)
- Medical Laboratory Science
- Microbiology (Infectious Disease Emphasis)
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Pharmacy
- Pre-Professional programs:
  - Pre-Chiropractic
  - Pre-Dental
  - Pre-Medicine
  - Pre-Mortuary
  - Pre-Occupational Therapy
  - Pre-Optometry
  - Pre-Physical Therapy
  - Pre-Physician Assistant

**4) Engineering, Technology and Math**

- Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering
- Agricultural Systems Technology
- Aviation
- Biotechnology
- Civil Engineering
- Computer Science
- Construction Management
- Electrical Engineering
- Electronics Engineering Technology
- Industrial Management
- Manufacturing Engineering Technology
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering

**5) Agriculture and Natural Science**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agronomy</li> <li>• Animal Science</li> <li>• Biochemistry</li> <li>• Biology</li> <li>• Chemistry</li> <li>• Dairy Manufacturing</li> <li>• Dairy Production</li> <li>• Ecology and Environmental Science</li> <li>• General Agriculture</li> <li>• Geographic Information Sciences</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Horticulture</li> <li>• Landscape Architecture</li> <li>• Microbiology</li> <li>• Pre-Professional program:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pre-Vet</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Physics</li> <li>• Range Science</li> <li>• Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences</li> </ul> |
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## Identification of key gateway courses by track

For the purposes of this program, gateway courses are defined as those which introduce students to a content area/discipline/major in addition to key courses which students need to complete during their first year of study.

### Education, Social Sciences and Management

- MATH 102, College Algebra, 3 credits (or appropriate math course based on placement)
- *Economics/Business focus:*
  - ECON 101, Global Economy, 3 credits
  - ENTR 236, Innovation and Creativity, 3 credits
  - CA 150, Introduction to Consumer Affairs, 2 credits
  - ECON 201, Principles of Microeconomics, 3 credits (MATH 102 is pre-requisite)
  - ECON 202, Principles of Macroeconomics, 3 credits (MATH 102 is pre-requisite)
- *Teacher Education focus:*
  - ECE 150, Early Experience, 2 credits
  - AGED/FCSE 295, Practicum in Career and Technical Education, 1 credit
  - EHS 140/140L, Enhancing Human Potential and Lab, 2 credits
  - HDFS 210, Lifespan Development, 3 credits
- *Social Sciences focus:*
  - PSYC 101, General Psychology, 3 credits
  - SOC 100, Introduction to Sociology, 3 credits
  - POLS 100, American Government, 3 credits
  - GLST 201, Global Studies I, 3 credits.

### Humanities, Fine Arts and Design

- MATH 102, College Algebra, 3 credits OR Math 103/103L, Quantitative Literacy and Lab (or appropriate math course based on placement)
- Introductory Modern Foreign Language (MFL) course (for language majors and B.A. students), 3-4 credits, depending on placement
- THEA 100, Introduction to Theater, 3 credits
- ARTH 100, Art Appreciation, 3 credits
- ART 111, Drawing I, 3 credits
- MUS 110 & 110L, Music Theory and Lab, 3 credits
- MCOM 151, Introduction to Mass Communication, 3 credits
- MCOM 155, Information Gathering, 2 credits
- HIST 111, World Civilizations I, 3 credits OR HIST 121 Western Civilization I, 3 credits
- ENGL 101, Composition I, 3 credits
- ENGL 151, Introduction to English Studies, 3 credits (departmental permission required)
- SPCM 101, Fundamentals of Speech, 3 credits

Health Sciences

- Math 102, College Algebra, 3 credits ( or appropriate math course based on placement)
- Chemistry course (based on placement/background)
- BIOL 101/101L, Biology Survey and Lab, 4 credits OR BIOL 151/151L, General Biology I and Lab, 4 credits

Engineering, Technology and Math

- Math course (based on placement)
- CHEM 106/106L, Chemistry Survey and Lab, 4 credits OR CHEM 112/112L, General Chemistry I and Lab, 4 credits
- PHYS 111/111L, Introduction to Physics and Lab, 4 credits

Agriculture and Natural Sciences

- Chemistry course (based on placement/background)
- PHYS 111/111L, Introduction to Physics and Lab, 4 credits, OR
- PHYS 101/101L, Survey of Physics and Lab, 4 credits
- MATH 102, College Algebra, 3 credits (appropriate math course based on placement)
- BIOL 151/151L, General Biology I and Lab, 4 credits, OR
- BIOL 101/101L, Biology Survey I and Lab, 3 credits
- GEOG 131 and 131L Physical Geography I OR GEOG 132 and 132L Physical Geography II, 4 credits

**Key ES program components/Fall 2013 implementation steps (See appendix A)**

- Deciding students apply to SDSU and selects one of the tracks within Exploratory Studies.
- ES students are assigned a first-year academic advisor through Wintrade Student Success Center and University College.
- ES students attend New Student Orientation during summer and meet with assigned advisor to register for courses.
- ES student must enroll in UC 109, UC 101 (new Exploratory Studies course), carefully selected general education and introduction to discipline/majors courses by track.
- Some first-term ES students will select major prior to the next term. These students exit the ES program and join the appropriate college by major selection.
- ES students who have not selected a major for the next term, continue in ES program for second term. First-year advisors continue with ES student until they declare major.
- All ES students are required to have selected a major in time for early registration the third term of enrollment.
- Semester by semester plans of study are available for each track to assist advisors and ES students in identifying courses.

## Spring 2013 Pilot Plan

SDSU will pilot the Exploratory Studies program in spring 2013. Results of the spring 2013 pilot will be used to inform full implementation of the Exploratory Studies program for fall 2013. See timeline for pilot in Appendix B.

Tracks selected for the spring 2013 pilot are:

- Education, Social Sciences and Management
- Agriculture and Natural Sciences

The population in the pilot program will include a sampling of students who were admitted for the fall 2012 semester and not declared a major for the spring 2013 semester as well as transfer students admitted for spring 2013 who have not declared a major. Students in the pilot will be those who have expressed an interest in fields represented in the two selected tracks.

Students in the *Education, Social Sciences and Management* track will be required to enroll in:

UC 199 Exploratory Studies, 2 credits. Students will also select from the following list of gateway and general education courses (identified by the program areas represented in the track).

- Math 102, College Algebra, 3 credits ( or appropriate math course as determined by placement)
- Economics/Business focus:
  - ECON 101, Global Economy, 3 credits
  - ENTR 236, Innovation and Creativity, 3 credits
  - CA 150, Introduction to Consumer Affairs
- Teacher Education focus:
  - ECE 150, Early Experience, 2 credits
  - AGED/FCSE 295, Practicum in Career and Technical Education, 1 credit
  - EHS 140, Enhancing Human Potential, 2 credits
  - HDFS 210, Lifespan Development, 3 credits
- Social Sciences focus:
  - PSYC 101, General Psychology, 3 credits
  - SOC 100, Introductions to Sociology, 3 credits
  - POLS 100, American Government, 3 credits
  - GLST 201, Global Studies 1, 3 credits

Students in the *Agriculture and Natural Sciences track* will be required to UC 199 Exploratory Studies, 2 credits. Students will also select from the following list of gateway and general education courses (identified by the program areas represented in the track).

- Math 102, College Algebra, 3 credits ( or appropriate math course as determined by placement)
- CHEM 106/106L, Survey of Chemistry I and Lab, 4 credits
- CHEM 115, 115L, Atomic and Molecular Structure and Lab, 4 credits
- PHYS 111/111L, Introduction to Physics and Lab, 4 credits, OR
- PHYS 101/101L, Survey of Physics and Lab, 4 credits
- MATH 102, College Algebra, 3 credits (appropriate math course based on placement)
- BIOL 151/151L, General Biology I and Lab, 4 credits, OR
- BIOL 101/101L, Biology Survey I and Lab, 3 credits
- GEOG 131 and 131L Physical Geography I OR GEOG 132 and 132L Physical Geography II, 4 credits

Exploratory Studies students will also be required to take the following courses, if needed. Some will have completed in their first semester at SDSU.

- UC 109, First Year Seminar, 2 credits
- UC 143, Mastering Lifetime Learning, 2 credits.

Assessment of Spring 2013 pilot of ES program:

The pilot will be assessed based on the student outcomes of the ES program.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Based on interests, abilities, values and goals, make educated decisions regarding course selection and degree program.
2. Select a major no later than the end of the second term of study or by the time 30 credits are earned and know the degree requirements for the selected major field of study.
3. Pursue a balanced and thought-provoking education both in and out of the classroom.
4. Be an active and self-directed learner who challenges oneself.

These outcomes will be assessed within the UC 199, Exploratory Studies course.

Focus groups will be conducted with students participating in the pilot to ask for additional input in regard to level of satisfaction with the program/courses and ideas for improvement.

### **Communication Plan**

1. Brochure (for use at Sr.Day, Jr. Day, etc.)
2. Website – include links from:
  - a. University College
  - b. Academic Affairs
  - c. Admissions
  - d. Wintrode Student Success Center
3. Include in Admissions materials
4. Provide updates at the following meetings:
  - a. Academic Council
  - b. University Management Team
  - c. First-Year Advisors/Professional Advisors Meeting
  - d. College/department meetings as requested
5. Social Media – twitter and facebook

### **Program assessment plan:**

The ES program will be assessed based on the student outcomes listed below:

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Based on interests, abilities, values and goals, make educated decisions regarding course selection and degree program.
2. Select a major no later than the end of the second term of study or by the time 30 credits are earned and know the degree requirements for the selected major field of study.
3. Pursue a balanced and thought-provoking education both in and out of the classroom.
4. Be an active and self-directed learner who challenges oneself.

These outcomes will be assessed within the UC 101, Exploratory Studies course.

Focus groups will be conducted with students participating in the UC 101 course to ask for additional input in regard to level of satisfaction with the program/courses and ideas for improvement.

### **References:**

(Cuseo, 2001). <http://www.uwc.edu/administration/academic-affairs/esfy/cuseo/>