Proposal Of A New Undergraduate Or Graduate Program

This document should not exceed 3-5 pages in length.

1. Proposing College / School: School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
   Department: ________________________________

2. Proposed Program Title: Nature Based Recreation Minor

3. CIP Code of Proposed Program: ____________________________
   4. Proposed Implementation Date: Fall 2014

5. Relationship of Proposed Program to the Auburn University Mission Statement and Strategic Plan:

(Auburn University's mission statement may be accessed at the following site: http://www.auburn.edu/administration/trustees/policymanual/vision_and_mission.html; Auburn University's strategic plan may be accessed at the following site: http://ocm.auburn.edu/strategic_plan/)

From the mission statement:
The University will serve the citizens of the State through its instructional, research and outreach programs and prepare Alabamians to respond successfully to the challenges of a global economy.

The University will give highest priority for resource allocation for the future development of those areas that represent the traditional strengths, quality, reputation, and uniqueness of the institution and that continue to effectively respond to the needs of students and other constituents.

Nature-based recreation and ecotourism (the travel to conduct this type of recreation) are growth industries both in Alabama and globally. Training students to work in these fields prepares them for both local and global employment. Within Alabama, nature-based recreation and ecotourism opportunities are provided on State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas, Forever Wild lands, on designated birding trails, and on National Forests and National Historic Sites among other sites within the state. Additionally, landowners in Alabama are increasingly using their land for recreation (e.g. Hunting, Birding) and having a program in Alabama that can provide students a background in this field accomplishes goals from the mission statement.

The minor is consistent with several priorities stated in the Auburn University Strategic Plan, including:

Priority 1: Elevating Academics
Elevating undergraduate education and enrich the undergraduate student experience; serving our students better and raising their expectations and standards; and, implementing new projects in the area of sustainability.

Priority 1,
Goal 5 Auburn University continues to increase opportunities for students to acquire international experiences through opportunities both on and off campus.

GOAL 6: Auburn University and Auburn University Montgomery continue to promote and create new Study Abroad opportunities for students.

Study abroad options are built directly into the minor.

6. Expected Program Outcomes and Assessment Methods:

(Expected outcomes must be stated clearly and must include student learning outcomes and an assessment plan for ascertaining the extent to which the expected outcomes are achieved and for designing improvements based on analysis of assessment results.)

Ecotourism is travel to conduct nature based recreation. The definition of ecotourism can be used to frame the learning...
outcomes for the minor as it includes elements from all of the core classes in the minor. There are four fundamental pillars of Ecotourism as defined by the International Ecotourism Society (2008) include: 1) it is nature based and conservation focused; 2) it fosters environmental and cultural learning and understanding; 3) it benefits the livelihoods of local peoples; and 4) it is sustainably managed as a business. These four elements are the core learning objectives that students are expected to achieve upon completion of this minor.

There are three core courses that provide the foundation of the Nature-based recreation minor: Environmental Interpretation (FOWS 2010) presents the skills and techniques to effectively communicate and reveal ‘meanings’ of places and *translate the technical language of a natural science or related field into terms and ideas that people who aren’t scientists can readily understand* (Ham 1992) (Pillar 2). The course on Nature Based Recreation (FOWS 3310) provides the foundation for understanding recreationists and designing and managing recreation opportunity settings (Pillars 1, 2). The course on Ecotourism (FOWS 4310) examines the Ecotourism industry from a holistic perspective with discussion, readings and case studies used to frame the four core components and issues relevant to the industry (Pillars 1, 2, 3, 4). At least one additional course within each of the concentration electives must be taken; Ecological Conservation (Pillar 1), Society and Development (Pillars 2, 3) and Economic-Tourism Management foundations (Pillars 3, 4).

Assessment:
1. Students will be evaluated on their knowledge and retention of the above learning objectives based upon individual assignments, presentations and testing within each of the required courses.
2. Upon completion of the minor, students will complete an exit survey that will include general questions about the four fundamental pillars of Ecotourism. This survey will be examined by SFWS faculty to determine level of student comprehension and whether there is need to modify either the course content of the minor or possibly the material content or presentation within one or more courses. The survey will also be used to request general feedback from the student for improving the minor.

7. Degree Requirements (Including All Formal Options):

*(For programs at the undergraduate level, please provide a curriculum model for the program as well as for each formal option.)*

The Nature Based Recreation Minor requires completion of 15 semester hours:

| Minor core (The following courses are required): | 3 |
| Environmental Interpretation (FOWS 2010) | 3 |
| Nature Based Recreation (FOWS 3310) | 3 |
| Ecotourism (FOWS 4310) | 3 |
| Minor core hours | 9 |

Concentration electives (6 hrs of the following restricted electives must be taken, from at least two different concentrations):

| Ecological Conservation | 3 |
| Conservation Biology (BIOL 5090) | 3 |
| Principals of Wildlife Management (WILD 3280) | 3 |
| Landscape Ecology (FOWS 5220) | 3 |
| *Study abroad course (Junior level or above) related to conservation | 3 |
| Society and Development | 3 |
| Rural Sociology (RSOC 5610) | 3 |
| Sociology of Community Development (RSOC 5640) | 3 |
| Sociology of Natural Resources and the Environment (RSOC 5650) | 3 |
| *Study abroad course (Junior level or above) on sustainable development, community development or society and the environment | 3 |
| Economics and Tourism Management | 3 |
| Environmental Services (FOWS 5320/6320) | 3 |
| Ecological Economics (FOWS 5880) | 3 |
| Principals of Marketing (MKTG 3310) | 3 |
| Global Hospitality (HRMT 5570) | 3 |
| *Study abroad course (Junior level or above) related to hospitality and tourism management | 3 |
| Concentration elective hours | 6 |
Study abroad/international opportunities.
Two international courses offered through the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences in collaboration with International Student Volunteers (ISV) are:
International Issues in Natural Resource Management (FOWS 3025)
International Issues in Community Development (FOWS 3015)

8. Specific Admission and/or Continuation Requirements:

N/A

9. Existing Courses and New Courses Required:

FOWS 3310, Nature Based Recreation, is a new course that has been previously taught as a Special Topics and is being submitted concurrently with this Minor.

10. Relationship of Proposed Program to Other Auburn University Programs:
(If "yes" for either item, please provide explanation in the space provided below.)

Will the program support or be supported by other program(s) at Auburn University?  
Yes  No
Will this program replace any existing program(s), or specializations / options / concentrations within existing program(s) at Auburn University?  
Yes  No

11. New or Additional Resources / Resource Shifting Required:
(If "yes" for any item, please provide explanation in the space provided below.)

Will additional faculty lines be required?  
Yes  No
Will new or additional space (e.g.: laboratory or classroom) be required?  
Yes  No
Will additional library resources be required?  
Yes  No
Will additional GTA support be required?  
Yes  No

Explanation of or provision for new or additional resources / explanation of program's support or replacement of other programs:

10a. Courses from units beyond the SFWS are included in the proposed minor and may increase enrollment in those classes. Each of these units has been contacted and have agreed to the inclusion of their respective courses in this minor.

12. Potential Duplication of Other Programs in the State:
(If the program would overlap with or duplicate a similar offering at another institution in the state, articulate the program's necessity and/or any differences from similar programs.)

The minor does not duplicate any other programs in the state.

13. Collaboration With Other Institutions:
(Indicate whether or not the proposed program will -- either immediately or in the future -- involve collaboration with other post-secondary institutions. If so, provide all relevant details.)

This program will not involve cooperation with other post secondary institutions. It may develop into ties and certification from The International Ecotourism Society.

14. Distance Education:
(If Distance Education will be incorporated in the delivery of the proposed program, provide details of implementation, scope, etc.)

N/A
15. Documented Need for Proposed Program:

(Elaborate upon the methodology used to appropriately assess regional, state, or national need and/or student demand for program.)

Nature-based recreation provides a multitude of psychological, physiological and economic benefits to society. It provides low cost opportunities to positively impact the nation’s obesity epidemic, opportunities to help reduce stress and provide an escape from daily life, and opportunities for economic development in rural communities.

Tourism, one of the world’s largest industries, has witnessed significant growth over the last half century. One of the fastest growing segments of the industry is anchored in outdoor recreation and nature-based experiences. Increasing concerns about the environment and sustainable development has led to the development of Ecotourism. The International Ecotourism Society (2008) offers an overarching definition as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.”

Within Alabama, nature-based recreation and ecotourism opportunities are provided on State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas, Forever Wild lands, on designated birding trails, and on National Forests and National Historic Sites among others. A recent publication from the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service highlights the economic impact to the state of Alabama from hunting, sportfishing, and wildlife watching (a subset of Nature Based Recreation) that includes total annual sales of over 2.175 billion dollars, output impact of over 3.58 billion dollars, and value added impact of over 1.09 billion dollars. These three activities alone employ over 42,000 people in the state.

The proposed minor is not offered anywhere else in Alabama, it will complement the new Natural Resources Management Major in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, and it will prepare students to enter the field of Nature Based Recreation that is so very important to the economy of our state.

16. Employment Opportunities:

(Provide specific examples of employment opportunities anticipated for graduates of the proposed program.)

Federal and state agencies who work with recreation such as the national park Service, Forest Service, Alabama State Parks, Alabama Department of Conservation and natural resources, private tourism and hospitality industries.
From: Edward Loewenstein
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2013 10:18 AM
To: Martin O'Neill
Subject: Proposed minor in Nature Based Recreation

Dear Dr O'Neill,

Attached is a minor that we are proposing in Nature Based Recreation. We would like to include two Hotel and Restaurant Management courses, HRMT 1010 and 2500, as elective choices in this minor. Please reply and let me know whether you are willing to allow us to include these courses. If you are willing, I will attach your e-mail in our submission packet to the University Curriculum Committee, if not, I will remove the courses from our list of electives. Although I do not believe this inclusion will place substantial pressure on your course enrollment, if you agree to allow us to include them but increased numbers become a problem in the future, we would be happy to remove any of the courses as an option at any time.

Sincerely,
Ed Loewenstein
Dear Ed:

I think that principles of marketing (MKTG 3310) would be a better fit. I do not think it would be a problem accommodating your students.

Avery

Avery M. Abernethy
Department Chair & Professor of Marketing

Dept. of Marketing
201 Lowder Hall
College of Business
Auburn University, AL 36849-5246

334-844-8544
Fax (334-844-4032)
abernav@auburn.edu

War Eagle!

From: Edward Loewenstein
Sent: Saturday, March 09, 2013 10:50 AM
To: Avery Abernethy
Subject: Proposed minor in Nature Based Recreation
Importance: High

Dear Avery,

Attached is a minor that we are proposing in Nature Based Recreation. We would like to include MKTG 3810 (or 3310), as one of the elective choices in this minor. Please reply and let me know whether you are willing to allow us to include this course. If you are willing, I will attach your e-mail in our submission packet to the University Curriculum Committee, if not, I will remove the course from our list of electives. Although I do not believe this inclusion will place substantial pressure on your course enrollment, if you agree to allow us to include it but increased numbers become a problem in the future, we would be happy to remove it as an option at any time.

Sincerely,
Ed
Dear Dr. Loewenstein:
I have checked with the individuals who teach the classes and they said they will be happy to receive students from your planned program. I think it is a great idea and I will be happy to collaborate and help in anyway I can.
Thanks for informing me.
Sincerely,
Curtis M. Jolly

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Dear Dr. Loewenstein,

Attached is a minor that we are proposing in Nature Based Recreation. We would like to include three Rural Sociology courses, RSOC 5610, 5640, and 5650, as elective choices in this minor. Please reply and let me know whether you are willing to allow us to include these courses. If you are willing, I will attach your e-mail in our submission packet to the University Curriculum Committee, if not, I will remove the courses from our list of electives. Although I do not believe this inclusion will place substantial pressure on your course enrollment (students would be allowed to count no more than one of these courses toward the minor), if you agree to allow us to include them but increased numbers become a problem in the future, we would be happy to remove any of the courses as an option at any time.
Sincerely,
Ed Loewenstein

Edward F. Loewenstein, PhD
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
602 Duncan Drive
Auburn University, AL 36849-5418

loewenstein@auburn.edu
334-844-1069 (office)
334-844-1084 (fax)
Ed:

Thanks for the gentle nudge. Responses below. Let me know if we need to discuss....thanks.

Jack

1. NBR: Conservation and Ecology concentration seems OK. There is room in BIOL 5090, but the course has grown, so it would be helpful to know the annual anticipated enrollment---we can handle 5-10 more per year, but anything more could put a strain on the course as Bob Boyd has students a lot of writing.

2. NRE: This minor is very close to our Organismal Biology-Conservation/Biodiversity formal option; it would be helpful to know your target audience for the minor, and how it differs from CONB, so NRE and CONB are not competing for students. Also, it seems highly appropriate that BIOL 3060 (ecology) be a required course. I know FORY 4230 doesn't require 3060, but several electives do (BIOL 5150, 5360, 4140, ENTM 5220, FORY 5150, WILD 3280, 5280), so not having taken 3060 will limit options for the minor unless advisors/advisees are vigilant. That said, we would need to know anticipated enrollment in BIOL 3060 as that course is close to saturation. Ditto for BIOL 4010, 4020 and 5140 as they also have limited seating without acquiring resources for more lab sections.

On May 2, 2013, at 6:51 PM, Edward Loewenstein wrote:

Hi Jack,
Just wondering if you’ve had a chance to look over those minors yet?
Cheers,
Ed

Sorry, Ed...your request got lost a a sea of emails....will respond ASAP. Jack

On Apr 5, 2013, at 8:43 AM, Edward Loewenstein wrote:

Jack,
I was wondering if you have had the opportunity to look over the other two minors I sent. I’ve attached copies if you need them. The only BIOL course in the Nature Based Recreation Minor is Conservation Biology and it is one of several
options in the restricted electives. In the Natural Resources Ecology Minor, there are several BIOL courses listed, but most (with the exception of Conservation Biology) are listed in a single category from which a student can select only a single course.

Cheers,

Ed

Edward F. Loewenstein, PhD
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
602 Duncan Drive
Auburn University, AL 36849-5418

loewenstein@auburn.edu
334-844-1069 (office)
334-844-1084 (fax)

Jack Feminella, Professor and Chair
Dept. of Biological Sciences, 101 Life Sciences
Auburn University, Auburn AL 36849-5407
Voice: 334-844-3906
e-mail: feminjw@auburn.edu
http://www.auburn.edu/cosam/departments/biology/index.htm

Jack Feminella, Professor and Chair
Dept. of Biological Sciences, 101 Life Sciences
Auburn University, Auburn AL 36849-5407
Voice: 334-844-3906
e-mail: feminjw@auburn.edu
http://www.auburn.edu/cosam/departments/biology/index.htm