

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA
ACADEMIC SENATE

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REPORT TO
THE ACADEMIC SENATE
AP-016-167

Discontinuation of Religious Studies Minor

Academic Programs Committee

Date: 11/02/2016

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: 11/16/2016

Academic Senate

Date: 11/30/2016
First Reading

AP-016-167, Discontinuation of Religion Studies Minor

BACKGROUND: The Department of Philosophy has put forward a referral for Discontinuation of the Religious Studies Minor. The minor has attracted very little enrollment and is primarily dependent upon a single faculty member, two facts that do not make for a robust program.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

Deans
Associate Deans
Department Chairs
All Faculty

DISCUSSION:

Before reaching the Academic Programs Committee, this proposal was reviewed by the College Curriculum Committee in the College of CLASS as well as the Dean of CLASS and the Office of Academic Programs. All concerns raised at those levels were addressed. The Academic Programs Committee then conducted campus-wide consultation, as well as its own review of the proposal. No concerns were raised.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Academic Programs Committee recommends approval of the Discontinuation of the Religious Studies Minor.

AP-016-167, Discontinuation of Religion Studies Minor

Philosophy	
Status	active
Hierarchy Entities	Philosophy
Approval Process Name	K. Other - Discontinuance/Merge/Move Program/Option/Minor/Emphasis/Credential
Current Step	Office of Academic Programs
Originator	David Adams
Created	02/03/2016 01:47PM
Launched	02/03/2016 01:49PM
Form	
General Catalog Information	
Department	Philosophy
Program Name (e.g. Art History, B.A.; Biology, B.S. - General Biology Subplan/Option; History Minor)	Religious Studies Minor
Importance to the Institution	While the Religious Studies Minor arguably could contribute to preparing students for life in a multicultural world, it does not particularly promote the University mission of linking theory and practice. Nor does the Religious Studies Minor contribute in a distinctive way to the University's polytechnic identity, its learn-by-doing philosophy, or such goals as environmental sustainability. The Religious Studies Minor is not central to the aims of the Philosophy Department's existing curriculum.
Quality of the Program	There are two principal reasons for discontinuing the Religious Studies Minor, one related to the availability of Departmental resources to support the Minor, the other relating to demand. Currently, the courses offered to support the Minor are taught by only one full-time, tenured faculty member. As a result, the courses required for the Minor are offered only when the faculty member in question is able to offer them-typically no more than one or two per academic year. Furthermore, the Department currently has no ability to assign other instructors to replace the key faculty member in case of illness, professional leave, or retirement. Together, these factors significantly impair the Department's ability to offer and sustain a stable and rigorous minor program in Religious Studies.
Efficiency and Demand for the Program	The second fundamental reason for discontinuing the Religious Studies Minor is lack of sufficient student demand. While it has never been easy to track the number of students enrolled in a given minor (as opposed to major) program, it is clear to the Department that only a handful of students (four or five) have attempted to complete the Minor in the last ten years. This is by any measure simply too few students to justify the efforts needed to remedy the lack of faculty resources identified above, and that would be necessary to keep the program viable.
Potential effect on the future employment status of faculty and staff in the program	No current Department faculty (full or part-time, tenured or tenure track) will have his or her position in any way affected by the deletion of the Religious Studies Minor. The faculty member who currently teaches the great bulk of the courses used to fulfill the Minor will continue to teach these courses on their existing rotation.
Plan/Timeline to Close the Program	The Department intends to close the Religious Studies Minor with the beginning of the Fall, 2018 academic term. As far as the Department is aware, the Minor currently has zero enrollment.
Steps	
Files	None

