To: ARC

Re: Proposed Programmatic Revisions to the Social Science contract major

Summary

The Social Science contract major convening group seeks to modify the existing major by codifying research methods requirements, adding a capstone course, and revising the available concentrations. The credits required for the major would increase from 40 (10 courses) to 44 (11 courses). The existing Social Science contract major currently offers six possible concentrations (a student may elect one, but a concentration not required). At this time, there are no course requirements for any of the concentrations. The modified major would continue to offer six concentrations and provide students with paths through which to complete a concentration. This revised interdisciplinary major would continue to provide students with flexibility to pursue interdisciplinary training in the social sciences and to design a program that fits their academic goals and needs. This format also allows students to explore specialized or emerging fields in areas in which traditional majors are not offered. The additional requirements are minor. Codifying the research methods requirement will make this requirement official, aligning current inconsistencies in major requirements listed across different domains (e.g., catalogue, 4-year plan, degree audit). The addition of a capstone course will provide coherence and focus to students’ interdisciplinary contract major by having students complete a project with a unifying focus. This course will provide students the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills, and methodologies gained from across the courses they have taken for the contract major.

Details related to the proposed changes are described below. Additionally, I want to mention that throughout this process I took a number of steps to facilitate transparency and ensure the involvement of all stakeholders in this program revision, including: in-person meetings with each convener in SSHS and social scientists housed in SSHGS, regular meetings with the dean of SSHS, discussion of the major and proposed changes during SSHS Unit Council, distribution of the proposal solicitation of feedback via email and holding three open forums about the proposed changes.

Thank you for the consideration of this proposal.

Regards,

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The Social Science contract major convening group proposes the following changes to the major:

1. Add a requirement that students complete a research methods course. The courses that would fulfill this requirement would be:
   - LAWS 353: Sociolegal Research & Writing
   - POLI 316: Political Science Methodology
   - PSYC 303: Research Methods in Psychology (taken concurrently with PSYC 304)
   - SOCI 307: Social Research with Computers
   - SOCI 308: Social Statistics with Computers
   - SOSC 390: Topics: Social Science Research Methods
   - SWRK 307: Social Work Research Methods

   Rationale: At this time, a course in research methods is not listed as a requirement of the major online, in the course catalogue, or the degree audit. Currently, students are told they need to take a research methods class, but this requirement is not listed in the catalogue or their degree audits. Adding this requirement will make the major consistent with other majors in SSHS (which have research requirements), as well as bring the written (catalogue) requirements of the major in line with what students are currently doing. The addition of this requirement would codify the requirements of the major to be in line with what students already complete. The research methods course would count toward the required number of upper-level (300+ level) courses in the social sciences.

2. Add SOSC 410: Scope & Methods in the Social Sciences & Humanities as a required capstone course for the major. NOTE: A separate proposal is being submitted to revise the name for “Scope & Methods in the Social Sciences & Humanities” to “Scope & Methods in Social Sciences.” Thus, henceforth, we refer to the course as “SOSC 410: Scope & Methods in Social Sciences.”

   Rationale: The current structure of the major has provided significant obstacles to assessment as no two students complete the same program of study and there are no required courses. Adding a capstone course has several benefits. First, a capstone course would provide students an opportunity to reflect on their experience completing the major and recognize how they can use their interdisciplinary degree to contribute to society. Second, it will help provide coherence to the major, giving students a shared course through which we can better assess whether students are meeting the learning outcomes of the program. Third, students completing the Social Science contract major are told they need to complete three writing intensive (WI) courses. Other majors in SSHS are scaffolded in such a way that students complete this requirement by completing other requirements in their designated majors. However, up to this point, this has not been possible for contract majors as there is no shared curriculum. Adding the capstone course will build a WI course to the Social Science contract major, facilitating completion of the WI general education requirements. Finally, capstone courses are already a part of most other SSHS majors; adding the capstone requirement will bring the Social Science contract major in line with the expectations of other SSHS majors and provide students with a culminating experience where they can integrate their interdisciplinary educational experiences and make explicit connections across disciplinary bounds.
3. Revise the overall number of required courses to 11 courses (44 credits) in the social sciences.

Rationale: In order to account for the addition of the capstone course to the major, we propose raising the number of required courses from 10 (40 credits) to 11 (44 credits). The increase in the credits required for the major are consistent with the other contract majors across campus (which require 11-12 courses), and is consistent with the number of credits required for other majors in SSHS (generally 11-13 courses; 44-52 credits).

4. Revise the concentrations offered for Social Science contract majors and align the concentrations with course requirements that allow flexibility, but reflect core content within each of the concentrations. The proposed concentrations are:

- Community Mental Health
- Education Studies
- Ethnicity & Race Studies
- Gender & Sexuality Studies
- Labor, Work, & Organizations
- Society & Culture (DCP students only)

Rationale: Concentrations aid students’ intellectual development by focusing their conceptual and methodological study within the interdisciplinary social science contract major. The concentrations highlight interdisciplinary curricular emphases students could pursue. The concentrations offered are not exhaustive, and contract majors may choose to focus on other topics within their interdisciplinary degree. However, the proposed revisions to the concentrations maintain the current structure of the Social Science contract major while adding course requirements to increase the rigor and depth to the concentrations. Currently, there are no course requirements associated with any of the concentrations within the Social Science contract major. This means that students could declare a concentration, the concentration will appear on their transcript, but students may not necessarily have taken courses associated with that concentration. See below for changes to the individual concentrations:

A. **Community Mental Health (CMH)**. The proposed changes to this concentration involve adding a description and course requirements to this concentration. CMH is the most frequently chosen concentration among students who choose to elect a concentration with their Social Science contract major. Few institutions offer CMH programs (either stand-alone, or integrated), so comparison with similar institutions is limited. However, offering a CMH concentration makes Ramapo uniquely situated to prepare students who are interested in social service careers the opportunity to focus on CMH beyond opportunities available at comparable institutions.

Description:
Community Mental Health constitutes a socially necessary set of institutions that provide services to millions of people on an annual basis and engages the
participation of multiple professionals. The concentration in Community Mental Health prepares students to understand the components needed to provide services at the community level and to develop skills for effective delivery. This concentration is a good fit for students interested in public health, public administration, social work, law, and public policy.

Requirements:
To complete the CMH concentration within the Social Science contract major, within the 11 courses required for the major, one required course (SWRK 328 Community Mental Health) and three electives would focus on issues related to CMH. The three electives would be drawn from the list below, with the restrictions that students must take courses from at least two disciplines and at least one of the three courses must be at the 300+ level:

Required:
SWRK 328: Community Mental Health

Electives:
LAWS 214: Disability Law & Society
LAWS 310: Law & the Elderly
LAWS 324: Child, Family, & the State
LAWS 348: Drugs, Crime, & Society
PSYC 231: Multicultural Psychology
PSYC 239: Cross-Cultural Psychology
PSYC 314: Abnormal Psychology
PSYC 335: Sexualities & Gender Identities: LGBTQA+
PSYC 357: Childhood Disorders
PSYC 432: Advanced Topics in Psychology: Child Abuse & Neglect
SOCI 202: Social Inequality
SOCI 230: Sociology of Health & Medicine
SWRK 210: Introduction to Gerontology
SWRK 225: Intro to Social Work
SWRK 227: Child Welfare
SWRK 230: AIDS: Social Perspectives
SWRK 251: Intro Substance Use Disorders
SWRK 270: Cultural Diversity
SWRK 324: Social Welfare & Law
SWRK 339: Case Management for Substance Use Disorders

An internship is recommended, but optional.

B. **Education Studies.** At the request of, and in consultation with, the Elementary Education convening group, we propose adding a concentration in Education Studies. This concentration may appeal to students who are interested in working in educational settings, but do not wish to teach.
**Description:**
The Education Studies concentration will allow students to explore the history of educational institutions and the social and cultural forces shaping educational thoughts and practices. Students who complete this concentration will also participate in fieldwork that will allow them to observe current educational practice and work with professional educators to hone their craft. Students who complete this major could find employment in many settings outside of schools that have educational functions.

**Requirements:**
To complete the Education Studies concentration within the Social Science contract major, within the 11 courses required for the major, students must complete one required course (EDUC 221: Social Context of Education) and three electives that would focus on issues related to Education Studies. The electives would be drawn from the list below, with the restrictions that students must take courses from at least two disciplines and at least one of the three courses must be at the 300+ level:

**Required:**
EDUC 221: Social Context of Education

**Electives:**
ARHT 313: Museums in America: History, Art & Society
EDUC 222: Teaching: Principles & Practices
EDUC 241: Instructional Technology
EDUC 346: Literacy Theory & Practice
EDUC 360: Introduction to Special Education
HIST 302: Public History
PSYC 215: Learning, Cognition, & Teaching
PSYC 227: Cognitive Psychology
PSYC 241: Developmental Psychology
PSYC 263: Child Psychology
PSYC 347: Adolescent Psychology

C. **Ethnicity & Race Studies.** We propose changing the name of the Ethnic Studies concentration to “Ethnicity & Race Studies.” This title better reflects the breadth of this concentration, which includes courses on related to both ethnicity and race.

**Description:**
The Ethnicity & Race Studies concentration focuses on historical and sociocultural scholarship related to race and ethnicity including, but not limited to: contemporary race relations, intergroup dynamics, the African Diaspora, intersections with gender and class, and inequalities, privilege, and oppression. This concentration is a logical component of a student’s preparation for a career with international agencies, law, business, and public health, the social services, and teaching.
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Requirements:
To complete the Ethnicity & Race Studies concentration within the Social Science contract major, within the 11 courses required for the major, students must complete one required course (either AFST 212: Introduction to African Studies or SOCI 215: Sociology of Race Relations) and three electives that would focus on issues related to Ethnicity & Race. The electives would be drawn from the list below, with the restrictions that students must take courses from at least two disciplines and at least one of the three courses must be at the 300+ level:

Required:
AFST 212: Introduction to African Studies
or
SOCI 215: Sociology of Race Relations

Electives:
AFST 202: Introduction to African Studies
AFST 215: African Americans in Film
AFST 220: Hip Hop & Society
AFST 308: African American Social & Political Thought (or the 200-level version of this course, pending ARC approval)
AFST 310: Africans in Contemporary Latin America
AMER 206: Asian Pacific Americans
AMER 214: Native Americans
ANTH 320: Nationalism & Ethnicity
HIST 324: Age of Segregation
HIST 325: Black Power Years
LAWS 213: Law Enforcement, Crime, & Community
LAWS 251: Law, Power, & Inequality
POLI 309: Civil Rights
PSYC 226: Social Psychology
PSYC 231: Multicultural Psychology
PSYC 239: Cross Cultural Psychology
SOCI 202: Social Inequality
SOCI 215: Sociology of Race Relations
SOCI 250: International Migration & Human Rights
SOCI 255: Human Rights in the Context of Law Enforcement
SOCI 302: Third World Women
SOCI 345: Race, Crime and Justice
SWRK 230: AIDS: Social Perspectives
SWRK 270: Cultural Diversity: Racism, Oppression, & Privilege

D. Gender & Sexuality Studies. We propose revising the title of the current “Gender Studies” concentration to “Gender and Sexuality Studies” to reflect changes in the fields and institutions (e.g., the former Women’s and Gender Studies minor at Ramapo recently changed its name to “Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies”). Thus, changing the concentration title from “Gender Studies” to “Gender & Sexuality Studies” is consistent with this development.
Description:
The Gender & Sexuality Studies concentration focuses on interdisciplinary scholarship about women, gender, and sexuality across cultures and their intersections with race, class, nationality, ability, age, among others. Students will also become acquainted with the current realities and history of feminism, gender, and sexualities in the U.S. and worldwide. Through courses in Gender and Sexuality Studies students gain a clearer sense of how to be engaged, ethical participants in the social world. The concentration is a logical component of a student’s preparation for a career in law, business, public health, the social services, and teaching.

Requirements:
To complete the Gender & Sexuality Studies concentration within the Social Science contract major, within the 11 courses required for the major, one required course (either PSYC 335: Sexualities & Gender Identities: LGBTQA+ or SOSC 280: Women in Contemporary Society) and three electives that would focus on issues related to Gender & Sexuality Studies. The three electives would be drawn from the list below, with the restrictions that students must take courses from at least two disciplines and at least one of their courses must be at the 300+ level:

Required:
PSYC 335: Sexualities & Gender Identities: LGBTQA+
or
SOSC 280: Women in Contemporary Society

Electives:
ANTH 308: Gender & Sexuality
ANTH 310: Politics, Culture, & Identity
HIST 288: Women in Middle Eastern Societies
LAWS 240: Law & Sexuality
LAWS 251: Law, Power, & Inequality
LAWS 324: Child, Family, & the State
LAWS 341: Gender & the Law
LITR 312: Feminist Theories
POLI 309: Civil Rights
PSYC 311: Psychology of Gender
PSYC 326: Love & Sexuality
PSYC 335: Sexualities & Gender Identities: LGBTQA+
PSYC 349: Psychology of Women
SOCI 202: Social Inequality
SOCI 232: Sociology of Family
SOCI 302: Third World Women
SOCI 361: Gender, Work, & Family
SOSC 280: Women in Contemporary Society
E. **Labor, Work, & Organizations.** We propose changing the name of the Labor Studies concentration to “Labor, Work, and Organizations.” This title better reflects the coursework available to students, as well as the interdisciplinary nature of this concentration (spanning Sociological, Psychological, Historical, and Business perspectives).

*Description:*
The concentration in Labor, Work and Organizations focuses on the historical and socio-economic aspects of the labor process, work organizations and the relationship between work and other aspects of life including, but not limited to: the state, the legal apparatus, and the family. In addition, students enrolled in the concentration will understand the role of human resources, education and training in the work environment.

To complete the Labor, Work, and Organizations concentration within the Social Science contract major, within the 11 courses required for the major, students must complete one required course (either PSYC 345: Industrial & Organizational Psychology or SOCI 361: Gender, Work, & Family) and three electives that would focus on issues related to Labor, Work, & Organizations. The three electives would be drawn from the list below, with the restrictions that students must take courses from at least two disciplines and at least one of the three courses must be at the 300+ level:

**Required:**
PSYC 345: Industrial & Organizational Psychology  
or  
SOCI 361: Gender, Work, & Family

**Electives:**
AMER 315: Class in America  
EDUC 221: The Social Context of Education  
ECON 322: Labor Economics  
ENST 207: Public Policy  
HIST 217: America in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era  
HIST 218: History of Business and Industry  
MGMT 302: Managing Organizational Behavior  
PSYC 345: Industrial & Organizational Psychology  
PSYC 435: Adv Topics: Psychology of Leadership  
SOCI 361: Gender, Work, & Family

F. **Society & Culture.** At the request of the Law and Society convening group, we propose changing the name of the Justice concentration to “Society & Culture.” This title better reflects the breadth of content within the concentration and addresses concerns that the label “Justice” would assume direct affiliation with the Law and Society major, which was not accurate. Note, as this concentration is only available to DCP students, the specific course sequence is outlined by the DCP program and is beyond the scope of this proposal.
G. **Cultural Studies.** We propose dropping this concentration from the list of options for the Social Science contract major. Although some students have selected “Cultural Studies” as a concentration in the past, it is not a large number (n=11; ~3.5% of Social Science contract major graduates since January 2014). Other institutions that offer this as a major or minor (e.g., Towson, Villanova) draw the curriculum from anthropology, communications, philosophy, and English—areas more consistent with the humanities and not represented in SSHS.

**Summary:**

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<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 courses (40 credits). The courses include:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Four 300+ level courses</td>
<td>• Research Methods (select one):</td>
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<td>• A Research Methods course is assumed to be one of the “four 300+ level courses” students complete. Note: This requirement is told to students, but is not officially in writing.</td>
<td>LAWS 353: Sociolegal Research &amp; Writing</td>
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<td>• Three additional 300+ level courses</td>
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<td>Students can elect one of the following concentrations:</td>
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<td>Labor Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justice (DCP students only)</td>
<td>Society &amp; Culture (DCP students only)</td>
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**Program’s Anticipated Enrollment**

The existing Social Science contract major had 131 students enrolled in Fall 2018. Forty-four percent of these students (n=58) are in the adult Degree Completion Program (DCP). We anticipate that number of majors to remain stable. We expect the number of students declaring a concentration will remain stable or grow as clear descriptions of each concentration are added to the catalogue and requirements of the concentrations are specified.