1. How many students (a) are in the BPS program and (b) do you anticipate would take the 36-credit option?

There are currently 55 students in the Organizational Leadership and Communication comprehensive major in the BPS. Five of these students would benefit from the 36-credit major. Some of these are second-degree students. All are UWEC stop-outs. Typically, first-degree seeking students who would benefit from the 36-credit option begin the program with 80-100 credits. The 36-credit major would also benefit second-degree students and first-degree students with 80-100 credits who choose a different program when they hear that all we have are 60 credit and certificate options for the OLC. We get inquiries from about 25 students for every one that applies. Often students who inquire about our program want to attend an institution with the reputation UW-EC has, but since they have so many credits already they prefer institutions that have 36 credit majors and accept more transfer credits.

2. Will the 36-credit option jeopardize the 60-credit comprehensive major?

No. The audiences are very different. The 60-credit comprehensive major serves students who have fewer credits. Students who begin the 60-credit comprehensive major typically have 54-60 baccalaureate level transfer credits.

3. Which certificates are online and so could be taken by these students?

The right answer needs to be determined on a student-by-student basis. Some of these students are second-degree students. Second-degree students do not need a second program. Others are students who have already completed minors or are one or two courses short of a minor or another major. Some would be good candidates for topical minors. While there are not currently any certificates that are fully online, we teach more than 100 online courses. We currently have two certificates that are half online: Web Design and Middle East Studies. The BPS Steering Committee is working with chairs to create online certificate options. Since these are 12 credits, we don’t anticipate that this will be an insurmountable obstacle. The certificates we create will also serve other UWEC students.

4. How many credits does a typical student have when entering the program?

What are we losing in terms of program quality for students who opt for the 36-credit over the 60-credit major, since we can’t guarantee what comprises the other credits they transfer in?

The responses to how many credits students typically have when they enter the program are above. The bottom line is that we will be able to serve more non-traditional students and more transfer students if we offer different options to meet their very different needs. They come to us with interesting backgrounds and multiple credits in various programs from many schools. For students with 45-60 baccalaureate level credits, the OLC-BPS is a great program and it is one for which they are well prepared academically. For students with more than 80 baccalaureate level credits or second degree students, a 36 credit major would be a better option. We also see large numbers of students who have been very successful in completing applied associate degrees that have 15-18 baccalaureate
level credits. In the future, if UW-EC is able to increase online offerings at the lower division level, we may be able to serve this group of students, as well. Students who have completed applied associate degrees would not be well prepared to move directly into upper division coursework like students who have 45-100 baccalaureate level credits already. In terms of program quality and rigor, all students graduating from UW-EC will meet our GE or LE and complete two programs. In that regard, students transferring into our completion programs are no different than any other transfer students.