



PROPOSED

RESOLUTION

COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

October 8, 2020

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES OF  
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY  
APPROVE THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN URBAN COMMUNITY CHANGE TO  
MOVE FORWARD TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE STATE SYSTEM  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR FINAL APPROVAL, PENDING APPROVAL BY  
THE OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

APPROVED PENDING ACTION BY THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

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Christopher Fiorentino, Ph.D., President

October 8, 2020  
Date

APPROVED BY VOTE OF THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

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Robert M. Tomlinson, Chairperson  
Council of Trustees

October 8, 2020  
Date

## WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA BA-URBAN COMMUNITY CHANGE

Institutions of higher education must demonstrate that we are committed to following Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and local communities, who have shown their leadership in such times. The proposed Urban Community Change (RUX) program fills a gap that is never so evident as it is now: that there is a dearth of degree-granting programs, nationally, that recruit and support community-rooted change agents. These agents have essential insider-knowledge of the lived experiences of inequity and their communities' efforts toward justice. These change agents are ready to enter higher education programs that will teach them the knowledge and skills to move their urgent vision forward, and then to populate our region with skilled professionals in communities, organizations, media and government. This, indeed, is cogently argued in this detailed description of Community Change Studies as a discipline and field: *Advancing College Education for Strengthening Communities and Democracy: A report to the Ford Foundation from Antioch University and CLP's International Working Group for College Education and Community Change* (2005).

The proposed Urban Community Change (RUX) program at West Chester University expands the already successful Youth Empowerment and Urban Studies (YES) minor and is intended for undergraduate students who want to develop expertise in Community Change Studies. The YES minor has enrolled between 33 and 45 students over the last 3 years, and since its inception has steadily graduated students with the minor. A recent survey of 550 WCU students indicates that between 50 and 100 students would consider majoring in RUX if it were available.

The Urban Community Change (RUX) program builds students' essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions for employment in this sector. Just as importantly, RUX develops their commitment and vision, as citizens, concerning community and social change, and it prepares them for jobs or further education in cross-sector professions that value these competencies, such as community-based organizations, non-profits, political and movement campaigns, government, and the private sector. Students will be prepared as engaged citizens ready for essential and growing areas of the workforce regionally, nationally, and globally.

RUX students will begin their careers with an adaptable skill set, developed through an interdisciplinary knowledge base, then built through successive practical professional experiences in regional urban communities, and ending with a capstone immersive internship. A highlight of the RUX program is the significant required hands-on work in Philadelphia and/or other urban locations. The 39-credit major consists of a 21-hour core with three lower-division and three upper-division courses, including a six-credit capstone. As the students move through the coursework, upper level courses (RUX/PAX 377) require hands-on application within the university setting; YES 300 requires a field placement in an urban community change setting with one of our Rustin Urban Community Change (RUCCAS) partners; and finally, the capstone course, RUX 400, will require 100 or more hours of practicum placement with one of those or new community partners.