



UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN
COLORADO

Office of the Provost

Board of Trustees - Information Items Restructuring and Eliminating Existing Degree Programs

Background: The complete list of program revisions is summarized in the included *BOT Curriculum Information Items Summary*. During the academic year, the University advanced a broad set of curricular actions focused primarily on curricular alignment, compliance, and portfolio stewardship, with limited but strategic programmatic growth. The majority of actions reflect deliberate efforts to clarify program structures, ensure compliance with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) expectations, align programs with industry and disciplinary standards, and clean up long-standing curricular inconsistencies. Here is a summary of such changes for the AY 2026-27 catalogs.

Summary of Changes:

- **Program Revisions**
 - 99 programs were revised
 - Clarify program structures and requirements (e.g., what constitutes a concentration),
 - Align curricula with HLC definitions and regulatory expectations,
 - Update program titles and descriptions to reflect current industry language and CIP codes, and
 - Improve internal consistency between program learning outcomes, curriculum maps, and catalog copy.

Rationale: These proposals represent incremental refinements or restructured offerings rather than entirely new academic directions.

- **Program Deactivations, Pauses, and Reorganizations**
 - 30 programs were deactivated
 - 5 programs had admissions paused
 - 7 unit reorganizations were approved

Rationale: These actions support clearer academic pathways, reduce duplication, and align offerings with student demand and institutional capacity.

- **Course-Level Activity**

- 215 new courses were created to support revised or restructured programs, to address gaps identified through curriculum mapping or to enable new delivery models.
- 340 courses were revised, primarily to:
 - Align credit hours, learning outcomes, and course descriptions with HLC expectations,
 - Update content and nomenclature to match industry standards, and
 - Support CIP code realignment and program rebranding efforts
- 186 courses were deactivated, reflecting the removal of outdated, duplicative, or misaligned coursework.

Rationale: Course-level actions accounted for a substantial portion of curricular activity and were essential to supporting program compliance and alignment efforts:

Framing Note for Trustees

Overall, this year's curricular actions should be understood as foundational rather than transformational. The emphasis was on cleaning up existing curriculum, resolving compliance issues, and positioning the academic portfolio for clearer communication, stronger accreditation alignment, and future growth — rather than launching novel or experimental programs. These curricular actions ensure the University's academic portfolio remains accreditation-compliant, cleanly structured, and strategically positioned for future growth.

- **Accreditation Assurance:**

Aligning programs and courses with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) definitions and expectations reduces institutional risk and strengthens the University's accreditation posture, particularly around program structure, concentrations, and credit alignment.

- **Clarity for Students and Advisors:**

Cleaning up program requirements, course inventories, and catalog language improves transparency for students, supports more accurate advising, and reduces confusion around pathways to degree completion.

- **Alignment with Industry and Workforce Standards:**

Rebranding programs, updating CIP codes, and modernizing course content ensure academic offerings accurately reflect current industry norms and employer expectations.

- **Responsible Academic Stewardship:**

Program deactivations, pauses, and course clean-up reflect deliberate management of the academic portfolio—prioritizing sustainability, demand, and quality over unchecked expansion.

- **Strategic Readiness for Targeted Growth:**

While most actions were corrective or alignment-focused, select initiatives begin to position the University to leverage emerging opportunities, including the medical school and flexible, stackable credential models, without compromising academic rigor or governance standards.

Upcoming Curricular and Academic Strategy Priorities

Looking ahead, the University will advance the following strategies to further strengthen consistency, transparency, and sustainability across the curriculum:

- Standardizing tuition costs across extended campus programs to reduce complexity and improve clarity for students.
- Transitioning all undergraduate “completion programs” to fully online delivery, increasing access and flexibility for adult and place-bound learners.
- Requiring market and labor force analysis for all new degree proposals to ensure alignment with workforce demand and enrollment sustainability.
- Updating catalog copy to brand standard, with a deliberate focus on:
 - Clearly articulated program learning outcomes,
 - Transparent career pathways, and
 - Alignment with institutional messaging and recruitment goals.

BOT Curriculum Information Items Summary

College	Unit	New Program Pathway/Option	Curriculum Modification	Implementation Costs	Notes
Education & Behavioral Sciences	Special Education	Inclusive Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement	Rename & align with existing curricula.	None: this simply replacing existing endorsement.	Replace the Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement (Ages 0-8 years) to align the endorsement with the new MA: Inclusive Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education. This brings us into alignment with national and state changes.
Natural & Health Sciences	Kinesiology, Nutrition, and Dietetics	Physical Education and Physical Activity Leadership B.S. – Licensure: Physical Education (Grades K-12)	No new course offerings.	None: primarily name changes.	Replace the current BS Sport and Exercise Science (SES): Physical Education K-12 Licensure Concentration.
		Adapted Physical Education (APE) Endorsement Program	No new course offerings.	None: primarily name changes.	Adapted Physical Education (APE) Endorsement Program.
Performing & Visual Arts	Music	Music Performance D.A. - Collaborative Piano	No new course offerings.	Reduces the required number of credits for UNC doctoral programs from 64 to 56, and reduces required dissertation credits from 16 to 10.	New Title - Replacing Music D.A. (There was previously an area under Music D.A. that offered Collaborative Piano).
		Music Performance D.A. - Composition Concentration	No new course offerings.	Reduces the required number of credits for UNC doctoral programs from 64 to 56, and reduces required dissertation credits from 16 to 10.	New Title - Was previously offered under the Music D.A. - Music Composition program.
		Music Performance D.A. - Conducting Concentration	No new course offerings.	Reduces the required number of credits for UNC doctoral programs from 64 to 56, and reduces required dissertation credits from 16 to 10.	New Title - Replacing Music D.A. (There was previously an area under Music D.A. that offered Conducting).
		Music Performance D.A. - Instrumental Concentration	No new course offerings.	Reduces the required number of credits for UNC doctoral programs from 64 to 56, and reduces required dissertation credits from 16 to 10.	New Title - Was previously offered under the Music D.A. - Music Composition program.
		Music Performance D.A. - Vocal Concentration	No new course offerings.	Reduces the required number of credits for UNC doctoral programs from 64 to 56, and reduces required dissertation credits from 16 to 10.	New Title - Was previously offered under the Music D.A. - Music Composition program.