

Title

Academic Program Proposal Process

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this document is to outline precise steps for the development of new academic programs or proposing significant modification* to an existing academic program. The steps will allow the unit, college, and institution to evaluate the benefits and risks of modifying a program or offering a new program through a systematic process.

*Significant Modification would include one or more of the following:

- Changes that will impact educator preparation program content that must be approved by the CO Department of Education
- Changes that will alter the program objectives to such an extent that 50% or more of the core curriculum and program requirements need modifications
- Changes that will affect the curriculum offerings of one or more additional units
- Changes that will affect current faculty and/or non-faculty resources from multiple units

Detailed Policy Statement

The process described in this policy document takes into consideration the roles of faculty and administrators while adhering to State of Colorado requirements.

Pursuant to C.R. S. 23-1-121(2) and 23-5-129(6)(b) the Colorado Commission on Higher Education is authorized to approve academic degree programs to ensure consistency with the institution's role and mission and to approve educator preparation programs.

<http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Academics/DegreePrograms/default.html>

Additional requirements exist for teacher preparation programs:

<http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Academics/TeacherEd/DegreePrograms/default.html>

Per University Regulations 3-3-501, "The purpose of the curriculum approval process is to ensure the integrity and quality of academic programs through a collaborative effort between faculty and administration." Faculty "develop and deliver academic programs and curriculum." Administrators "assure that curriculum proposals are appropriate to the disciplinary responsibility of the unit and the University and that adequate resources are available to implement proposed curriculum."

Applicability

The academic program approval process applies to the development of all academic programs regardless of the venue for offering the program (on-campus vs. off-campus) or the mode of delivery (face-to-face, online, correspondence, etc.).

Definitions

Academic Programs include bachelor, graduate and professional degrees as well as emphasis areas, minors, certificates, and teacher education endorsements/licensure.

Note: New degrees and all educator preparation programs must be approved by the State of Colorado.

CCHE (Colorado Commission on Higher Education)/CDHE (Colorado Department of Higher Education) <http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/cche/mission.html> : The CCHE/CDHE must approve all academic degree programs.

CDE (Colorado Department of Education) <http://www.cde.state.co.us/>: The CDE is an administrative arm of the State Board of Education responsible for licensing all educators. All UNC educator preparation programs must be approved by the CDE.

Related Policies/References

The following policy documents provide information to help guide program development in the areas of course scheduling, instructional methods, course types, and minimum contact hour ratios.

[Policy document UNCOA-001: Scheduling Guidelines for Academic Programs](#)

[Policy document UNCOA-002: Instructional Methods](#)

UNC Curriculum Webpage: <http://www.unco.edu/regrec/FacultyStaff/Curriculum.html>

Implementation Procedures

Step One: Preliminary Discussions and Timeline

Due to the time commitment involved in the development of programs, the new program proposal process begins with preliminary discussions to assist in preventing unforeseen roadblocks. New academic programs have an effect on many academic and non-academic units across campus. Initial discussions will assist in increasing campus awareness of a possible new program. Additionally, the initial discussions can help inform the faculty in the originating unit of the curricular and non-curricular aspects of program development that will need consideration in order to meet institutional, CDHE/CCHE/CDE, and federal guidelines.

Step Two: Worksheets (Step Two Timeline)

[Rationale and Justification Worksheet](#)

[Undergraduate Curriculum Overview Worksheet](#)

[Graduate Curriculum Overview Worksheet](#)

The Rationale and Justification Worksheet plus the Curriculum Overview Worksheet include information required for program approval through university processes, as well as by the Board of Trustees, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. Completion of the worksheets will assist units in evaluating the appropriateness and readiness for offering the new program.

Educator Preparation Programs must follow additional state requirements located on this link: <http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Academics/TeacherEd/DegreePrograms/default.html>

Step Three: UNC Curriculum Approval Process

UNC Board Policy Manual 1-1-304: http://www.unco.edu/trustees/Policy_Manual.pdf

UNC University Regulations Part 5: http://www.unco.edu/trustees/University_Regulations.pdf

UNC Curriculum Webpage: <http://www.unco.edu/regrec/FacultyStaff/Curriculum.html>

EXPEDITED REVIEW

An expedited review process has been developed for new programs such as minors or certificates under the following conditions.

- The program is not a new degree or emphasis area.

- The program is not undergoing significant modification. (See Purpose of Policy section)
- The program will use currently existing courses and those courses can absorb additional students without the need for additional resources. If new courses will be developed, the unit must indicate how the new courses will be delivered within current resources.
- Academic impact on other units is negligible. If the proposed program will use courses from outside the originating unit, an academic impact statement must be obtained from each unit. If a unit is not able to accommodate additional students within the current level of resources, the proposed program is not eligible for expedited review.
- The program will not ask for additional resources until such time that the new program can sustain those resources due to increased enrollment.

Implementation Procedures for Expedited Review

A Modified Step One will initiate the review.

- The PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION is initiated by faculty and will include Unit Faculty, Director/Chair, and Dean (A-Dean if designated by Dean). Adherence to the conditions for expedited review will be discussed as well as the need for the program, academic impact on other units, and enrollment benchmark for requesting additional resources in the future.
- If no concerns are noted, the Dean will discuss (email is acceptable) the proposed program with the “Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School and International Admissions” (graduate programs only), the “Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies” (undergraduate programs only), the “Executive Director of Extended Campus,” and the “Special Assistant to the Provost.” The Dean will address adherence to the conditions for expedited review, the need for the program, academic impact on other units, and the enrollment benchmark for requesting additional resources in the future.
- If no concerns are noted, the program will move to the curriculum process.

Curriculum Review

- Complete a Program Form found on the curriculum website. In the rationale, include a statement indicating the enrollment benchmark that may trigger a request for additional resources in the future. <http://www.unco.edu/regrec/FacultyStaff/Curriculum.html>
- Attach the following documents to the program form.
 - Library Resource statement (contact the Dean of University Libraries to obtain this statement)
 - Academic Impact statements from all units that house required or elective courses that reside outside of the originating unit.

Policy Authority

Provost

Academic Program Proposal Process

UNCOA-005

Effective Date: 9-1-16

Office of Origin/Approval Authority: Provost

Contact Information

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