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Review and Approval of Program Change Prop

Academic programs should be aligned with their missions, strategic plans, a goals and strategic directions.

Proposals for academic programs should reflect common criteria, quality; c advantage; need (including accreditation, workforce needs, etc.) efficiency potential for growth and the leveraging of resources.

Decisions to offer, change, or drop academic programs, when they have the other units within the University require extensive consultation early in the stage.

Consideration and approval of academic program proposals should be carrie Regents or by appropriate-level administrator with delegated authority from

Formal approval by the Board of Regents and the Coordinating Board is req programs may be publicized or initiated.

This policy is intended to:

- Enhance quality, productivity, and efficiency in academic program implementation
- Ensure that program development is aligned with institutional, cam strategic directions, and compacts
- Make explicit the criteria for academic programs and their connecti
- Foster shared consultation and, where appropriate, joint planning a
- Ensure thorough and timely review of proposals for approval at the

This document summarizes guidelines and procedures for UT System acade work with the Office of Academic Affairs on degree program change proposa critical resources are at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board wel

- Division of Universities, Policies and Procedures (www.thecb.state
- THECB Rules and Regulations, Chapter 5, Subchapter C 5.41 - 5.5(www.thecb.state.tx.us/Rules/>)

There are three major categories of degree program change reques

1. Nonsubstantive program change requests

2. Substantive baccalaureate and master's degree requests meeting t approval by the Commissioner of Higher Education, and

3. Doctoral program or other substantive proposals requiring submiss Coordinating Board at its quarterly meetings.

Nonsubstantive Requests

The Coordinating Board has defined nonsubstantive requests as those that

criteria:

1. No implications for changes in institutional role and scope; conforms to approved Table of Programs.

2. No significant new costs.

3. No issues of unnecessary duplication with programs at other institutions.

4. Potential for high quality programming obvious from institution's previous experience in the same or closely related subject field.

In general these "nonsubstantive" requests are for changes in degree designation for activity already being offered at the institution under other approved program titles.

For nonsubstantive degree title change proposals, submit a letter with the president's signature to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, prepared for the Executive Vice Chancellor's signature. Nonsubstantive proposals will not have to be submitted to the UT Board of Regents. If your request is found to be in good order, it will be forwarded to the Coordinating Board for staff review and approval by the Commissioner on behalf of the Coordinating Board.

Changes Within Authorized Programs

Questions frequently arise about approval requirements for changes **within** currently authorized programs, such as the addition of new options or concentrations, or the establishment of thesis or non-thesis options. These do not normally involve changes in degree titles, and may not require review or approval by the UT System Office of Academic Affairs and the Coordinating Board. Some program change proposals do not neatly or safely fit the categories of "clearly exempt from review" and "must be reviewed." Components are encouraged to send such program proposals for informal review and comment by Office of Academic Affairs staff, without going to the trouble of completing a formal proposal. The essential information to send includes the curriculum description (with course titles and numbers) and resource needs.

Following are the most recent informal guidelines in this regard from the Coordinating Board.

Undergraduate Programs

For undergraduate programs, anything that approaches what might be considered a major**—usually more than 21 credit hours—**that will be specified in the catalog or reflected in a variation of the degree title raises program inventory questions and should be forwarded for review. But, if there are option proposals of fewer than 21 hours that could be construed as creating different programs, the Office of Academic Affairs would be glad to look at these without full nonsubstantive proposals. Just send a letter or fax with the essentials as noted above.

Graduate Programs

Program options (concentrations, tracks, or whatever they may be called) of **twelve or fewer credit hours** can be established and advertised in the catalog without review by the Office of Academic Affairs or the Coordinating Board. Anything more than that in a graduate program begins to raise questions of whether the Coordinating Board might classify it as a separate program in their inventory, regardless of what you are labeling the degree. These should be submitted to this office and will most likely require routine review of Coordinating Board staff.
A Caution
Establishment of concentrations in **interdisciplinary programs** has caused some problems for universities in the past, and these are good choices for informal review. As a general rule, if any change could be considered creation of a new program and will be reflected in the catalog as a program, then it should be submitted for Coordinating Board consideration to get in their program inventory.

Program changes such as adjustments in the total number of credit hours, addition or deletion of courses, or thesis or nonthesis options for authorized degree programs do not require review or approval of either the Office of Academic Affairs or the Coordinating Board, as long as they are within normally accepted ranges for the type of program that was authorized.

Substantive Requests for Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

Under procedures adopted in January 1999 by the Coordinating Board, most proposals for substantive program changes at the baccalaureate and master's level are eligible for approval at the Coordinating Board staff level by the Commissioner on behalf of the Coordinating Board. **These require fully-developed proposals using the format for substantive degree program requests on the Coordinating Board Universities Division web site, and they are submitted to the UT System Office of Academic Affairs.**

During planning and proposal preparation for new programs, address the criteria for program approval listed in the Coordinating Board's Rules and Regulations, Chapter 5 (www.thecb.state.tx.us/CBRules). Information about potential duplication of programs in the state can be most easily researched by using three different Coordinating Board web sites:

1. Find the most appropriate CIP code by using the "Index " feature at the Coordinating Board's Texas CIP Codes page.

2. Access the list of all degree programs in the state by linking to the Program Inventory web page, select the institutions to be searched by choosing from the list in the Institutions dialog box, enter the appropriate CIP code, and then click the Search Inventory button to obtain your results.

3. Check for other recently proposed and pending degree programs: view the Coordinating Board web site list of pending proposals for new degree programs under Program and Administrative Proposal Tracking and follow the directions listed on the page.

In general, bachelor's and master's degree proposals are eligible for staff-level approval at the Coordinating Board if they meet the following criteria:

- they are on the approved Table of Programs,
- they are of high quality and meet SACS and other accrediting agency standards,
- adequate practicum placement sites are available if applicable,
- there is demonstrated student interest and job market need,
- there are no program duplication issues,
- five year cost is less than $1 million, and
- no new special item funding would be required.

To submit proposals in this category, **send four originals signed by the president, using the** substantive change proposal format on the Coordinating Board web site to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, prepared for signature by the Executive Vice Chancellor. This form includes all information needed from your president.

System administration staff has been delegated authority by the Board of Regents to review and approve Bachelors and Masters proposals. Please allow System Administration staff at least thirty days to review and make any recommendations for changes.

If approved by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, , proposals will be forwarded to the Coordinating Board, where they may be approved by the Commissioner, denied approval, or forwarded to the Coordinating Board for consideration at a quarterly meeting. Referral to the Board may be prompted by an expression of concern from any institution.

Substantive Proposals for Doctoral Programs

Proposals for new doctoral programs are submitted for review and approval at regular meetings of the UT System Board of Regents and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The following criteria will be used in the review of doctoral proposals by System administration sfaff.

Institutional Mission and Strategic Goals

I. **In what ways is the proposed doctoral program consistent with the institution's mission?**

- How does the doctoral program support the strategic direction and compact?

- Does the program relate to other institution's programs?

- If your institution has a Master's program in the areas, is it producing a significant number of graduates?

- What are the implications? Impact to other units colleges or campuses?

II. **National, State and Regional Need**

- What is the need and demand for the program? Are similar programs offered at other systems? If so, how do you justify the replication of programs?

  - Evidence that the program meets societal needs and expectations

  - Evidence of consultation with potential employers or professional organizations

  - Employment data (availability of jobs for graduates)

  - Enrollment data for similar programs

  - Data reflecting student interest or demand, both short and long term

  - Projected number of applicants for the program

  - Projected number of degrees to be conferred per year at full operation

- Is it possible to offer this program as a collaborative/cooperative with another institution/entity?

III. **Program Quality and Assessment**

- Core Faculty

  - What's their publication record in refereed journals?

  - What's their record in successfully securing substantial extramural funding to support their research program (if applicable to the field)?

  - Is the proposed group diverse in forms of sub-specialties within the discipline, level, and experience? Is it demographically diverse?

  - Do faculty have terminal degrees from a variety of well-regarded institutions?

  - Do faculty have prior experience directing dissertations?

  - Are there any accrediting standards in regard to the minimum number of faculty? If so, how many?

- Doctoral Curricula

  - What is the full curricular plan, including specific courses, number of credits by course and instructional faculty?

  - What is the plan to assess learning outcomes and its relationship to the program?

  - Are there any practica, internships, and clinical placements associated with this program? If so, describe arrangements made with organizations for student placements. Include supervision plans…

  - Are there any accrediting standards, related to curriculum, that must be met? If yes,

what is the plan to achieve those standards and the timetable to achieve them?

- Learning Assessment

    - What are the learning outcomes for the program?
    - How will the outcomes be measured? How often?
    - How will instructors, faculty continue to improve teaching and learning?
    - What about graduation rates, and average time-to-degree? How those be measured? What standards will be applied?

IV. Institutional and Financial Support for the Program

- Is the program within the capacity of unit's resources?
- Have resources been allocated to support the proposed program? How?
- If additional resources are needed, how will the program leverage existing resources to attract new resources?
- What steps will be taken to insure the program is operated economically and efficiently?
- What current resources (facilities, equipment, and library materials) would contribute to the program?
- What resources would need to be added?

V. Student Quality and Financial Support

- What measures do you expect to see of incoming students? (admission exam scores? Others?)
- What measures do you expect to use to evaluate the success of the program? Number and/or percentage of graduates placed in a job after graduation?
- How many students will be supported yearly? What are the national expectations within this field for student support?
- Number of TA's, GRA's, IA's positions available dedicated to support graduate students.
- Allocation of dollars to support students
- What's the specific plan to recruit high quality graduate students?

When planning and preparing doctoral program proposals, carefully consider the criteria for approval listed in the Coordinating Board Rules and Regulations, Policies & Procedures Manual pg. 11 & CB Rule 5.46, including the questions noted above. The Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs is available for consultation and can be especially helpful in early stage planning. Research potential duplication of program issues using the web sites identified earlier in this document.

To submit proposals in this category, **send five originals with the president's signature,** using the substantive change proposal format on the Coordinating Board Universities Division web site to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, prepared for signature by the Executive Vice Chancellor. All substantive proposals must be accompanied by the **two completed** cost forms included on the web site and a Certification of Adequacy of Financing **signed by the university president.** To expedite processing in the Office of Academic Affairs and help to present your proposed program in its best light, also include a draft of the two page Recommendation and Background Statement to be included in the Board of Regents a genda materials. Allow System Administration staff at least thirty days prior to Regents agenda deadlines for proposal review. If

necessary, administrative staff can work with a near-final draft to reduce lead time requirements.

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