

Regulations for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation

General

In response to a new degree (or degrees) proposed or significant needs identified by UNC, General Administration will establish panels in the appropriate academic discipline to review the need for changes in program offerings in the discipline. Each campus will be provided an opportunity to participate in the review and may choose to participate directly, indirectly, or not at all. Different mechanisms of review may be chosen including face-to-face meetings, conference calls, video conferences, or commentary on proposals by campuses.

For new degree program proposals an information and data template will be used by General Administration to provide a common framework against which each proposed new degree program can be displayed. This will provide information that may be used to assess priorities when such assessments are needed.

UNC utilizes the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), 2000 Edition for the classification of all degree programs. Campuses will propose an appropriate classification for each degree program proposed.

New Degree Program Proposals

General Administration will be responsible for managing the review process for new degree proposals and, after consultation with disciplinary experts and campuses at various stages, for making a recommendation to the BOG. The review process will involve disciplinary experts both from within and from outside the state. Outside reviews will be required for all doctoral-level program proposals and may be used for programs at other levels.

Baccalaureate Degree Programs

Disciplinary reviews will address the overall need for the production of graduates in the discipline and how the proposed new degree program or programs will fit with pertinent existing programs to serve state needs. In the course of the review, the proposed program or programs will be assessed for need and quality. Consideration should be given to all options including the new program as proposed, a modified version of the program, joint programs, expansion of one or more existing programs, initiating or expanding an online program, a combination of these, or no change. Based on this process, expert reviews where relevant, and an overall assessment, General Administration will make recommendations for the next steps. Recommendations for establishment will be taken to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies and Programs for consideration, then, upon favorable recommendation, to the Board of Governors.

Master's Degree Programs

Disciplinary reviews will address the overall need for the production of graduates in the discipline and how the proposed new degree program or programs will fit with pertinent existing programs to serve state needs. In the course of the review, the proposed program or programs should be assessed for need and quality. Consideration should be given to all options including the new program as proposed, a modified version of the program, joint programs, expansion of one or more existing programs, initiating or expanding an online program, a combination of these, or no change. Based on this process, expert reviews where relevant, and an overall assessment, General Administration will make recommendations for the next steps. Recommendations for establishment will be taken to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies and Programs for consideration, then, upon favorable recommendation, to the Board of Governors.

Doctoral Degree Programs

The first stage of review will vary for different types of doctoral programs. Currently doctoral programs are classified by the Department of Education for IPEDS reporting as First Professional programs and Doctoral programs. The Department of Education is evolving to two new classifications of doctoral programs: Applied Doctoral programs and Research Doctoral programs. In this transitional period the three following classifications will be used.

First Professional programs-- medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and law are offered in UNC. (This classification is to be phased out for IPEDs).

Applied Doctoral programs—typically prepare graduates to be practitioners in the field.

Research Doctoral programs—typically prepare graduates to do research in the field or become faculty members at colleges or universities.

Applied and Research Doctoral program proposals will be reviewed by disciplinary panels and the results will be a recommendation by General Administration to plan, to revise, or not to plan the program. These recommendations will be reported to the University-wide Graduate Policy Council. Those recommended for planning by General Administration and approved for planning by the Educational Planning Committee may proceed to prepare a proposal to establish the program. Proposals for establishment will be reviewed and a recommendation will be provided by the University-wide Graduate Council. Based on outside reviews, the review by the University-wide Graduate Council and an overall assessment of the program in relation to priority factors, General Administration will decide whether to recommend the establishment of the program to the Educational Planning Committee. Upon a favorable assessment, the Educational Planning Committee will recommend the program to the Board of Governors.

First Professional program proposals normally involve outside reviewers in the early stages of development and in most cases an on-site review team. Other high-cost programs may also be addressed in the same manner.

Joint Degree Programs

Joint Degree programs resulting in the awarding of a joint degree by two or more UNC constituent institutions or by a UNC constituent institutions and non-UNC educational institutions must be approved through the regular institutional processes and have the approval of the chancellor of each participating UNC institution before submission to General Administration for review and presentation to the BOG for approval.

Proposals for Joint Degree programs must include the following:

Indication of appropriate approvals by all participating UNC institutions including approval by their chancellors.

Certification that the following institutional processes have been agreed to:

- Admission process
- Registration and enrollment process for students
- Committee process for graduate students
- Plan for charging and distributing tuition and fees
- Management of transcripts and permanent records
- Participation in graduation
- Design of diploma

Each student who will receive a Joint Degree must be approved by each UNC institution whose name will appear on the diploma using the institutional process for certifying a student to receive a degree.

Dual Degree Programs

A Dual Degree program involves two academic units, either on the same campus or on different campuses, including non-UNC campuses, in a formal agreement to offer two degrees as part of a program of study that will result in a student being awarded both degrees. While such programs offer the advantage that some course work may count for each degree, the requirements for each of the two degrees in a Dual Degree program must be substantially equivalent to the requirements for a student taking only one of the degrees. For example, a Juris Doctorate and an MBA could be linked in a Dual Degree program. If more than one campus is involved this would be a Coordinated Dual Degree program. Another option is to offer part of each program in a single interdisciplinary degree program that would be substantially different from each of the original programs. Such a single degree program would be a new degree program requiring Board approval. Constituent institutions considering such arrangements are to consult with General Administration regarding which option their proposal fits under.

Interdisciplinary Degree Program

An Interdisciplinary Degree program involves two or more academic units, either on the same or different campuses, including non-UNC campuses, in a formal agreement to offer a program of study drawing on two or more disciplines that will result in a student being awarded an interdisciplinary degree. If more than one campus is involved in offering the program it would also be a joint degree.

Degree Consortiums

A Degree Consortium is a formal agreement between two or more UNC or non-UNC institutions to share courses in the same discipline that will count as degree credit for a degree offered separately by one or more of the participating institution. Constituent institutions considering such arrangements are to consult with General Administration before establishing them. Each separate degree would be reviewed through the normal process.

Alternative, Online, or Distance Education Delivery of Approved Degree Programs

Alternative, online, and distance delivery of BOG-approved degree programs require approval by General Administration and an assurance to General Administration that all reporting to and necessary approvals from regional or specialized accreditation agencies have occurred prior to the program beginning. Approval by GA is required if fifty percent or more of the degree program will be offered in an alternative, online, or distance delivery mode, or a combinations of these modes.

Accreditation agencies require notice and approval in many cases of alternative, online, or distance delivery. Any program proposal should include information about accreditation requirements for alternative delivery. UNC institutions are individually accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and are responsible for ensuring that they follow COC criteria and procedures with respect to any alternative, online, or distance delivery that may constitute a substantive change as defined by the Commission on Colleges.

If a degree program has not been approved by the Board of Governors, its approval for alternative, online, or distance delivery must wait until BOG program approval is received.

The constituent institutions and the academic units offering the instruction are responsible for the development, delivery, regular assessment, and accreditation of certificate and degree-related alternative, online, or distance education courses and programs.

Each institution must have a clearly defined process for the review and approval of proposals to plan or establish alternative, online, or distance delivery of degree programs. All campus processes must

be followed and campus approval must be received before a proposal may be submitted to General Administration.

The academic standards and quality of certificate and degree-related alternative, online, or distance delivery of courses or programs must be consistent with and comparable to the academic standards and quality of regular on-campus instructional activity. The application and maintenance of academic standards are the responsibility of the academic unit and the campus offering the instruction.

Off-site Degree Programs

Degree programs offered at a site away from the institution's campus may be entirely face-to-face or have a mix of face-to-face and alternative or online delivery. Proposals for offsite delivery of degree programs must document the comparable quality of the proposed programs to programs offered on the campus in terms of both academic standards and standards for student support. Proposals for offsite programs are to include a description of the space arrangements for offering the program. Priority should be given to partnering with constituent institutions of UNC, including the use of Graduate Centers, and of the North Carolina Community College System where appropriate.

Online Degree Programs

Degree programs delivered online enable students to access them without residing on the campus or being required to come to the campus except for brief periods for orientation or proctored testing. Proposals for online delivery of degree programs must document the comparable quality of the proposed programs to programs offered on the campus in terms of both academic standards and standards for student support. Due care should be given to the provision of local student support, such as arrangements for proctored examinations.

Other Delivery Methods

Other methods, such as NCREN, one and two-way television, and CD-ROM-based work may still be used from time to time. Rapidly changing technology may lead to new modes of delivery of courses and degrees. Proposals for other methods for delivery of degree programs must document the comparable quality of the proposed programs to programs offered on the campus in terms of both academic standards and standards for student support.

Expedited Program Review

While the academic program planning and evaluation process is required by BOG Policy to "balance responsiveness with due diligence and a state-wide perspective," it is also necessary to develop "expedited program review processes for rapid response where warranted." A request for an expedited review will be warranted where there is an extraordinary need to have a program start up immediately to meet a clear state need, or to announce immediately that the program will be available at a certain future time. An example might be the need for a degree program as part of a state effort for recruiting or expanding business, industry, or a governmental function.

Discontinuation of Academic Degree Programs

The Board of Governors has the authority to establish and discontinue degree programs. The productivity study which will be initiated biannually by General Administration will generate a campus review that may result in recommendations for discontinuation. A campus may recommend the discontinuation of a degree program at any time. (See Appendix D – 400.1.1.6[G]). A proposal for discontinuation should provide a reasonable time for students to complete their work in the program or provide an alternative way for students to complete their program.

Forms and Procedures for Conveying Proposals

Revised forms and guidelines are provided for use by the constituent institutions.