Policies and Procedures

SECTION: **Academic Concerns**	NO. **4.1.4.**		
CHAPTER: **General**	ISSUED: 11/15/12	REV. A 05/12/2022	REV. B
POLICY: **Approval of a New Academic Program**	*Page 1 of 3*		

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the procedures, structure and approval requirements for new academic programs.

POLICY

The new program approval policy and procedures provide a rational and effective process for program development, consideration and approval that will ensure that the University is making coordinated decisions for program development, resource allocation, and external regulatory compliance. This document provides a structure to assist in the planning and approval process of new academic degree programs at Creighton University. By requiring specific data and background information, the procedures are intended to ensure appropriate consistency and care in designing and presenting new academic program proposals. They are also intended to clarify the institutional procedures that govern internal and external approvals and thereby eliminate confusion and unnecessary delays.

This policy and accompanying procedures govern all **proposed new academic programs and new degrees** at Creighton University. The process also pertains to changes in format of delivery and to changes which have implications for one or more of the other Colleges/Schools including, but not limited to: 1) offering new or existing courses from another college(s)/school(s) in the proposed new program, 2) developing interdisciplinary opportunities for shared or cross listed courses, 3) use of instructional space currently administered by another college/school, etc. Whenever the phrase "new academic program" is used in this document, it refers to one or more of the following categories.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Programs:
- *Degree Program*: a program of study leading to a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree. All degree programs require a minimum number of semester credit hours be earned (as specified by the particular program and referenced in the official catalogs of the University).
  - *Major: A cohesive combination of courses, including introductory, intermediate, and advanced coursework that designates a student's primary area of specialization within their degree program. Majors are designated on university transcripts.*
  - *Minor: A combination of courses designed to provide a cohesive introduction to an area of study beyond the major. Minors are designated on university transcripts upon receipt of degree.*
  - *Undergraduate Certificate*: A cohesive combination of courses in a particular area *outside* of a student's primary school of study or for a non-degree seeking student. The number of credits required is generally more than the number of credits required for a minor.
  - *Graduate Certificate*: a post-baccalaureate program of study offered at the graduate level, focusing

Policies and Procedures

on developing a particular skill set. The number of credits required will usually be between 12 and 18 and these credits/coursework *may* be applied to further graduate study.

- *Concentration:* A prescribed selection of courses within a student's major that provides a particular focus for the major and is designed to give a student specialized knowledge, competence or skill within the major. May also be called an emphasis, specialization, or track.

Guidelines for Developing and Seeking Approval of New Academic Programs, Pre-Proposal Application – Refer to Appendix A

Guidelines for Developing and Seeking Approval of New Academic Programs, New Academic Program Full Proposal – Refer to Appendix B

PROCEDURE

Academic Governance and Review of Proposals

PHASE 1:   College/School(s) Planning

Pre-proposal: Initial steps for program planning and approval begin at the level of the College and/or School that will provide the primary program content. The proposed new program could be the result of collaboration between more than one College/School. Because the responsibility for curriculum belongs to the faculty, it is essential that faculty members in the discipline(s) are involved in the planning and execution of a curriculum leading to a new academic program.

All planning should be in concert with the Dean(s) of the School(s) or College(s) who will be responsible for providing resources for the new program. Initial planning should be done by developing a pre-proposal and using screening questions regarding the viability of such a program. The pre-proposal application includes a required external market analysis and a completed Financial Implication Form (FIF). The FIF outlines the basic resource needs balanced by the potential enrollment for revenue generation as supported by the external market analysis. (See Appendix A –Pre-proposal Application)

There should be an initial School(s) review of the pre-proposal and approval to develop a full proposal. The pre-proposal should be discussed by the Dean(s) and Provost (or his or her designee).

PHASE 2:   Formal FULL Proposal Development and Internal Unit Approval

Program Proposal: Following approval of the pre-proposal the second step in the process is the development and evaluation of a full program proposal that includes the fiscal impact of such a program

Policies and Procedures

SECTION:	NO.		
Academic Concerns	**4.1.4.**		
CHAPTER:	*ISSUED:*	*REV. A*	*REV. B*
General	11/15/12	05/12/2022	
POLICY:	*Page 3 of 3*		
Approval of a New Academic Program			

which should include a five-year pro forma budget. (Appendix B-Proposal guidelines)

School or College Review: The third step in the approval process is the evaluation of the full proposal by the School or College review committee or governing board. Program goals must be explicitly stated and a plan for assessment must be present. The assessment plan for all new programs will be reviewed by the Associate Vice Provost for Learning and Assessment and concerns must be addressed.

PHASE 3:   University Review and Approval

Academic Planning Review: Once a new academic program proposal is approved by the appropriate academic goverance body of the respective School or College, it proceeds to the **University.**

The Provost or his or her designee will assemble and chair an executive committee that includes the Dean's Council and **appropriate academic representation** for the proposal being reviewed, in addition to representation from finance, assessment, libraries and institutional accreditation. The Dean's Council will review the proposal, school or college recommendation and any other accompanying materials. The Dean's Council will make recommendations to the President for prioritization of implementation as part of the University's academic plan.
Recommendations include:
- Approval
- Pending approval once specific recommendations for change and/or follow up
- Reject

AMENDMENTS OR TERMINATION OF POLICY

The University reserves the right to modify, amend or terminate this policy at any time.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING AND SEEKING
APPROVAL OF NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Pre-Proposal Application

INTRODUCTION:
New program development is critical to the University and both encouraged and expected. New programs refer to any new degree program, graduate certificate program, or doctoral minors. These guidelines are intended to be helpful in the planning and implementation of new programs.

1. Program Champion Discusses Idea with Dean

[Policy 4.1.4] Initial steps for program planning and approval begin at the level of the College or School that will provide the primary program content. Because the responsibility for curriculum belongs to the faculty, it is essential that faculty members in the discipline(s) are involved in the planning and execution of a curriculum leading to a new degree. A program idea and champion can be faculty, chairs, assistant/associate deans, dean and all members of the faculty.

2. Dean(s) shares proposed program with Dean colleagues and possible collaborations are identified.

All planning should be in concert with the Dean(s) of the School(s) or College(s) who will be responsible for providing resources for the new program.

3. External Market Demand Analysis

Dean(s) makes request to Provost Office for External Market Demand Analysis as part as a part of the Pre-Proposal, see Appendix A. External Market Analysis will begin with a scoping meeting with stakeholder group identified by the requesting school(s)/college(s) to ensure all aspects of the program are properly identified. Market demand analysis will include, when appropriate, demand for international student audience. In addition, the External Market Analysis will include a comparison of the proposed program with similar programs in other regionally accredited institutions in Nebraska, comparable Jesuit institutions, and other relevant peer/aspirational institutions.

4. Financial Implications Form (FIF)

The Financial Implications Form (FIF) is a high-level resource identification tool to determine the basic resource needs for the proposed *new* undergraduate, graduate and professional program (degrees, majors, minors, and certificates) and must include information concerning how the program will be financially supported prior to proceeding through the curricular development process. In those cases where a new program engages more than one department or school/college, the review process will be coordinated to ensure all parties are aware of potential financial implications.

The FIF will require data from the External Market Analysis to be accurately completed. This is not the official Pro Forma for the program which will not be developed until the Pre-Proposal Application is approved. School/College Finance Directors should be consulted to assist with the preparation of the FIF.

5. Pre-Proposal Application

If the External Market Analysis is <u>favorable</u> and the FIF has been approved by all stakeholder groups the following is submitted to the Office of the Provost:
  a. External Market Analysis
  b. FIF
  c. Pre-Proposal Summary & Link to CU Mission & Jesuit education
     This section includes a description of the "history" of the idea, an explicit statement about the link between the program and the University's mission & Jesuit education, and how the program meets the needs of today's learners. For new graduate programs, the rationale should address how the program relates to the graduate purpose statement. **500-word limit**

If the External Market Analysis is <u>unfavorable</u> indicating it would be difficult to recruit adequate enrollment to offset expenses, the Dean(s) will make the final determination to advance a Pre-Proposal Application based upon a discussion with the champion(s). The application would require a very strong mission-based reason for consideration. This portion of the application will be reviewed by the Office of the Provost in consultation with Mission & Ministry, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and the President.

The Provost will review the Pre-Proposal Application and grant or reject authorization to advance to Step 2: Full-Program/Curriculum Development Phase

**GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING AND SEEKING
APPROVAL OF NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

<u>Full Program/Curriculum Proposal</u>

The formal program proposal should contain the following components:

1. **Pre-Proposal Summary & Link to CU Mission & Jesuit education** (as provided in Pre-Proposal Application)

2. **Admission Requirements**
   The proposed program may have specific admission requirements beyond those of the school or college in which the program is housed. If so, those requirements should be clearly delineated in the application, in the curriculum discussion, and in the catalog information (if the program is approved).

   For new <u>graduate</u> programs, admission standards must include four of the following or their equivalents:
   - Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
   - demonstration of satisfactory writing ability;
   - demonstration of appropriate academic preparation of applicant;
   - specification of required grade point average for admission;
   - minimum TOEFL score or personal interview to assure language proficiency for international students;
   - other: equivalent experience, testing, etc.

3. **Learning Outcomes and Assessment Plan**

All new academic program proposals will include a clear description of the program's learning outcomes, identify how the program outcomes support achievement of the University's Six Student Learning Outcomes (http://www.creighton.edu/aea/assessmentofstudentlearning/universityleveloutcomes/index.php), and specify methods for assessing student learning. The proposal will include:
   - List of each program student learning outcome
   - How each program student learning outcome supports the achievement of at least one University Student Learning Outcome
   - Curriculum Assessment Matrix illustrating the alignment of program outcomes with the program's curriculum
   - Assessment Plan for Student Learning, to include specific learning outcomes, sources of evidence (activities supporting the objective), assessment method, and data collection points
   - Process for reviewing student learning outcomes data and making curricular revisions.

   The Center for Faculty Excellence will provide consultation and endorsement of the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Plan.

4. Plan for Program Evaluation

Describe the strategies for regular evaluation of the program including the following.

List of evaluation activities; these may include, but are not limited to:
- o Faculty program review and reflection
- o Student end of course evaluations
- o Graduate exit survey data
- o Employer evaluations
- o Administrative monitoring or program success
- o Financial viability of the program, ability of the program to meet financial goals
- o Ongoing market viability of the program
- o Advisory board feedback
- Timeline for each evaluation activity
- Process for reviewing program evaluation data and making programmatic decisions. Evidence of faculty and administrative involvement is required.

5. Curriculum/Program Delivery Schedule

For all new academic programs, this section will include:
- a statement of the broad curricular philosophy and rationale for the curricular architecture
- a listing of all courses and descriptions that constitute the proposed program with clear identification of all new courses and any cross listing of courses. Use Appendix D for course descriptions.
- course development matrix
- program of study – identifying number of credit hours required for graduation, courses that are required, and those that are electives
- the curricular cycle, including the timing and sequence of course offerings
- The program length: how long the program is designed to take a full-time student to complete (Required by the Department of Education to be reported and must match the information provided in marketing materials)
- mode of delivery, including number of starts for distance delivered programs
- required on-campus orientation or other on-campus requirements for distance delivered programs
- proposed start date

All new graduate programs must meet the following curricular standards:
- Includes a minimum of 30 semester hours; a curriculum exceeding 36 semester hours requires special justification
- Includes a research component
- Includes a thesis or applied project and substantive written report
- Describe any field or internships requirements

6. Accreditation

This section will address all institutional accreditation (HLC) implications raised by the proposal and any steps taken to satisfy them. If a specialized/programmatic accreditation is available for the degree program a description of the efforts and timeline for applying for initial accreditation must be included.

7. Resources

This section will describe how the University has organized and planned for adequate human, financial, physical, and instructional resources to initiate and support the proposed program. For all resources, the proposal should clearly indicate which resources already exist, which resources must be acquired, and what strategies will be employed to acquire them. The FIF should be used as a resource for this section. Proposals will include a discussion of the following:
- Human Resources
    - A person qualified by education and experience to administer the program
    - An administrative structure through which appropriate control can be exercised
    - The number and qualifications of administrative and support personnel needed to support the proposal
    - Student support resources (e.g., writing center, academic support services)
    - The number and qualifications of faculty needed to provide the instruction required by the proposal (include faculty CVs and/or proposed requirements)
- Financial Resources (Associate VP for Finance, College/School Business Partner, and Office of the Provost will work with the new program champion to complete this section)
    - A detailed account of the financial resources available and budgeted to cover all start-up costs as well as anticipated costs to maintain the necessary administrative, instructional, and support personnel over succeeding years
    - An institutionally approved projected budget for the first five years of the new program including one-time start-up expenses, the anticipated sources for first year funding, projected operating costs and income for at least five years, and a line-item justification showing the derivation of each estimation of cost and revenue.
    - Pro-forma will be developed by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Associate VP for Finance and College/School Business Partner
- Physical Resources
    - Adequate classroom, lab, and office space
    - Capital expenditures for classroom/lab modifications
- Instructional Resources
    - Identify the existing and/or additional instructional and library resources required to support the program, including adequacy and appropriateness of the library resources for the new academic program being offered
    - (This section will be completed in collaboration with the new program champion(s) and select members of the Center for Faculty Excellence) For distance or blended programs, identify the existing and/or additional instructional technology resources required to support the program's learning outcomes

8. Program Development Timeline

The timeline for development of the program will include plans/timelines for:
- Program inception date
- Course development timeline
- Faculty recruitment and hiring (if applicable)
- Faculty preparation for teaching distance courses if applicable

For the purposes of marketing and recruitment, Enrollment Management and University Marketing will be made aware of any APPROVED Pre-Proposal Applications. In addition, the Office of the Provost will

also forward this section when the proposal is received. Program champion(s) are not required to meet with these units as a part of this Step 2 Proposal.

9. **Affirmative action considerations – include in proposal if applicable**