

Section 13. Program & Organizational Unit Proposals

GUIDELINES

Board policy dictates the creation of degrees, majors, programs, or organizational units must be approved by the Board of Regents. Flexibility is given to the institutions to implement minor changes without Board approval. In cases where there is an absence of significant programmatic change, minimal impact to other NSHE institutions and clear adherence to approved institutional mission, institutions may seek approval through the Academic Affairs Council. Furthermore, Board policy establishes an accountability system whereby institutions are directed to provide periodic follow-up information on budget estimates and enrollment projections provided through the program proposal process.

Items Requiring Academic Affairs Council Approval Only

1. Certificates of at least 30 credit hours except for post baccalaureate certificates;
2. Certificates of at least 9 and less than 30 credit hours that provide preparation necessary to take state, national and/or industry recognized certification or licensing examinations (all other certificates of less than 30 credit hours, including post baccalaureate certificates, do not require AAC approval);
3. Study abroad programs;
4. Name change to a degree, major or primary field of study that is cosmetic in nature and does not result in a change in curriculum; and
5. Name change to an organizational unit that is cosmetic in nature.
6. Reactivation of a previously approved degree, major or primary field of study that was placed on hold (or deactivated) by the institution for less than five years since the effective date of the deactivation. The institution must provide appropriate written notice to the Board indicating the reactivation of the program. A deactivated program will be considered formally eliminated five years after the effective date of the deactivation.

(Rev. 88 (03/22) Chapter 6, Page 17)

Items Requiring Board of Regents Approval

The following items must be approved by the Academic Affairs Councils prior to being presented to the Board for approval:

1. Degree, major or primary field of study for baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral level programs (BA, BS, MA, MS, Ph.D, and named degrees);
2. Emphases, major or primary field of study within the bachelor of applied science (BAS);
3. Primary field of study within an associate of arts, an associate of science, and an associate of business (AA, AS, and AB);
4. Primary field of study within an associate of applied science (AAS);
5. Emphases, concentration, or options that are converted into a major;
6. School or college;
7. Organizational unit, center, or institute;
8. Name change to a degree, major or primary field of study accompanied by a significant change in curriculum;
9. Degree-type change to a major or primary field of study (e.g., a BAS to a BA);
10. Name change to a school, or college that is the result of a significant reorganization of existing units, consolidation, or change in mission;

11. Name change to an organizational unit, center, or institute that is the result of a significant reorganization of existing units, consolidation, or change in mission;
12. Deletion of any degree, major, primary field of study, school or college, center, institute or other organizational unit; and
13. Deactivation of a previously approved degree, major or primary field of study that an institution wishes to place on hold.

Items Not Requiring Academic Affairs or Board Approval

1. Emphases, concentrations and/or options within a degree (except for the emphases within a BAS that require Board approval);
2. Post baccalaureate certificates of any duration; and
3. The addition or elimination of departments.

Inventory of Approved Degrees and Certificates

The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs shall maintain an inventory of all degrees and certificates approved by the Academic Affairs Council or the Board of Regents, including certificates that provide preparation necessary to take state, national and/or industry recognized certification or licensing examinations.

DEFINITIONS

Center – an organizational unit focusing primarily on research and scholarly activity where services are typically unrelated to internal administrative operations (for the purposes of new unit proposals this definition is the same as “institute”).

Certificate – an award granted certifying that certain training or educational requirements have been achieved.

College – collection of departments, can include schools, that grant degrees in particular fields (may also be known as a division).

Degree – the award given to graduates based on educational level. The basic levels include associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, and doctorate. (AA, AS, AAS, BA, BS, BAS, MA, MS, Ph.D).

Department – division of a school or college focused in a particular academic area - reports to a unit other than another department, usually a college.

(Rev. 88 (03/22) Chapter 6, Page 18)

Diploma Requirements – in general, diplomas can only recognize Board approved degrees and majors. However, emphases/concentrations/options for AAS and BAS degrees and certificates may appear on a diploma. Transcripts may include emphases/concentrations/options for any degree or certificate.

Discipline – a distinct area of study, branch of instruction, or academic field.

Emphasis, Concentration, Option – a specific area or branch of study within a student’s

major. For example: a student majoring in Animal Science may choose to pursue an emphasis (i.e. option or concentration) in Equine Sciences or Rangeland Livestock Production.

Institute – an organizational unit focusing primarily on research and scholarly activity where services are typically unrelated to internal administrative operations (this definition is the same as “center” and is intended only to be used for the purposes of new organizational unit proposals, primarily to distinguish between internal administrative “institutes” or “centers” occurring at the community college versus research oriented units occurring at the universities).

Major – the primary field of study within a degree characterizing the body of knowledge gained within a discipline.

Named Degree – the integration of a major title into a degree title. For example, a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) is a named degree. Academic Affairs Council agreed in December 2004 that named degrees are only permitted in cases where accreditation, professional, or national recognition require it.

New Program Follow-up –Board policy establishes an accountability system whereby institutions are directed to provide periodic follow-up information on cost estimates and enrollment projections provided in the program proposal process (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 5). Reports must be submitted following the third and fifth year of a program’s existence.

Organizational Unit – a department, school, college, division, center, or institute

Primary Field of Study – a term used to describe the equivalent of a major within an associate degree or bachelor of applied science degree

School – generally associated with professional degrees, can be within colleges, depends upon discipline and national context, generally similar to a department but larger and usually has multiple areas representing different academic programs

Study Abroad – formal affiliation or consortium involving students or faculty in another country for educational purposes in which academic credit is granted. Faculty or student exchanges which involve a limited number of people for a period of less than one semester and international arrangements for the purposes of research are excluded from this definition. (Added 6/05; A. 3/06, 8/07, 4/09, 12/10, 9/11, 3/13, 9/14, 12/15, 12/17, 12/19, 6/21)