**APR 17: Curriculum Proposal Guide**

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# NEW COURSES

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| **Curriculum form(s) related to developing a new course**:   * AA5 Course Proposal Change Form   *All curriculum forms can be found on the Resources for Faculty and Staff page under the heading of Forms (*[*http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp*](http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp)*).* |

A. Course Prefixes

The prefixes used to designate courses, except in the case of very short names such as art, are abbreviations of the names of departments or of fields of study within the departments.

B. Numbering System

Each course is identified by means of a course prefix and a three-digit number. The first digit of the number designates the level of the course and indicates the minimum class rank a student should have achieved to enroll in the course.

Students should not enroll in courses numbered above their class rank without the permission of the department offering the course. Undergraduate students may not enroll in graduate level courses for either undergraduate or graduate credit except under the conditions specified in the graduate catalog. In such cases, the student must meet graduate-level requirements to receive credit.

Courses numbered 293, 294, 393, 394, 493, 494, 593, 594, 693 or 694 are for special topics that reflect a student’s or faculty member’s special interest not covered by regular departmental curriculum offerings. Credit in these courses varies from one to four credit hours, to be determined by the department for each offering. Students may take up to 12 hours of special topic credit in a single department/program. A particular topic course can be taught at most two times in a five-year period. If a department/program wishes to teach a particular topic course more than twice in a five-year period, it must propose the course as a regular course, subject to the curriculum review process.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 01-100 |  | Noncredit courses which are not applicable to degrees |
| 101-199 |  | Courses for freshmen |
| 190-199 |  | First-Year Seminar courses |
| 200-299 |  | Courses for sophomores |
| 300-399 |  | Courses for juniors |
| 400-499 |  | Courses for seniors |
| 500-799 |  | Masters-level courses |
| 800-999 |  | Doctoral-level courses |

The number 389 is reserved for cooperative education undergraduate courses, and the number 589 is reserved for cooperative education graduate courses.

Within the sequences 480-499, 580-599, 680-699, and 780-799, the second and third digits of the numbers are assigned to special types of courses:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 80-82 |  | Independent study and directed-readings courses |
| 83-89 |  | Internships, practicum, and special applied field projects |
| 90-92 |  | Student teaching |
| 93-94 |  | Special topics courses |
| 95-98 |  | Seminars |
| 699 |  | Thesis |
| 779 |  | Continuing Research - Non-Thesis Option |
| 799 |  | Continuing Research - Thesis Option |
| 999 |  | Continuing Research – Dissertation |

1. Credits and Class Meetings

Colleges should ensure that credit hours awarded for work adhere to the SACS Policy Statement ([http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Credit%20Hours.pdf](http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/Credit%20Hours.pdf%20) ) on Credit Hours and the federal definition of a credit hour below. In determining credit hours awarded for online courses, learning outcomes and the amount of work should be equivalent to credit hours awarded for traditional face to face courses.

**Federal Definition of the Credit Hour.** For purposes of the application of this policy and in accord

with federal regulations, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates

a. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of

credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a

different amount of time, or

b. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic

activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio

work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

According to the UNC Policy Manual: 400.1.6—“all UNC campuses must ensure that every course offered for academic credit adheres to the standard of a minimum of 750 scheduled minutes of instructional time or the equivalent per credit hour. The time may include required examination periods, but may not include study days. In setting the academic calendar for each semester, campuses may set holiday periods, study days, and final examinations appropriate to accommodate the scheduled classes. In no case may a campus set a calendar that has optional final examinations if the time is considered a part of the required minimum class time.”

Unless otherwise indicated at the end of the course description, the number of hours a class meets each week is the same as the credit-hour value of the course. The credit-hour value of each course is indicated in parentheses immediately following its title. For example, if 3 hours of credit may be earned, the credit is indicated as (3). In variable credit courses, the minimum and maximum hours are shown as (1-3). Unless repeat credit is specified in the course description, a course may be applied only once toward the hours required for graduation. The availability of a course for repeat credit and the maximum hours that may be earned are indicated within the parentheses and immediately following the credit-hour value of the course as follows: (3, R6). In this example, the course carries 3 hours of credit and may be repeated once for a total maximum of 6 hours applicable toward a degree.

Credit is awarded in experiential courses on the basis of a minimum of three contact hours per credit hour.

D. Course Descriptions

Course descriptions can only be 25 words or less. This length does not include prerequisites, corequisites, or S/U grading, or other wording not pertaining to the description. If the description in any way overlaps another department, a signed consultation form from the affected department is needed.

E. Prerequisites and Corequisites

A prerequisite (PREQ) is any special requirement, usually one or more background courses or requirements other than class rank, that must be met before enrolling in a course specifying the prerequisite. A corequisite (COREQ) is any course which must be taken during the same term as the course that specifies the corequisite. Experiential Courses. The maximum credit in experiential courses that may be applied toward a degree within the minimum of 120 or 128 hours required in all bachelor’s programs is 26 semester hours (20 percent). The maximum credit that may be earned in cooperative education or applied field project courses/internships or in any combination of the two is 15 hours.

* A course prerequisite can not be a higher level course number than the course itself. That not only means from 100 to 200, but also from 123-124 numbers.
* Anytime you use a prerequisite that has a prefix other than your department, you must consult with that department as you make changes to your course and the consultation form should be attached. For example, if BIOL 233 uses CHEM 130 as a prerequisite and you want to delete BIOL 233, the Chemistry department needs to be consulted. This lets the Chemistry department know you no longer offer this course and also that they will not need to offer additional sections of CHEM 130.

F. Cooperative Education Courses

Students participating in a cooperative education work term are registered for a 389 course in the major department, or the department most closely related to the work experience. To be eligible, a student must be at least a sophomore and have a GPA of 2.0 or above. Exceptions must be approved by the departmental co-op placement adviser. A full statement of the requirements for academic credit is available from the Cooperative Education Office in the Career Services Office. Academic assignments and work performance are used to evaluate the student on an S/U basis.

G. Special Topics Course Policy

Courses numbered 293, 294, 393, 394, 493, 494, 593, 594, 693 or 694 are for special topics that reflect a student’s or faculty member’s special interest not covered by regular departmental curriculum offerings. Credit in these courses varies from one to four credit hours, to be determined by the department for each offering. Students may take up to 12 hours of special topic credit in a single department/program. A particular topic course can be taught at most two times in a five-year period. If a department/program wishes to teach a particular topic course more than twice in a five year period, it must propose the course as a regular course, subject to the curriculum review process. **Do not delete the special topics number when developing a new course.**

H. New Liberal Studies Courses

The category of Liberal Studies to which each course applies may be found in the liberal studies requirements section. The applicable category also is indicated by the parenthetical code at the end of each course description.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Core** | | |  | **Perspectives** | | |
| C1 |  | Writing |  | P1 |  | Social Sciences |
| C2 |  | Mathematics |  | P2 |  | (changed to C5) |
| C3 |  | Oral Communication |  | P3 |  | History |
| C4 |  | Wellness |  | P4 |  | Humanities |
| C5 |  | Physical and Biological Sciences |  | P5 |  | Fine and Performing Arts |
|  |  |  |  | P6 |  | World Cultures |

Any Liberal Studies course being proposed (new or changing an existing course) needs to complete the appropriate LS course proposal form found at <http://www.wcu.edu/liberalstudies/> . The syllabus must also reflect the Liberal Studies objectives for that particular Liberal Studies Program category.

# II. NEW DEGREE PROGRAMS

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| **Curriculum forms related to developing new programs**:   * Appendix A Request for Authorization to Plan a New Degree Program (GA document) * Appendix A Authorization to Plan Coversheet (WCU document) * Appendix C Request for Authorization to Establish a New Degree Program(GA document) * Appendix F Notification of Intent to Plan a New Distance Ed Program (for distance site based or online programs) (GA document) * Appendix G Request for Authorization to Establish a New Distance Ed Program or Site (for distance site based or online programs) (GA document) * Distance Education Impact Assessment (WCU document) * AA6 Program Proposal/Change Form (WCU document) * Info Sheet for Proposing programs in Buncombe County, if applicable (WCU document)   *All curriculum forms can be found on the Resources for Faculty and Staff page under the heading of Forms (*[*http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp*](http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp)*).* |

**Note: New programs approved for Authorization to Plan through the WCU curricular process will only be submitted to General Administration if they are one of the top three program priorities (see below).**

Academic Review and approval processes for new programs begins at campus level and eventually requires approval from or notification to General Adminstration (GA) and/or SACS. Processes and timelines at GA for the submission, review and approval of new baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral programs are delineated in flowcharts in Appendum B. SACS policies and requirements are described in Addendum C: Substantive Change Policy for SACS.

## Establishing WCU New Program Priorities

General Administration implemented a revised academic program review process in a June 12, 2012 memorandum to recommend that no more than three new academic program proposals be active in the planning process (that is, submitted to UNC General Administration) at any one time. In order to be considered, a new academic program must be one of the campus’ top three priorities. A campus may additionally include in the list the new 2- 3 program priorities in rank order for information purposes.

The process described below will be used to develop the Campus Academic Program Priorities List.

1. In early fall of each year, the Office of the Provost will make a call to the academic deans requesting the names of any new programs being considered at the college level. Informal feedback and discussion of potential new programs may occur at the Council of Deans.
2. The proposal of new programs should follow the process described above for requesting Authorization to Plan a New Degree Program.
3. By the end of the first week in April, the Office of the Provost will sumbit the names of all new programs that have been approved for Authorization to Plan through the WCU curricular process, and not submitted to GA, to the Faculty Senate (APRC). APRC will review the list of proposed new programs and make recommendations on their priority to the full Senate for their consideration and recommendation.
4. The Council of Deans will review and discuss the list of program approved for Authorization to Plan and the priority list recommendations of the Faculty Senate. Based on this information, the COD will make recommendations on the priority of new programs to submit to GA.
5. The final priorities list will be reviewed and approved by the Provost and Chancellor prior to submission to General Administration.

## **Basic Program Requirements (undergraduate**)

* 1. no less than 120 hours and no more than 128 hours required
  2. all concentrations require equal number of hours
  3. majors with 27-45 hours must require minor, second major, or other approved program
  4. 46-64 hours are required in majors that do not require a minor or second major
  5. 50% of courses required in the major have to be at the 300-400 level (must petition for exemption to this rule when proposing the program)
  6. 25% of the total degree program required hours must be at the 300-400 level
  7. 8 semester plan for completing the program must be attached.(will eventually be posted on the website for the degree program---no longer posted in the catalog)

## **Basic Program Requirements (graduate)**

1. 50% of the credit hours for a master’s degree must be 600 level or above
2. 50% of the credit hours for the education specialist’s degree must be 700 level or above
3. At least 24 hours must be earned as resident credit hours (teacher education requires 1 semester of full time graduate work—summer may be counted as one of the semesters—see Graduate Catalog for exceptions)
4. Graduate degrees must be completed within 6 years

## D. College and university level review and approval process for new programs:

* 1. The Appendix A or F, Request for Authorization to Plan and Appendix A Coversheet are developed by the department.

1. Once approved by the Dean, the Dean submits the Appendix A or F and Coversheet to the Associate Provost to place on the Council of Deans agenda. If endorsed by the COD, an AA6 with the Appendix A or F and Coversheet attached is submitted through the campus curriculum approval process.
2. Once the program proposal is approved by Faculty Senate, the Appendix A or F Request for Authorization to Plan is electronically submitted to General Administration by the Office of the Provost. See Addendum B for GA process and timeline of Appendix A.
3. The Office of the Provost notifies the department and college when GA approves the Appendix A or F and invites submission of Appendix C or G. (Note: The Appendix C is due to GA within 4 months of GA’s invitation to submit).
4. Appendix C is reviewed and approved by the Provost and Chancellor prior to submission to GA, The Office of the Provost notifies departments when the Appendix C has been approved by the Provost and Chancellor . At this point, the departments submit the program AA5s and AA6s through the campus curriculum approval process. The Provost Office will simultaneously submit the Appendix C to General Adminstration. See Addendum B for GA process and timeline of Appendix C review.

## E. Approval process for proposing distance programs for programs already approved as residential.

1. The Distance Education Impact Assessment form is completed by the department.
2. The Dean submits the Distance Education Impact Assessment form to the Associate Provost to place on the Council of Deans agenda.
3. Once endorsed by the COD, the department completes an Appendix F and G and submits both forms to the Dean who will submit Appendix F and G to the Associate Provost for review.
4. At the time of submission of Appendix F and G to the Associate Provost, the department and college will simultaneously submit an AA6 to propose the distance program through the university curriculum process. The AA6 should clearly indicate if the program will remain residential in addition to being a distance program, or if it will be a distance program only. The Appendix F and G do not need to be attached to the AA6, however consultation forms from all departments involved in the program curriculum should be attached. (Note: If the residential program is becoming inactive, a separate AA6 with Appendix D attached is needed for inactivation or deletion.)
5. The Provost reviews and approves Appendix F and G and submits to General Administration according to GA’s established timeline. Appendix F is submitted at least 30 days prior to Appendix G. Appendix G is submitted to GA after the AA6 has been approved through the university process.
6. When the AA6 has been approved through the university process and GA has approved the distance program, the AA6 is submitted to the Registrar’s office for final processing and updates are made to the proposed catalog.

Further information regarding new program development can be found at the University of North Carolina General Administration website <http://www.northcarolina.edu/aa_planning/degrees/index.htm>.

# III. CERTIFICATE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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| **Curriculum form(s) related to developing a certificate program**:   * Appendix A Authorization to Plan Coversheet or Needs Assessment Impact Assessment if Distance (WCU Document) * AA6 Program Proposal/Change Form (WCU Document) * Info Sheet for Proposing Programs in Buncombe County, if applicable (WCU Document)   *All curriculum forms can be found on the Resources for Faculty and Staff page under the heading of Forms (*[*http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp*](http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp)*).* |

## Introduction

The University can broaden access and serve the needs of target populations by offering opportunities for enrollment in certificate programs. Certificate programs not only provide a means to expand access but also provide opportunities to enhance diversity. They serve as an important vehicle in workforce development, career change and interdisciplinary collaboration among academic programs and organizations. One means of addressing these needs is the development of a certificate program of study: an approved core of courses designed to provide the student with expanded competencies and knowledge.

## Characteristics

* Post-Masters Graduate Certificate
  + A credit program offering advanced courses at 600/700 level
  + Focused study on a particular aspect of a master’s-level degree program
  + Requires candidates have an earned master’s degree in a related field of study
  + Requires a minimum of 12 credit hours. To be counted toward performance based funding a minimum of 24 credit hours is required.
* Post-Baccalaureate Graduate Certificate
  + A credit program offering courses at the 500/600 level
  + Requires candidates have an earned baccalaureate degree.
  + Designed to provide transition to a related master’s degree or stand alone as an independent program.
  + Requires a minimum of 12 credit hours To be counted toward performance based funding a minimum of 18 credit hours is required.
* Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Certificate
  + A credit program that may include courses from various levels from one or more disciplines.
  + Candidates must have a minimum of 60 credit hours for acceptance into the program if the certificate can be completed with 400 level courses
  + Courses offered may be selected as electives or constitute a minor for undergraduate students
  + Courses may be dually listed as 400/500 level courses.
  + Requires a minimum of 12 credits.
  + Courses may draw from one or more disciplines
  + Program is not designed as transitional to a master’s degree; coursework in this program will not apply to a graduate program of study.

Certificate programs should not serve as a substitute for an existing program or compete with an existing program. Further, certificate programs should be consistent with the mission of the University and that of the academic units. The guidelines outlined below are designed to apply to those certificate programs comprised of upper level undergraduate study and graduate coursework, and do not cover licensure, pre-med, and other programs that are typically completed at the baccalaureate level.

## Certificate Curriculum Requirements

All certificate programs must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Certificate programs generally require between 12 and 18 semester hours of coursework. At least half of this coursework must be at a level higher than that of entry. Certificate programs which exceed 30 semester hours will only be approved under unusual circumstances. Note: Post-Baccalaureate certificates must meet a minimum threshold of 18 semester hours and Post-Masters certificates a minimum of 24 semester hours to be counted toward performance based funding.
2. The coursework comprising the certificate program must be integrated and organized in a sequence of study approved by the sponsoring departments.
3. Unless otherwise stipulated the regular grading scales for undergraduate and graduate courses are to be used
4. No more than one independent project should be included in the approved program of study for completion of the certificate.
5. Minimum grade standards for interdisciplinary programs will be defined by the sponsoring academic unit, subject to the following: Students in a graduate (post-master’s or post-baccalaureate) certificate program must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in all graduate certificate coursework.
6. A student may apply coursework from a certificate program toward a degree offered at WCU with the approval of the department offering the degree. Certificates that may accrue to or fulfill the requirements of a minor must be approved concurrently with approval of the certificate.

## Certificate Programs Approval Process

Certificate programs will be developed in accordance with the program development and curriculum approval process of the university and will include the following:

1. Initiation of the proposal by an academic department
2. All certificate programs must seek consultation from other similar programs or programs related in any way to the proposal
3. Completion of a needs assessment document (to be attached to the AA-6) –may use the Cover sheet to the Appendix A for resident programs or the Impact Assessment form for distance programs (please note the Appendix A form is not required)
4. Approval by appropriate department and college curriculum committee(s) as well as the relative department head and dean
5. Review and approval by Educational Outreach, if applicable (distance and online programs)—this is accomplished through completion of the Impact Assessment form
6. Approval by the Council of Deans (COD). The dean should submit the proposal to the Associate Provost to be placed on the COD agenda. If endorsed by the COD, the proposal continues through the curriculum process.
7. Review and approval by the appropriate university level curriculum committee(s)-- Liberal Studies Oversight Committee, University Curriculum Committee, Graduate Council, and/or Professional Education Council
8. Approval by the Faculty Senate
9. Approval by the Provost/designee
10. Notification to General Administration to add the certificate program to WCU’s program inventory

## Admission Standards For Certificate Programs

The sponsoring academic unit will be responsible for establishing admissions standards, in accordance with University admissions standards and subject to the following guidelines:

1. Candidates for post-master’s certificates must have a master’s degree in a relevant field.
2. Candidates for post-baccalaureate certificates must have completed at least a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution.
3. Candidates for interdisciplinary undergraduate certificates must have a minimum of 60 undergraduate credits from a regionally accredited institution and a recommended minimum GPA of 2.5 for acceptance to programs at the undergraduate level. Undergraduate students at the upper level may take courses in the interdisciplinary certificate program or complete the certificate program as a minor.

## Administration Of Certificate Programs

All certificate programs will be reviewed two years after initiation and then become part of the ongoing program review process. The Director of Assessment shall report the results of these reviews to the Academic units, Graduate Council (as appropriate), Educational Outreach (as appropriate) and the Provost.

1. The program, wherever it may be administratively housed, must be clearly identified and labeled as a certificate program. The intent of the program must be specified in the academic unit’s literature.
2. A faculty advisor will be appointed for each certificate program. The advisor will be responsible for certifying the successful completion of the program’s academic requirements.
3. The Graduate School will communicate with the Registrar for recording the completed graduate certificate on the student’s transcript.
4. Undergraduate certificate program completion will be communicated to the Registrar by the academic advisor.
5. All changes to approved certificate programs must be sent through the same curriculum approval process as other program changes.

# IV. CONSULTATION FORMS

Many academic programs consist of courses offered by departments other than their own. As you plan changes to your curriculum, keep in mind the fact that your changes might have an impact on other departments. You must submit consultations forms from the library (for new courses or programs) as well as any other department that is affected by the course proposal or change. Some of the reasons may be:

* Course proposal has similar content to content in another department
* Course proposal has prerequisite/corequisite from another department
* Course proposal impacts another major from a different department
* Course proposal might be of particular interest to another department to list as an elective choice

# V. PROPOSING PROGRAMS TO BE OFFERED IN ASHEVILLE OR BUNCOMBE COUNTY

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| **Curriculum form(s) related to proposing programs to be offered in Asheville or Buncombe County**:   * Info Sheet for Proposing Programs in Buncombe County (WCU Document)   *All curriculum forms can be found on the Resources for Faculty and Staff page under the heading of Forms (*[*http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp*](http://www.wcu.edu/7614.asp)*).* |

Consultation between UNCA and WCU Provosts is required prior to WCU’s offering a program in Biltmore Park, Asheville or any location in Buncombe county. The form for proposing programs in Asheville or Buncombe county seeks to obtain information needed to consult with UNCA.

**Instructions for submitting this form:**

1. For new program proposals not currently in WCU’s approved academic inventory, attach the form to the Intent to Plan Cover Sheet when submitting a new program proposal.
2. If this program is currently in WCU’s approved academic inventory, the college dean should submit the Form to the Associate Provost to be placed on the COD agenda.

# IV. ITEMS THAT REQUIRE APPROVAL FROM (or notification to) GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND/OR SACS

* New degree program Request for Authorization to Plan (Appendix A) for approval THEN the Authorization to Establish (Appendix C)
* New degree program in the same 6-digit CIP code as currently authorized program at the same level
* Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS) Request for Authorization to Plan (Appendix A)
* Discontinuation of a degree program (Appendix D or Appendix I). Appendix I is used to discontinue site-based locations of a distance program or an online program without discontinuing the resident degree program.
* New doctoral program or first professional degree program Request for Authorization to Plan (Appendix A) THEN the Authorization to Establish (Appendix C)
* Intent to Offer a sequence of distance education courses for certification, licensure, or other purpose not leading to award or a degree (See Section III. Certificate Program Guidlines)Degree program title change (letter to GA from Provost with rationale)
* \*New distance education program Request for Authorization to Plan (Appendix F—at least 3 months prior to implementation) for approval—if 50% or more of the degree program is provided through distance education THEN the Authorization to Establish (Appendix G)—no less than one month following the Appendix F.
* For SACS: If proposing to add a different location other than the Cullowhee main campus to an existing program an Appendix G is required regardless of whether or not the site is considered a resident or distance site by GA. If it is a GA recognized site, the Appendix G serves as the prospectus to SACS, but is not submitted to GA.

In order to be approved as a distance program through General Administration, the institution must have already established the program in its degree inventory through the Appendix A & C processes.

# ADDENDUM A: CAMPUS ELECTRONIC CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROCESS

**Share Drive Etiquette:** Please be sure to save a copy of a form to your computer and close it on the share drive so that “shadow forms” don‘t remain in the share drive folder.

Notes: a) It is a wise practice to invite curriculum proposal representatives to attend the curriculum approval meetings at all levels.

b) All forms and attachments for each AA4, AA5 or AA6 should be included in one word document.

c) Once curriculum is approved and placed in the Approved Curriculum folder in each college’s approved folder it is up to the departments/colleges to update the relative websites to reflect the changes.

d) Use the proper nomenclature for naming files

**AA4:** use an AA4 for all course changes that do not affect another department. (All other course changes/proposals, Liberal Studies changes/proposals and program changes are to be prepared on an AA5 or AA6)

1. Department develops AA4 form and after getting departmental approval submits the form to the college curriculum designee to process
2. Dean’s office designee obtains college level (curriculum committee and dean approval) and then places the electronic AA4 in the “Pending AA4” folder in the College curriculum folder on the share drive. Be sure to use the same nomenclature to name the document, example: PAR 350-AA4
3. Provost Office checks the college folders each Friday morning to process AA4s. All graduate level AA4 proposals will also be approved by the Graduate School.
4. Once AA4s are approved by the Provost designee (Associate Provost) they are posted back in the respective college folder found in the Approved Curriculum folder indicating the date of approval in the title. The curriculum will also be copied and pasted into the Registrar’s Folder and the Graduate School folder (as applicable) for processing. The Graduate School will periodically review their approved curriculum folder and process as needed.
5. Departments/Colleges update websites to reflect changes
6. If a change also requires a program change all the changes for one specific program need to be done on ONE AA6---not an AA4

**AA5/AA6: AA5s are used when changes are being made to one course that affects another department, all Liberal Studies course changes/proposals, and all new courses. AA6s are used for all program changes and new program proposals**

1. Curriculum developed in department and approved by department head
2. Technical review done at the departmental level (with use of checklist)
3. Curriculum is submitted electronically to deans office
4. Deans office designee posts all AA5/AA6 curriculum to the Curriculum spreadsheet—be sure to use consistent nomenclature as well as identify if Liberal Studies:

Examples for AA5: PAR 350-AA5 or ENGL 101(LS)-AA5

Examples for AA6: BS CHEM-AA6 or MFA Art-AA6, etc.

* 1. Column A – Date curriculum posted in folder
  2. Column B – Dept. of origination
  3. Column C – course prefix & number or degree and program title
  4. Column D – indicate “new course”, “number/prefix/description change”, “program change(s)”, “new program” , etc.
  5. Column E – College abbreviation

1. Dean’s Office designee posts curriculum documents in the appropriate college folder using the following file name format: PAR350-AA5 or BA English-AA6 --- (AA5/6s must be posted from the college by the date indicated on the Curriculum Approval Schedule found in the Curriculum Forms and Resources Folder on the share drive.) If an AA6 is being accompanied by relative AA5s all curriculum forms concerning this program proposal or change should be placed a folder and labeled: example is “BS in Chemistry docs”. This folder should then be placed in the “pending AA5/6” folder for your college. If courses from a different college are being changed to accommodate this same program change then that college should also create a “BS in ? docs” folder for that specific college with their specific curriculum forms related to that change. These forms will be merged into one folder by the Provost Office when they are submitted to the Faculty Senate. However, these related curriculum items should still be listed as separate AA5s and AA6s on the Curriculum spreadsheet.

6) College Curriculum Committees (Column F) and Deans (Column G) review curriculum and post decision on spreadsheet by the date indicated on the Curriculum Approval Schedule.

1. Provost Office Assistant checks college folders and spreadsheet periodically, but for sure on the day after the college approval deadline, to post documents for the University Level Committees to review where needed (turns on tracked changes for each document)
2. Provost Office Assistant highlights each cell on the spreadsheet where each document will need to go for approval.

* University responses (chair of curriculum committees—and/or designees-- will be the only ones that have editing rights to this spreadsheet---will indicate date of approval and put initials to identify him/herself)---a statement on the bottom of the spreadsheet would indicate that the date and initials are equivalent to a signature.

1. All documents will be programmed to track changes and curriculum chairs will have the capability of editing the proposals as needed---with the requirement to notify the department head who submitted the proposal if any changes are made.
2. Remember, anyone can view the proposals so department heads could then go in and review these changes and notify Provost Office Assistant to remove the proposal from the approval process---or otherwise it will continue through the process.
3. Deadlines for each level of review are indicated in the Curriculum Approval Schedule in the Curriculum Forms and Resources folder on the share drive and are also on the AA5 AA6 Spreadsheet on the share drive.
4. Curriculum committees could either choose to meet electronically or in person as long as the decisions were made and posted (on the spreadsheet) by the chair on or before the due date.
5. All of campus has view-only access to check progress of curriculum.
6. On the day after the university level approval deadline the Provost Office Assistant submits items that have completed the process so far, to the Senate by moving the items to the Senate folder attaching the spreadsheet to the senate agenda for information and/or action.
7. Once Senate approves the curriculum, Provost Office Assistant prints out all the AA5s/AA6s approved and gives them to Provost Office designee (Associate Provost) for approval and signature.
8. Once signed Provost Office Assistant moves the documents to the Approved Curriculum Folder (college folders are in this folder) and updates the spreadsheets. Curriculum items in the Approved Curriculum folder will have the date of approval in their title so that if the same course/program is changed later the system will allow another version to be easily saved. A copy of each item will be copied into the Registrar’s Folder, Graduate School folder, College folder, and/or SACS folder as appropriate found in the Approved Curriculum folder.
9. The Registrar’s Office, Graduate School, Colleges, and SACS coordinator will periodically check the Approved Curriculum folder and process as needed.

ADDENDUM B: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION PROCESSES AND TIMELINES FOR NEWPROGRAMS

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# ADDENDUM C: SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE POLICY (SACS)

**Purpose**

Western Carolina University (WCU) recognizes the importance of compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' *Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges Policy Statement* (SACSCOC, 2011)[[1]](#footnote-2), which requires WCU to report ALL substantive changes accurately and in a timely manner to the Commission on Colleges. The purpose of this policy is to describe the process and procedures to be utilized to ensure that WCU complies with this Commission on Colleges policy.

**Scope**

WCU’s *Substantive Change Compliance Policy* applies to EACH academic unit and department and is MANDATORY.

**Definition of "Substantive Change"**

Substantive change as defined by the Commission on Colleges is "a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution." Examples of substantive changes that might be proposed by an institution include:

* initiating coursework or programs at a more advanced level than currently approved;
* initiating a branch campus;
* altering significantly the educational mission of the institution;
* initiating a merger or consolidation with another institution;
* relocating a main or branch campus; changing governance, ownership, control, or legal status of an institution;
* changing from clock hours to credit hours;
* adding a permanent location at a site where the institution is conducting a teach-out for students from another institution that is closing; and closing a branch campus or an institution.

More important for deans and department heads are examples of substantive changes that might typically originate with proposals from department or academic program leadership including:

* expanding programs at current degree level;
* initiating joint degrees with another institution;
* initiating a certificate program (example: continuing ed credit) at employer's request and on short notice;
* initiating other certificate programs;
* initiating off-campus sites;
* relocating an off-campus instructional site;
* initiating online programs or other programs where the faculty and students are not in the same location that are significantly different from current online offerings;
* initiating degree completion programs;
* initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium;
* entering into a contract with an entity not certified to participate in USDOE Title IV programs;
* acquiring any program or site from another institution;
* altering the length of a program significantly; and
* closing a program or approved off-campus site.

**The initiation or relocation of off-campus instructional sites and the addition of new programs that represent significant departures from current offerings are the MOST COMMONLY reported substantive changes.** A "significant departure" is one in which the proposed new program has no closely related counterpart among the previously approved programs in the curriculum. To determine whether a new program is a "significant departure," the Commission on Colleges considers whether the new program requires significant amounts of additional faculty, courses, library or other learning resources, equipment or facilities, or financial resources.

**Policy**

The process that WCU will use to ensure compliance with the *Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges Policy Statement* involves the following four methods: 1) implementing effective communication and procedures, 2) providing adequate resources, 3) conducting periodic training, and 4) utilizing quality assurance safeguards.

**Communication and Procedures**

* Detailed procedures regarding all internal and external (UNC General Administration and SACSCOC) academic program planning and revision processes are found in WCU’s *Academic Procedure and Regulation (APR) 17(*<http://www.wcu.edu/10132.asp>) and [WCU’s *Faculty Handbook*](http://www.wcu.edu/10323.asp) (<http://www.wcu.edu/10323.asp>) especially Sections 13.00 and 14.00).
* Academic units follow the procedures outlined in *APR 17* and in the *Handbook* to obtain internal approval for substantive changes.
* The Office of the Provost (specifically the Associate Provost) alerts the University SACS Accreditation Liaison regarding any curricular decisions that are potential substantive change actions.
* The University SACS Accreditation Liaison is responsible for reviewing curricular decisions brought forth by the Associate Provost and determining if the action requires substantive change notice to the Commission on Colleges.
* The University SACS Accreditation Liaison prepares notices and required documentation for submission to the Commission on Colleges with appropriate notices to the Provost and Chancellor.
* Actions and decisions are communicated to appropriate deans and stakeholders according to the guidelines in *APR 17*.

**Resources**

* Policies, procedures, and information regarding substantive change can be found on the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness [website](http://www.wcu.edu/30518.asp). (<http://www.wcu.edu/30518.asp>)
* The Associate Provost and the University SACS Accreditation Liaison provide guidance for all internal and external reporting activities.

**Training**

* The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness will offer periodic training for deans, department heads and curriculum committee chairs on substantive change policy and other academic program compliance issues related to accreditation.

**Quality Assurance**

* The Office of the Provost maintains and monitors an external reporting tracking system.
* Procedures and information contained in *APR 17* and the *Faculty Handbook* are reviewed and published annually.
* The University Registrar will implement changes upon receiving the official SACSCOC letters from the Office of the Provost and will provide the means to track off-campus activity.
* Metrics are kept and reported annually regarding timely reporting of substantive change activity.

**Enforcement**

Responsibility for enforcement of this policy resides with the Provost. The deans are responsible for their units adhering to the procedures set forth within *APR 17* and the *Faculty Handbook*, and the Provost is responsible for ensuring that they do. The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Planning and Effectiveness serves as the liaison to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges with responsibility to report substantive changes in a timely manner. No substantive change can be implemented until a letter of approval or an acceptance of notification is received from the Commission on Colleges. Prior to receipt of the letter of approval, any distribution of information, including advertising, must include wording that the program is pending SACSCOC approval.

**Review**

The Faculty Senate, Council of Deans, and the Provost have reviewed and approved WCU’s *Substantive Change Compliance Policy*. This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically as appropriate.

1. The *Substantive Change for Accredited Institutionsof the Commission on CollegesPolicy Statement* (SACSCOC, 2011) can be found on the Commission's website: <http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)