



The University of North Carolina

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

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Constituent Universities
Appalachian State
University

East Carolina
University

Elizabeth City
State University

Fayetteville State
University

North Carolina
Agricultural and
Technical State
University

North Carolina
Central University

North Carolina
State University
at Raleigh

University of
North Carolina
at Asheville

University of
North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

University of
North Carolina
at Charlotte

University of
North Carolina
at Greensboro

University of
North Carolina
at Pembroke

University of
North Carolina
at Wilmington

University of
North Carolina
School of the Arts

Western Carolina
University

Winston-Salem
State University

Constituent High School
North Carolina
School of Science
and Mathematics

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and, Programs

FROM: Alan Mabe *AM*

DATE: October 7, 2008

SUBJECT: Regulations for the Revised Academic Program Planning Policy

Policies are approved by the Board of Governors and regulations are issued by the President to implement policies. These proposed regulations are provided for your review and discussion prior to their being issued. The regulations are being circulated widely for comment and may be revised prior to the Committee meeting as we review comments. We welcome any comments you may have prior to the meeting.

We have included the revised policy on Academic Program Planning that was approved by the Board of Governors at the May meeting to provide background for your review of the regulations.

Board of Governors Policy on Academic Program Planning

North Carolina citizens and institutions must be prepared to compete in a rapidly changing global environment. Consistent with this mandate the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, the University's General Administration, and the constituent universities shall be guided by the needs of the people of North Carolina in their academic degree program development, approval, and discontinuation actions. Academic program planning and procedures must be nimble, efficient, and responsive to those needs at all levels.

Campuses shall continue to have a lead role in identifying academic program needs and in formulating proposals to meet those needs. The University's General Administration shall also engage in the identification of academic program needs. General Administration shall develop procedures to regularly review workforce and societal needs and, on at least a biennial basis, identify degrees and programs beneficial to the State. General Administration shall also periodically draw on the expertise of the faculty to identify longer-term emerging trends that may have implications for new degree programs. In its analysis, General Administration shall always consider whether all regions of the State are adequately served by the University. As referenced in this policy, needs of the State and its citizens are inclusive of requirements growing out of local, regional, national, and global challenges.

Once academic program needs are identified by the campuses or by General Administration, General Administration, in consultation with the campuses, shall forward, after appropriate review, recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding how best to meet those needs. All campuses shall have an opportunity to participate in a process for recommending the best way to address those needs. Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary processes that utilize campus faculty and administrators shall be established to recommend whether expansion of a current degree program, collaboration in a joint degree program, an online degree program, or a stand-alone degree program is the best option. Campuses are urged to give high priority to collaborative or joint program development.

In these processes, faculty expertise is essential for sound academic decision making at the campus and system levels. At the campus, disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, University, and Board levels, analysis and recommendation of the need for a new academic program, the place for its establishment, and the method of its delivery shall be based on:

- (1) number, location, and mode of delivery of existing programs,
- (2) the relation of the program to the distinctiveness of the campus and the mission of the campus,
- (3) the demand for the program in the locality, region, or State as a whole,
- (4) whether the program would create unnecessary duplication,
- (5) employment opportunities for program graduates,
- (6) faculty quality and number for offering the program,
- (7) the availability of campus resources (library, space, labs, equipment, external funding, and the like) to support the program,
- (8) the number and quality of lower-level and cognate programs for supporting the new program,
- (9) impact of program decision on access and affordability,
- (10) the expected quality of the proposed degree program,
- (11) feasibility of a joint or collaborative program by two or more campuses, and
- (12) any other consideration relevant to the need for the program.

General Administration shall, in collaboration with the campuses, promote the expansion and availability of online degrees and other programs which facilitate access to higher education for all citizens. As the availability of online degree offerings increases, General Administration, in collaboration with the campuses, shall incorporate consideration of online offerings into the assessments of proposals for new academic degree programs. Online program development is part of the academic planning and assessment processes, and campuses will continue to take the lead in proposing the establishment of online degree programs.

While the responsibility for quality, efficiency, and productivity of academic degree programs rests at the campus level, General Administration shall be responsible for periodic reviews to

determine whether productivity and quality review processes are followed. Campuses shall regularly review the priorities of their offerings and are to be prepared to discontinue programs that no longer meet any significant need. In collaboration with the campuses, General Administration shall review and revise standards for offering degree programs at various levels and by various methodologies. The University shall balance responsiveness with due diligence and a state-wide perspective. In achieving this balance, General Administration shall develop expedited program review processes for rapid response where warranted. The campuses' faculty and administration and General Administration shall assure a continuing commitment to academic excellence.

The President, after consultation with the campuses and the Board of Governors, shall promulgate regulations to implement this Board of Governors policy and is authorized to provide guidance to the campuses in their academic program development and discontinuation.

DRAFT 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, or commentary on proposals by each campus.

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 degrees 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 and 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.

Master's Degree Programs

Disciplinary reviews will address the overall need for the production of degrees 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 and 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.

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 to plan or not to plan. Those recommended for planning by General Administration and approved by the Educational Planning Committee may proceed to prepare a proposal to establish the program. Proposals for establishment will be reviewed by the University-wide Graduate Council. Based on outside reviews, the review by the University-wide Graduate Council and an assessment of the program in relation to priority factors, General Administration will decide whether to recommend the program to the Educational Planning Committee for approval to establish the program.

First Professional program proposals normally involve outside reviewers in the early stages of development and in most cases an on-site review team. Some health related applied 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 institution and a non-UNC educational institution 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 the institutional process for certifying a student to receive a degree by each UNC institution whose name will appear on the diploma.

Dual Degree Programs

A Dual Degree program involves two academic units, either on the same campus or on different 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. Another option is to offer part of each program in a single degree program that would be 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.

Degree Consortia

A Degree Consortium is a formal agreement between two or more institutions to share courses in the same discipline that will count as degree credit for a separate degree offered 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 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 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 of the institution 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 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. 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.

Other Delivery Methods

Other methods, such as NCREN, 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. 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 for Conveying Proposals

Revised Forms and procedural guidelines will be provided for use by the constituent institutions.

[Current documents are being revised to reflect the new policy and regulations.]