



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

**ADMINISTERED BY: Office of the Provost
and Senior Vice President for Academic
Affairs**

Policy No: AP-AA-42.2
TITLE: New Degree Program Request
EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/15/2022
CANCELLATION:
REVIEW DATE: Spring 2025

PURPOSE

To establish the policy and procedures for establishing and reviewing new academic programs prior to implementation.

AUTHORITY

Part Two, Chapter I, Section V of the Bylaws and Rules of the University of Louisiana System.

OBJECTIVE

To ensure compliance with the Louisiana Board of Regents' policy and procedures relating to academic planning and degree program proposals.

DEFINITION

New degree programs are limited to baccalaureate degrees, graduate degrees, and undergraduate and graduate certificates.

Substantive change is a significant modification or expansion in the nature and scope of an accredited institution. The types of substantive change and the procedures for addressing them appropriately may be found in Substantive Change for SACSCOC Accredited Institutions Policy Statement (<https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/substantive-changes/>).

- Some changes, such as initiating a certificate program using exiting approved courses and location and initiating off-campus sites where students can earn 24% or less of credits towards a program, do not need to be reported to the Commission.
- Others, such as initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 25-49% of credits towards a program, and initiating programs or courses offered through contractual agreement or consortium require that the Commission be notified in advance of the implantation of the change.
- Larger scale changes require the submission of a prospectus and prior approval from the Commission. Examples of such changes include the addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those

that were offered when the institution was last evaluated and initiating off-campus sites where student can obtain 50% or more credits towards a program.

See [AP-AA-10](#) for more detail on substantive change requirements.

GENERAL POLICY

All requests for new degree programs require Board of Regents approval, and must undergo two approval processes:

1. Indicate the intention to propose a new degree program via the annual academic planning process.
2. Submit a detailed program proposal for each new program that is included in the Board approved academic plan.

Both the annual academic plan and each individual program proposal submitted after approval of the plan will undergo rigorous review by Regents staff and will be circulated to Chief Academic Officers statewide for review and comment.

PROCEDURE

1. Each year, institutions must submit [to the UL-System] an updated three-year academic plan using the Regents template. Plans will include:
 - a. An executive summary that describes recent and future efforts to meet statewide attainment goals through student support, engagement with business and industry, collaboration with other institutions, efforts to close equity gaps, and other activities aligned to the goals of the current Board of Regents Master Plan for Higher Education.
 - b. A comprehensive list of intended degree program and academic unit additions, terminations, reconfigurations, and consolidations, with relevant details for each. Intended new degree programs must be designed to support the wellbeing of the state by meeting the needs of students, industry, and academia and must fall within the existing role, scope, and mission of the institution.
2. Plans will then be circulated to Chief Academic Officers and labor market representatives statewide for review and comment. Feedback from the statewide review may include support, recommendations, or substantive feedback to the proposed program based on need, mission, or duplication. Staff will attempt to resolve challenges through discussion among interested parties; unresolved issues will be presented to the Board for a final decision.
3. Changes to academic plans outside the annual academic planning process must be submitted to Regents for review according to the procedures outlined in academic planning guidelines. Changes to plans for the current year must undergo review by Chief Academic Officers statewide and receive Regents' approval.
4. Proposals for new programs must be submitted using the appropriate Board of Regents Academic Degree Program Proposal Form and must include all information required in the

form. Before submission to Regents, proposals should be reviewed by other institutions within the University of Louisiana System and approved by the management board according to UL-System policy. Approved new degree programs are required to submit regular progress reports to the Board of Regents until the program demonstrates sustainability and meets accreditation requirements.

5. Program proposals for non-certificate programs including at the associate's, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels, will be circulated to Chief Academic Officers statewide for review and comment. The proposing institution is responsible for addressing issues and concerns raised during the Chief Academic Officer review and identified by Regents staff before consideration for approval by the Board of Regents.
6. Proposals for all graduate degrees (master's and doctoral) and for highly technical and/or selective baccalaureate degrees require review by an external consultant. External reviewers are selected by Regents staff according to external review guidelines. External evaluations will be conducted as desk reviews and do not require on-site visits. The cost associated with an external review of proposed programs will be paid by the proposing system and/or institution. Regents staff will manage the external review process and coordinate with campus staff for the reviewer's payment and final submission of the report.
7. Once a proposal has been approved by the Board of Regents, the dean is responsible for completing the University Courses and Curriculum process.
8. To initiate the process, the dean should submit a "Letter of Intent" to the provost and copy the University's SACSCOC Liaison.
 - A. The Letter of Intent should include a summary of the proposed change(s) along with the anticipated implementation date and location.
 - B. The Letter of Intent should be submitted at least twelve (12) months prior to the anticipated launch date.
9. The Provost will submit the Letter of Intent to the President for review. If approved, the President will include the proposed program on the academic plan submitted to the UL-System.

RESPONSIBILITIES

CHAIRS

Chairs are responsible for promptly notifying the appropriate college dean in writing when considering changes to their academic program offerings. Chairs are responsible for completing the Board of Regents' Degree Program Proposal form, Degree Program Proposal Budget form, and Newly Approved Academic Progress Report form(s). If necessary, chairs address substantive change requirements for SACSCOC.

DEANS

Deans are responsible for promptly notifying both the Provost and the University's SACSCOC Liaison when contemplating changes to their college's academic programming. If the dean is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, she/he should contact the University's SACSCOC Liaison for clarification. Additionally, deans are responsible for following the reporting requirements and timelines of the University Courses & Curriculum policy.

SACSCOC LIAISON

The University's SACSCOC Liaison is responsible for ensuring that academic program changes are reported to SACSCOC as appropriate and in a timely fashion.



John W. Nicklow
President
University of New Orleans