

General Principles of Curriculum Change:

1. **Approval Requirements.** Approval must be obtained for all of the following:
 - a. New or revised courses, including cross-listing of courses.
 - b. New or revised academic programs.
 - c. Accelerated degree programs, which must follow the policy on such programs, as approved by the faculty senate, the provost, and the Board of Trustees.
 - d. Dual-degree programs or joint marketing agreements.
 - e. Offering a complete academic program at a new location (including branch campuses) or completely on-line. Note: This also may require state-level approval and regional accreditation approval.
 - f. Deletion of courses and academic programs.
 - g. Suspending an academic program or re-instating a suspended program.
 - h. Changes to academic program admissions requirements, as described in the catalogs.

2. **Definitions.**

- a. *Academic Programs* are defined to include:
 - i. *Majors*: A major is the primary field of study for an undergraduate or graduate student. Undergraduate majors must have at least 24 credit hours.
 - ii. *Minors*: Undergraduate programs of 15 or more credit hours of courses representing a student's secondary field of study.
 - iii. *Concentrations*: Some majors have "tracks," "options," or "focus areas." All of these are considered to be *concentrations* in the curriculum review process and require approval as indicated in this policy.
 - iv. *Curricula*: Requirements that apply to a larger group of majors, such as the Liberal Education Curriculum that applies to all students graduating from the College of Arts and Sciences or the Professional Business Administration requirements of the Haworth College of Business.
 - v. *Graduate certificate programs*: Graduate certificates may be approved for students in a degree program or as separate entities. They usually require fewer than 30 credit hours.
- b. *Academic Units* are defined to include:

- i. *Departments and Schools*, as they have been established by the Board of Trustees and organized into colleges.
 - ii. *Institutes*, as they have been established by University Policy. Institutes are authorized to offer courses and may be authorized to house interdisciplinary academic programs, once approved through the curriculum approval process.
 - iii. *Centers*, as established by the policy on centers and institutes. Centers do not offer courses or degrees.
- 3. **Role of the faculty.** The curriculum change process begins with departmental faculty. Subsequent processes are managed according to this curriculum change policy. These steps include roles of faculty committees and academic officers, as described below.
- 4. **Role of the department chair.** The department chair should
 - a. Ensure that faculty governance procedures have been followed, since the chair's signature on curriculum change documents indicates that both the faculty and the chair support the proposal.
 - b. Consult with faculty to ensure that proposals are written according to the guidelines.
 - c. Ensure that necessary administrative approvals are obtained. This includes review for the completeness of the proposal at each step,
 - d. Ensure that proposals are consistent with the departmental assessment plan, and that they include identification of measurable learning outcomes for assessment.
 - e. Consult with deans about proposals being considered in the department, especially proposals for new programs and other changes which have budgetary implications.
 - f. Obtain letters of support from other departments in the same college and consult with the dean's office on obtaining inter-college letters of support.
 - g. Read the agendas and minutes of all college curriculum committees and, when necessary, respond to the appropriate college committee chairs regarding proposals that affect the department.
- 5. **Role of the College Curriculum Committee.**
 - a. The college curriculum committees are chaired by board appointed tenured faculty who do not serve simultaneously as academic officers of the University. The committee must approve all curriculum changes prior to approval by the dean.
 - b. The committee should evaluate proposals taking into account all of the following:
 - i. College and departmental assessment plans.

- ii. Effect of proposals on students transferring from Michigan community colleges. Detailed information on transfer articulation must be included with undergraduate proposals when reviewed by the college curriculum committee.
 - iii. The strategic plans and missions of colleges and departments.
 - iv. The academic quality of the proposal and the faculty involved.
 - v. The consistency between the proposal and university policies as recorded in the relevant catalogs.
- c. The committee may initiate college-level curriculum studies as appropriate or requested.

6. **Role of the dean.** The dean's responsibilities include:

- a. Ensuring that the college curriculum committee schedules its meetings and follows university policies on curriculum change.
- b. Consulting with the provost on proposed new academic programs and proposed program deletions as early as possible in the approval process.
- c. Determining the resource requirements for any curriculum change proposal. Deans should not sign proposals unless resource requirements have been met. A detailed resource plan must be attached to proposals for new programs.
- d. Obtaining a letter of support from the dean of University Libraries for new programs, indicating that library resource requirements have been met.
- e. Ensuring that intra-college support has been obtained for proposals.
- f. Obtaining letters of support from other deans for inter-college support and attaching these letters of support before forwarding proposals to the curriculum manager.
- g. Reviewing proposals for implications for accreditation, certification, or licensure.
- h. Ensuring that proposals are complete before forwarding to the curriculum manager.
- i. Consulting with faculty, department chairs, deans, and others who require assistance in developing curriculum proposals.
- j. Ensuring that agendas of college curriculum committee meetings are circulated to those individuals identified by the faculty senate office, including all academic officers (president, provost, vice-provost, deans, associate deans, department chairs), chairs of college curriculum committees, members of the faculty senate, and others as designated by the senate. Each academic year, the senate office will provide this list to the dean's offices. This agenda should be circulated electronically at least 5

working days prior to the college curriculum meeting so that individuals who want to view proposals in advance will have time to do so.

- k. As the college's chief academic officer, the dean may request periodic review of academic programs or request that departments consider specific issues involving their academic programs.
 - l. The dean may require that market studies be completed on proposals for new academic programs, with the cost of the study being paid by the dean's budget.
 - m. Most curriculum proposals are final upon approval of the dean. The exceptions are proposals for new academic programs, program name changes, and program deletions, which require approval through the appropriate studies council, the provost, the president, the Board of Trustees, and the Presidents Council (except for new concentrations and new minors, which are final with approval by the Board of Trustees.). Other exceptions include those which require approval from the Professional Educators Board and the Committee to Oversee General Education. In addition, the Graduate Studies Council, the Undergraduate Studies Council, and the provost may request university-level review of specific proposals that would otherwise be final at the dean's level.
7. **Role of the Graduate Dean.** The graduate dean reviews all curriculum proposals that involve graduate courses and graduate programs. This review is to take into account how the revision fits with other graduate offerings and how the revision meets generally accepted standards of graduate education.
8. **Role of the Library Dean.** The library dean must review all proposals for new academic programs so that library resource needs can be assessed for the program. A letter of support from the library dean is required for new program proposals. Soliciting this letter is the obligation of the dean whose college will house the new program.
9. **Role of the Curriculum Manager:** The curriculum manager's responsibilities include:
- a. Ensuring that the curriculum change process is managed according to this curriculum change policy and the curriculum change guidelines.
 - b. Ensuring that proposals are complete, according to the curriculum change guides. The curriculum manager will review proposals for inter-college letters of support. Intra-college support issues are to be resolved at the dean's level.
 - c. Receiving proposals approved by deans and forwarding proposals for implementation or for review by the appropriate council of the faculty senate, by the graduate dean, or by the curriculum committee of the Professional Educators Board.
 - d. Receiving approvals from the faculty senate and forwarding proposals for implementation or for further review, where required, by the provost, president, WMU Board of Trustees, and the academic officers' committee of the Presidents Council of State Universities of Michigan.

- e. Consulting with faculty, department chairs, deans, and others who require assistance in developing curriculum proposals.

10. Role of the catalog editor.

- a. Revising the catalogs once appropriate approvals have been obtained.
- b. The catalog editor is appointed by the University registrar, whose office is responsible for regular updates to the catalog.
- c. Once a year, the catalog editor will send department chairs a list of undergraduate courses that have not been offered in the preceding three years and graduate courses that have not been offered in the preceding five years. Unless a department objects, the courses on those lists will be dropped from the catalog. The catalog editor will prepare an annual report on the dropped courses, which will be sent to the faculty senate office for distribution to the appropriate senate councils.
- d. New catalogs will be issued annually. New catalogs will take effect at the start of a fall semester.

11. Role of the provost.

- a. As the university's chief academic officer, the provost may request periodic review of academic programs or request that departments and colleges consider specific issues involving their academic programs. Changes to academic programs must follow this curriculum change policy adopted by the faculty senate.
- b. The provost may request a change to a curriculum proposal and may refuse to implement a proposal that has been approved at other levels. If this is the case, the request for a change or refusal to implement must be communicated to the appropriate dean, with reasons provided.
- c. The provost appoints the curriculum manager, usually an academic officer who holds faculty rank and tenure in an academic unit.
- d. The provost must approve new academic programs, changes to the names of academic programs, and deletions of programs before review by the president.
- e. The provost approves the resource plans associated with proposals for new academic programs and for program deletions.
- f. The provost may require independent market studies to assess demand for a proposed new program. The cost of this market study will be paid by the provost's office.
- g. The provost presents new programs, name changes, and program deletions to the Board of Trustees and responds to questions from the board about those proposals.

- h. The provost represents the University at the meetings of the academic officers' committee of the Presidents Council of State Universities of Michigan. This duty may be delegated to a vice-provost or other academic officer.

12. Role of the President.

- a. As the chief executive officer of the university, the president must approve new academic programs, name changes for academic programs, and program deletions, prior to their being scheduled for approval by the WMU Board of Trustees.
- b. The president has the authority of allocation of resources to academic programs.

13. Role of the Board of Trustees.

- a. The Board of Trustees must approve new academic programs prior to their being offered.
- b. The Board of Trustees must approve program name changes and program deletions, prior to those changes taking effect.

14. Role of the Faculty Senate.

- a. This document is a policy of the faculty senate. Changes to the policy require senate approval.
- b. Senate councils have specific duties, which may be revised by the senate.
 - i. *Undergraduate Studies Council* must approve all new undergraduate academic programs, changes in the names of undergraduate programs, deletions of undergraduate programs, and changes in undergraduate policy. (Changes in undergraduate policy also require approval of the faculty senate and the provost.) The undergraduate studies council can undertake reviews of undergraduate programs.
 - ii. *The Committee to Oversee General Education (COGE)* is a standing committee of the Undergraduate Studies Council. COGE must approve general education courses and may recommend changes in general education policy. These recommendations go to the Undergraduate Studies Council.
 - iii. *The Graduate Studies Council* must approval all new graduate academic programs, changes in the names of graduate programs, deletions of graduate programs, and changes in graduate policy. (Changes in graduate policy also require the approval of the faculty senate and the provost.) The council may undertake reviews of graduate programs.
- c. Membership on senate councils and committees is determined by the policies of the faculty senate.

15. **Role of the curriculum committee of the Professional Educators Board (PEB).** The PEB must approve curriculum proposals that affect the training of teachers or other personnel for K-12 schools. This includes proposals that originate in the College of Education and proposals for programs that originate in other colleges.

16. **Role of the Vice-Provost for Institutional Effectiveness.**

- a. Obtain approval of the Higher Learning Commission, when required.
- b. Consult with departments, deans, and provost on Higher Learning Commission requirements.

17. **Appeals.**

- a. Faculty committee decisions can be appealed as follows:
 - i. Decisions of college curriculum committees and the Professional Educators Board can be appealed to the Undergraduate Studies Council or to the Graduate Studies Council, as appropriate.
 - ii. Decisions of the Committee to Oversee General Education can be appealed to the Undergraduate Studies Council.
 - iii. Decisions of the Undergraduate Studies Council and the Graduate Studies Council can be appealed to the executive board of the faculty senate and then to the full senate.
 - iv. Appeals should be acted on at the first possible meeting of the appealing body.
- b. Academic officer decisions may be appealed as follows:
 - i. A department chair's decision can be appealed to the dean of the college.
 - ii. A dean's decision can be appealed to the provost.
 - iii. Academic officer's appeals should be acted on by the dean or provost within 30 calendar days of the appeal.

18. **Curriculum change deadlines and approval routes.**

- a. *New academic programs* can begin only at the start of a fall semester and must be approved by the department, college curriculum committee, dean, Professional Educators Board (if needed), Graduate Studies Council or Undergraduate Studies council and provost, no later than December of the prior calendar year. Approval by the President, Board of Trustees, and Presidents Council must be complete no later than April of the preceding spring semester. New concentrations and minors are final upon approval by the Board of Trustees. For example, a new program to start in fall

2008 must have completed the approval process through the provost's approval no later than December, 2007, with approval from the president, Board of Trustees, and Presidents Council no later than April, 2008. Some new programs, including offering programs in new locations, may also require approval of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Note: If a department wants to wait until a new program is listed in printed and on-line admission applications, then a greater lead time is required, since those materials are committed in March for the admissions cycle beginning in the fall, for enrollment in the subsequent year. That is, the materials for recruiting the fall 2008 class were prepared in the spring of 2007.

- b. *Deletion of programs and name changes of academic programs* can take effect only at the start of a fall semester and also require approval through the Presidents Council and must be done according to the same deadlines as those for new academic programs. See note above for lead time required for deletions to be reflected in admissions materials and applications.
- c. *Revised graduation requirements* can take effect only with the start of a fall semester and must have received all of the necessary approvals by December of the preceding calendar year. Thus, a proposed change for fall 2008 must be approved by the end of the fall 2007 semester. Revised graduation requirements for most undergraduate programs are final upon approval by the department, college curriculum committee and dean. Undergraduate teacher education programs also require approval by the Professional Educators Board. Revised graduation requirements for graduate programs require approval by the department, college curriculum committee, dean, and graduate dean.
- d. *New general education courses and other changes to general education* can start only at a fall semester and must have received all of the necessary approvals by October of the preceding calendar year. Thus, a proposed change for fall 2008 must be approved by October 31, 2007. General education courses require approval by the department, college curriculum committee, dean, and the Committee to Oversee General Education. Changes to general education policy are managed according to the policies of the faculty senate.
- e. *New courses and changes to existing courses* can start in a fall or spring semester. A course starting in fall semester must be approved by October 31 of the preceding academic year. A course starting in spring semester must be approved by March 31 of the preceding academic year.
- f. No exceptions can be granted to the deadline for new programs, program name changes, or program deletions, since those deadlines are set by the Presidents Council. Exceptions to the deadlines for other types of changes can be made by the curriculum manager, in consultation with the provost and registrar.

19. Curriculum Change Guides. The curriculum manager will prepare guides for how to make curriculum changes of various types. The guides will also include detailed instructions on

how to fill out the curriculum change forms. The guides will be developed in consultation with the registrar, the chair of the Graduate Studies Council, the chair of the Undergraduate Studies Council, and the president of the Faculty Senate. The guides will be available on the faculty senate web site.

20. Process for Organizational Changes of Academic Units is retained as a separate policy and is not affected by this policy.