

Curriculum Change Guide for Revising an Existing Academic Program

This guide applies to curriculum changes that revise the graduation requirements or admission requirements for existing academic programs, including both graduate and undergraduate programs. These include revisions to requirements for degrees, majors, minors, concentrations, and certificate programs. If the revision involves a name change, including the name of the degree, the guide for creating a new academic program or changing the name of a program should be followed.

Note: We often use the words “tracks,” “options,” “focus areas,” and others to refer to concentrations. Regardless of the label employed, such choices are treated as concentrations for the purpose of review at WMU and by the Presidents Council of State Universities of Michigan.

These proposals can be started at a fall semester only.

- 1. Obtain faculty approval in the department that will offer the program.** Departments vary in how this approval is obtained, according to their policy statements. If the proposed program is interdisciplinary, approval must be obtained in each participating department. Interdisciplinary proposals must also identify the policies on administering the program. Departments that are considering changes in admission requirements are encouraged to consult with the graduate dean or vice-provost for enrollment management as early in the review process as possible.
- 2. Prepare a formal curriculum change form.** In most departments, this is done through consultation with the department chair and the faculty members who initiated the proposal. For the proposal to be complete, all sections must be filled in. The proposal must have the old and new catalog copy attached. The old catalog copy must be from the most recent catalog posted by the registrar. If the proposal requires creating new courses or revising existing courses, those proposals should be approved at the same time as the proposal for a new academic program. Separate course proposals will be required. A proposal for a revised academic program sometimes includes a detailed proposal as an attachment to the curriculum change form. Some of the detail requested on the curriculum change form may be addressed in the detailed proposal, instead.
- 3. The department chair signs the proposal and forwards to the college curriculum committee.** In some colleges, this is managed through the dean’s office. In others, the chair should send the proposal directly to the college curriculum committee chair. Before doing so, the chair should determine that the proposal is complete. The chair may consult with college advising offices, in particular, to complete the section related to transfer articulation. Chairs and faculty are encouraged to consult with the curriculum manager and with the appropriate deans, including the graduate dean if it is a new graduate proposal. Deans should advise the provost on proposals that are being developed that have resource implications.

4. **The college curriculum committee chair schedules the proposal for review by the college curriculum committee.** That committee is composed of faculty representatives from the departments, according to the policies of the college. Before an undergraduate proposal is reviewed by a college curriculum committee, the proposals section on transfer articulation should be completed.
5. **The college curriculum committee chair sends approved proposals to the dean.**
6. **If the revision creates new demands for library resources, the dean should consult with the library dean and obtain a letter of support.**
7. **The dean should obtain the approval of the graduate dean for graduate proposals, including the graduate dean's signature on the proposal form.**
8. **If the dean approves the proposal, the dean will send four copies of the proposal to the curriculum manager.** The dean should indicate how resource issues have been resolved, if relevant.
9. **The curriculum manager will review the proposal for completeness.** Most program revisions will be final at this step. If there are policy issues that arise with the proposed revisions, the curriculum manager will forward the proposal to the faculty senate for review by the appropriate council.
10. **If the revised academic program is a teacher education program:** It may be necessary for the proposal to be reviewed by the curriculum committee of the Professional Educator's Board. In that instance the curriculum manager will send the proposal to the College of Education for that review. Exception: A revised academic program proposal originating in the College of Education and which will be part of a teacher education proposal, will be reviewed by the curriculum committee of the Professional Educators Board *before* it is sent to the curriculum manager.
11. **The curriculum manager forwards the proposal to the catalog editor.** The proposal will be incorporated into the next version of the catalog, consistent with the approved deadlines.

How to Complete the Curriculum Change Form, Page 1:

1. The proposed effective semester must be a fall term and must have received all of the necessary approvals by December of the preceding calendar year.
2. Check all of the boxes at the top of the form that apply, including at least one of the following: revised major, revised minor, admission requirements, graduation requirements, etc. If you are changing the requirements for a concentration or certificate program, check "other" and explain.

3. Enter the title of the degree, curriculum, major, minor, concentration, or certificate.
4. If your proposal requires creating new courses or revising existing courses, those course proposals will have to be attached and approved at the same time.
5. Skip the sections of the report that have to do with course change.
6. The department chair must sign the form before sending to the Dean's office. The chair should check to see that all parts of the proposal are complete, including page 2.

How to complete the curriculum change form, page 2:

The narrative section of the curriculum proposal must also be completed. Here are some guidelines:

1. **Explain briefly and clearly the proposed improvement.** "This proposal revises the requirements of the Ph.D. program in English." Old and new catalog copy must be attached. Be sure to use the most recent catalog copy from the on-line catalogs at <http://catalog.wmich.edu>.
2. **Rationale. Give your reason(s) for the proposed improvement.** The rationale needs to be understandable by someone outside your discipline. This may be contained in an attached proposal document. If so, indicate that here.
3. **Effect on other colleges, departments, or programs. If consultation with others is required, attach evidence of consultation and support. If objections have been raised, document the resolution. Demonstrate that the program you propose is not a duplication of an existing one.** This section should consider the effects on others at WMU. Demonstrate that your revision does not duplicate efforts of others at WMU

When you revise the requirements of an academic program, all intra-college and inter-college support issues must be re-established. Deans are required to deal with support issues within a college and letters indicating that support do not have to be forwarded to the curriculum manager. If inter-college support is required, those letters must be attached and must be signed by the dean (or the dean's designee) when the proposal is sent to the catalog manager. If the inter-college levels of support are not included, the curriculum manager will return the proposal to the dean's office.

4. **Effect on your department's programs. Show how the proposed change fits with other departmental offerings.** As with the other sections, this should be brief, but it should be explained.
5. **Effects on enrolled students.** Indicate how students enrolled under current catalogs will be able to complete the program. Note: Students transferring from

Michigan community colleges may graduate under catalogs in place while they were enrolled at the community college. Consult the admissions office or the transfer office for more detail.

6. **Student or external market demand.** Provide recent fall census enrollment numbers for the program being revised. These numbers can be obtained from the institutional research web site at www.wmich.edu/ir. If this revision is expected to increase or decrease enrollment, please describe.
7. **Effects on resources.** Describe any resource needs (faculty, laboratory equipment and space, studio equipment or space, advising support, administrative support, library acquisitions, or other needs) created by this. Before the proposal is sent to the curriculum manager, there must be a letter of support from the dean of University Libraries if there are any resource implications for the library. These issues may be addressed in an attached proposal document. If so, indicate that here.
8. **General Education criteria.** This section does not apply unless the completion of this academic program is intended to substitute for a general education requirement. See the university's general education policy for more information on this.
9. **List the learning outcomes for the major, minor or concentration. These are the outcomes that the department will use for future assessments of the course.** This section must be completed even if the learning outcomes remain the same after the revision takes effect.
10. **Describe how this curriculum change is in response to assessment outcomes that are part of departmental or college assessment/accreditation review.** It is expected that most curriculum changes are related to departmental or college assessments. You should describe how assessment/accreditation led to this change or indicate that it is not related. If this proposal was not prompted by assessment, then this section should state that.
11. **Describe, in detail, how this curriculum change affects transfer articulation from Michigan community colleges.** This section does not apply to graduate programs. This step will take a lot of time, but will save time later on. In consultation with advisors, your department chair, or your college advising office, identify how students at Michigan community colleges can transfer into this program. The offerings of all Michigan community colleges should be reviewed for this purpose.