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1 Approval Requirements

Approval must be obtained for all of the following:

- 1.1 New or revised courses, including the cross-listing of courses.
- 1.2 New or revised academic programs. NOTE: This also may require state-level approval and regional accreditation approval.
- 1.3 Accelerated degree programs, which must follow the policy on such programs, as approved by the Faculty Senate, the Provost, and the Board of Trustees.
- 1.4 Dual-degree programs or joint marketing agreements.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 Deletion of courses and academic programs.
- 1.7 Suspending an academic program or re-instating a suspended program.
- 1.8 Changes to academic program admissions requirements, as described in the catalogs.
- 1.9 Changes to curricula, such as the College of Arts and Sciences Essentials (CASE) Curriculum that applies to all students graduating from the College of Arts and Sciences or the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) requirements of the Haworth College of Business.

2 Process

The curriculum change process is initiated by a department faculty member and involves a series of review steps by faculty committees and University administrators. The goal of this process is to produce curriculum improvements that provide value to students and employ University resources efficiently and effectively. This process is the key element of shared governance at the University.

The efficient use of resources must always be considered when creating new courses or programs. Specific departments generally have expertise in a specific academic subject, although that is not always the case. For example, leadership is an academic subject that is important in many academic and professional fields that benefits from courses that consider the impact of different environments on leadership issues. As such, it is a subject that is not proprietary to a single department. Proposals for new courses and programs must avoid duplication and inefficient use of resources and endeavor to use existing courses where practicable.

Figure 1 shows the college portion of curriculum process for all course and program changes.

The curriculum process starts with faculty. Departments may have a formal curriculum committee that approves proposals created by one or more faculty members. If a department does not have a formal curriculum committee, it is important that the department faculty develop and review proposals to ensure that they meet goals of the department and the needs of students. If there are any questions about the curriculum process, faculty should contact the WMU Curriculum Manager.

In addition to completing all fields in the proposal form, proposals that create or change courses or programs must include the current catalog copy language and the proposed catalog copy language, as an attachment.

A syllabus and class schedule must be attached to proposals that create new courses or change courses.

Documentation of methods to be used to assess student learning outcomes must be included for proposals that create new WMU Essential Studies courses or significant changes to existing WMU Essential Studies courses.



Figure 1: Curriculum Revision Process – All Proposals

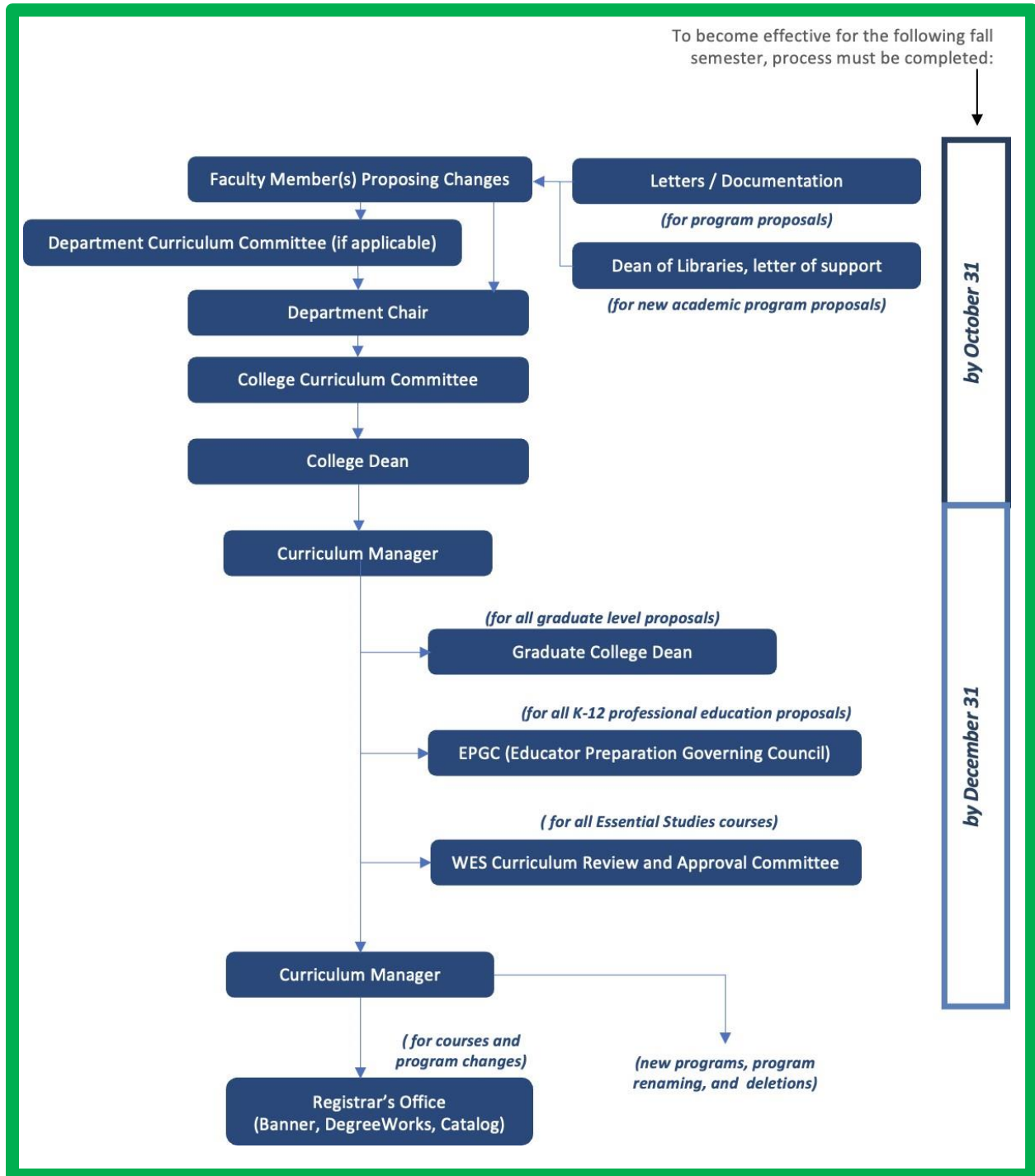




Table 1: Adding or Deleting Courses in Interdisciplinary Programs

Adding or Deleting Courses from a Program			
	<u>Documentation Required</u>	<u>Appeal to:</u>	
		<u>Intra-College</u>	<u>Inter-College</u>
Add Course(s)	Letter of Support from Chair	None	None
Delete Course	Letter of Support from Chair	Dean	Provost

2.1 Interdisciplinary Programs

Further documentation must be included in a program proposal that adds or deletes courses from another department or college. Table 1 gives the documentation required and the potential to appeal decision to add or delete a course. Intra- college means within a college whereas inter-college means among colleges.

2.2 Adding a Course

When adding a course from another department to a program, the proposal must include a letter of support from the chair of the department offering the course affirming that the department faculty have approved the addition of this course to the program. If the department does not want the course to be added, there is no appeal of this decision, meaning the course is not added to the program.

2.3 Deleting a Course

When deleting a course from a program, the first step is to obtain a letter of support from the chair of the department providing the course. The chair of the department initiating the proposal should allow 15 business days for a response to their inquiry about support from impacted parties' chair. If further discussion among parties is needed, it should commence within 15 business days of the reply. When a chair declines to support a proposal, documentation that details possible budgetary consequences of the proposal should be provided.

If a letter of support cannot be obtained, the decision can be appealed by submitting evidence of good faith discussions between the chairs and faculty of the department to the Dean (for intra-college programs) or Provost (for inter-college programs). Good faith negotiations should focus on whether the department offering the current course can address the needs of the department responsible for the program. While the department offering the course is typically the subject matter expert, the department offering the program has the responsibility for ensuring the coordination and connection of content between all courses in a program to provide the student with the best educational outcomes.

Issues such as the instructors' qualifications, quality of the instructional materials, availability of support resources, and current course assessment outcomes are all valid areas of concern for the department offering the program. If the number of students taking the course is sufficiently large, the department offering the course should consider creating a unique course tailored to the needs of students in the program. Among features that should be addressed are topics, pedagogy, delivery mode(s), and adequately contextualized problems, examples, cases, and tests.



The dean or Provost has 15 business days to address the appeal and mediate the issues between the impacted parties. The final decision on the appeal must be provided, in writing, to all impacted parties within five business days of the mediation. The decision of the dean or Provost is final.

2.4 New Proposals

For new proposals that are creating or changing explicitly interdisciplinary programs, the proposal must include a document defining how decisions regarding program changes and deletions are to be made. Explicitly interdisciplinary programs are listed in the catalog under an interdisciplinary heading.

Creating a new program is a significant undertaking, and sufficient time must be allowed for the curriculum review process. This is especially true with interdisciplinary programs. For intra-college or inter-college curriculum proposals that are intended to be submitted in the fall of an academic year, the following dates are strongly recommended to ensure that the proposal can be completed in timely manner. Failure to heed these deadlines may result in the proposal not getting through the process and implemented for the intended catalog year.

- 2.4.1. Initiate proposal by January 1 of prior academic year
- 2.4.2. Initiate discussions with impacted departments by March 1 of prior academic year
- 2.4.3. Obtain letters of support or evidence of good faith discussions prior to April 15 of prior academic year

For new programs, the proposal must contain an estimate of program demand and a projection of enrollment in the program for five years from the start of the program. This enrollment projection will be used to determine if the program has met its enrollment goals. If the program does not meet the projected enrollment, it must either be deleted or the dean(s) involved may grant an extension of up to three years for the program to meet the enrollment goals. If the program does not meet the enrollment goals after the extension, then the program must be deleted.

The department chair must review the proposal to ensure it is complete and all required documentation is included. Once the proposal is approved by the department chair, it proceeds to the college curriculum committee. The chair of the college curriculum committee schedules the date of the college curriculum committee meeting(s) and must send a notification of the meeting date, time, location, and agenda to the distribution list provided by the Faculty Senate office at least five business days prior to the meeting.

Curriculum proposals approved by the College Curriculum Committee are then reviewed by the college dean. The dean is responsible for seeing that all required documentation is included in the proposal and ensuring that the college has sufficient resources to support the proposal. The dean must approve proposals by October 31 if they are to be implemented for fall of the following academic year. New courses and course changes that are approved by the dean by March 31 can be implemented in the spring semester of the following academic year, but these courses will not appear in the catalog.

Once the proposal is approved by the dean, it is reviewed by the Curriculum Manager for completeness. The Curriculum Manager will work with the college faculty and leadership to obtain any missing information, documentation, or attachments needed to complete the proposal before routing the proposal onto the next step.



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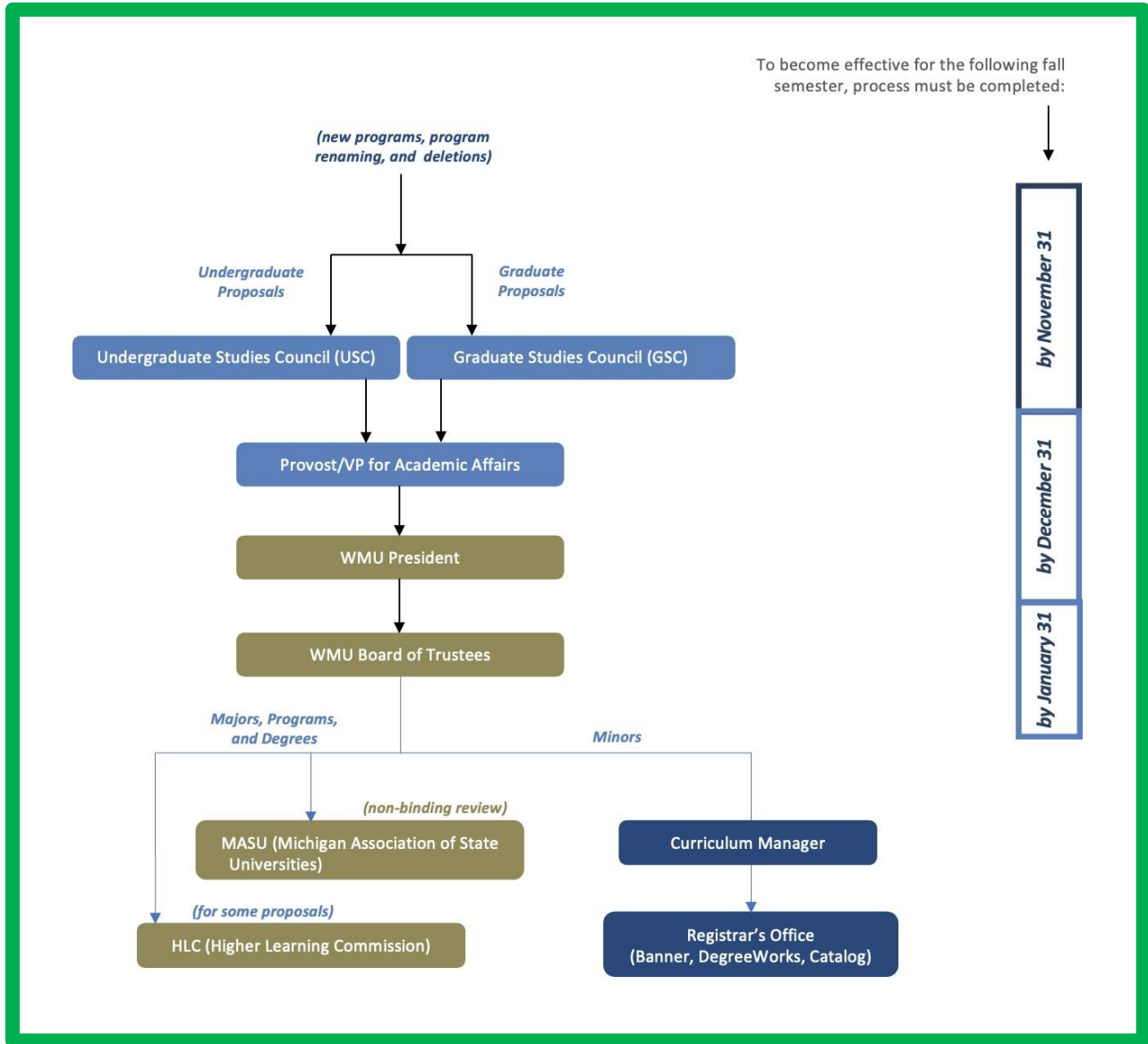
General Principles of Curriculum Change

Most curriculum proposals are final upon approval of the dean. Figure 2 shows the process for proposals that require further approval in addition to the dean of the college. Proposals that require further review are proposals for new academic programs, program name changes, and program deletions, which require approval through the Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Council or Undergraduate Studies Council, the Provost, the President, the Board of Trustees, and the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) (except for new minors, which are final with approval by the Board of Trustees). Other exceptions include those which require approval from the Educator Preparation Governing Council (EPGC) and the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee. 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.

Graduate level proposals are reviewed by the Graduate College dean. K-12 professional education proposals are reviewed by EPGC. All proposals involving WMU Essential Studies courses are reviewed by WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee. Once these reviews are completed, the proposal is again routed to the Curriculum Manager.



Figure 2: Curriculum Revision Process – Further Review which Create, Rename, or Delete a Program





3 Roles of Individuals and Committees

Individuals and committees with roles in the curriculum process are addressed in this section.

3.1 Faculty

The curriculum change process begins with departmental faculty. The department chair may also initiate a curriculum change. Faculty must:

- 3.1.1. Complete the proposal in the electronic curriculum system
- 3.1.2. Ensure that the proposal abides by the department policy statement in relation to curriculum
- 3.1.3. Work with chair to get letters of support or good faith discussions from impacted departments and colleges
- 3.1.4. Ensure that all faculty have been consulted on the proposal if there is no department curriculum committee

3.2 Department Curriculum Committee

Departments are strongly encouraged to have an active and involved curriculum committee as an important part of shared governance. In addition, the more people that review a curriculum change, the more likely it is that any problems or errors in the proposal will be found and corrected before implementation. The department curriculum committee must:

- 3.2.1. Ensure that the proposal is complete
- 3.2.2. Ensure that all faculty have been consulted on the proposal

3.3 Department Chair

The department chair must:

- 3.3.1. 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.
- 3.3.2. Consult with faculty to ensure that proposals are written according this policy and all Faculty Senate guidelines related to curriculum.
- 3.3.3. Ensure that proposals are consistent with the departmental assessment plan, and that they include identification of measurable student learning outcomes for assessment.
- 3.3.4. Ensure that necessary administrative approvals are obtained. This includes review for the completeness of the proposal at each step.
- 3.3.5. Consult with deans about proposals being considered in the department, especially proposals for new programs and other changes which have resource implications.
- 3.3.6. Ensure a detailed resource plan is attached to the proposal. The resource plan must, at a minimum, address resources needed to staff the course as well other resources needed to support the proposal, e.g., computer resources, laboratory resources, library resources, etc.
- 3.3.7. Obtain letters of support from other departments for interdisciplinary programs. For majors/minors/certificates being multi-unit or multi-college, letters of support from administrators of all units named in the proposal must be attached to the initial proposal. These letters must include statements the unit supporting the proposal will offer the courses with sufficient capacity to meet the enrollment plan, addressing any needs for additional resources. Further, multi-unit/multi-college proposals must include a letter from a unit/college administrator indicating the acceptance of that unit/college being the administrative home for the proposed program, addressing any needs for additional resources.
- 3.3.8. Respond to curriculum inquiries in a timely manner.



- 3.3.9. Read the agendas and minutes of other college curriculum committees and, when necessary, respond to the appropriate college committee chairs regarding proposals that affect the department.

3.4 College Curriculum Committee

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. The College Curriculum Committee must:

- 3.4.1. Distribute college curriculum committee agendas and meeting minutes to all members of the distribution list as maintained by the Faculty Senate office. This list should include, at a minimum, 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 annually update this list to maintain accuracy. The agendas should be circulated electronically at least five working days prior to the College Curriculum Committee meeting so that individuals who want to view proposals in advance will have time to do so.
- 3.4.2. Ensure that proposals are complete including:
 - i. Proposal initiated by a faculty member. If the proposal is initiated by someone other than a faculty member (e.g., chair, director, dean), ensure documentation of faculty support is attached to proposal
 - ii. Letters of support for addition or deletion of courses from another department in interdisciplinary programs
 - iii. Letters of support or evidence of good faith discussions from all impacted parties
 - iv. Course syllabus, as required
 - v. Detailed resource plan.
- 3.4.3. Evaluate proposals considering 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 the college and department.
 - iv. The academic quality of the proposal and the faculty involved.
 - v. The consistency between the proposal and university policies as stated in the relevant catalogs.
- 3.4.4. Initiate college-level curriculum studies as appropriate or requested.

3.5 College Dean

The dean must:

- 3.5.1. Ensure that the college curriculum committee schedules its meetings and follows University policies on curriculum change.
- 3.5.2. Consult with the Provost on proposed new academic programs and proposed program deletions as early as possible in the approval process.
- 3.5.3. Consult with departments to make sure that resource requirements have been met.
- 3.5.4. Ensure that proposals for new courses do not duplicate existing courses and represent an efficient use of University resources.
- 3.5.5. Review proposals for implications for accreditation, certification, or licensure.



- 3.5.6. Ensure that proposals are complete before forwarding to the curriculum manager.
- 3.5.7. Consult with faculty, department chairs, deans, and others who require assistance in developing curriculum proposals.
- 3.5.8. Ensure that agendas of college curriculum committee meetings are circulated appropriately.
- 3.5.9. Request periodic review of academic programs or request that departments consider specific issues involving their academic programs.
- 3.5.10. Require that market studies be completed on proposals for new academic programs, with the cost of the study being paid by the college budget, when necessary.
- 3.5.11. Obtain letters of support from other deans for inter-college support, consulting with the dean or their designee.
- 3.5.12. Approve or disapprove of proposals, with possible conditions.
- 3.5.13. Consult with the University's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) or Provost designee on the Higher Learning Commission new academic program requirements.

3.6 Graduate Dean

The graduate dean must:

- 3.6.1. Reviews all curriculum proposals that involve graduate courses and graduate programs. This review is to consider how the revision fits with other graduate offerings and how the revision meets generally accepted standards of graduate education.
- 3.6.2. Approve or disapprove proposals.

3.7 Library Dean

The library dean must:

- 3.7.1. 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.
- 3.7.2. Provide a letter stating that no additional resources are needed or that the library can support the additional resources needed.

3.8 WMU Essential Studies Faculty Director

The WMU Essential Studies faculty director must:

- 3.8.1. Oversee the operation of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee.
- 3.8.2. Consult with the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee.
- 3.8.3. Consult with faculty, department chairs, deans, and others who require assistance in developing WMU Essential Studies course proposals and cyclic course review proposals.
- 3.8.4. Receive proposals that have been approved by the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee and forward them to the next step in the curriculum process.

3.9 Curriculum Manager

The curriculum manager must:

- 3.9.1. Ensure that the curriculum change process is managed according to this curriculum change policy and the curriculum change guidelines.
- 3.9.2. Ensure 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.



- 3.9.3. Receive proposals approved by deans and forwarding proposals for implementation or for review by the appropriate council or committee of the Faculty Senate, the graduate dean, or the curriculum committee of the Educator Preparation Governing Council (EPGC).
- 3.9.4. Receive 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 President's Council of State Universities of Michigan.
- 3.9.5. Consult with faculty, department chairs, deans, and others who require assistance in developing curriculum proposals.
- 3.9.6. 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, the chair of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee and the president of the Faculty Senate. The guides will be available on the Faculty Senate web site.

3.10 Catalog Editor(s)

The catalog editor(s) is appointed by the University Registrar, whose office is responsible for regular updates to the catalog. The catalog editor(s) must:

- 3.10.1. Revise catalogs once appropriate approvals have been obtained.
- 3.10.2. 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 eliminated from the catalog.
- 3.10.3. Prepare an annual report on eliminated courses, which will be sent to the Faculty Senate office for distribution to the appropriate Senate councils.
- 3.10.4. Issue catalogs annually. New catalogs will take effect at the start of the fall semester.

3.11 Provost

The provost must:

- 3.11.1. Request periodic review of academic programs or request that departments and colleges consider specific issues involving their academic programs, as the University's chief academic officer. Changes to academic programs must follow this curriculum change policy adopted by the Faculty Senate.
- 3.11.2. Ensure that proposals for new programs do not duplicate existing programs and ensure that University resources are being used efficiently.
- 3.11.3. Request changes to curriculum proposals 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.
- 3.11.4. Appoints the curriculum manager, an academic officer who must hold faculty rank and tenure in an academic unit.
- 3.11.5. Approve or disapprove of new academic programs, changes to the names of academic programs, and deletions of programs before review by the president. The Provost may add conditions to any proposal.
- 3.11.6. Approve or disapprove the resource plans associated with proposals for new academic programs and for program deletions. This decision should consider the proposal's effect on other departments or colleges.
- 3.11.7. Require independent market studies to assess demand for a proposed new



program, if this is deemed necessary. The cost of this market study will be paid by the Provost's office.

- 3.11.8. Present new programs, name changes, and program deletions to the Board of Trustees and responds to questions from the BOT about those proposals.
- 3.11.9. Represent the University at MASU meetings. This duty may be delegated to a Vice Provost or another academic officer.

3.12 President

The president must:

- 3.12.1. Approve or disapproves new academic programs, name changes for academic programs, and program deletions, prior to their being scheduled for approval by the WMU Board of Trustees. The president may add conditions to any proposal.
- 3.12.2. Authorize the allocation of resources to academic programs.

3.13 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees must:

- 3.13.1. Approve new academic programs prior to their being offered.
- 3.13.2. Approve program name changes and program deletions, prior to those changes taking effect.

3.14 Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate must:

- 3.14.1. Approve changes to this policy.
- 3.14.2. Oversee all Senate councils and committees related to the curriculum process. Membership on senate councils and committees is determined by the policies of the Faculty Senate.

3.14.3. Undergraduate Studies Council

The Undergraduate Studies Council must:

- i. Approve or disapprove 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.
- ii. Evaluate student learning outcomes to ensure that they are appropriate and measurable and included in the catalog copy of each proposal.
- iii. Check that the following items are included in the proposal, at a minimum: rationale, University mission support, documentation for intra- or inter-departmental differences, enrollment plan for new programs, and ensure the program will not lengthen a student's time to graduation.
- iv. Undertake reviews of undergraduate programs, if directed by the Provost.

3.14.4. Graduate Studies Council

The Graduate Studies Council must:

- i. Approve or disapprove of 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.
- ii. Evaluate student learning outcomes to ensure that they are appropriate and measurable and the catalog copy of each proposal.
- iii. Check that the following items are include in the proposal, at a minimum: rationale, University mission support, and documentation for intra- or



- iv. inter-departmental differences, enrollment plan for new programs.
- iv. Undertake reviews of graduate programs, if directed by the Provost.

3.14.5. WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee must:

- i. Coordinate with the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee for the on-going course review and approval process.
- ii. Undertake a review of the WMU Essential Studies Program every four years.
- iii. Maintain an assessment handbook that includes processes on initiating, submitting, and reviewing individual WMU Essential Studies courses.

iv. WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee

The WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee must:

- a Approve or disapproval of all WMU Essential Studies courses.
- b Recommend changes in the WMU Essential Studies Program and processes. These recommendations go to the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee.
- c Ensure that student learning outcomes (SLOs) for a course are identified. This committee cannot restrict which SLOs are included for a new WMU Essential Studies course.
- d Ensure the assessment plans match the identified SLOs
- e Review a revised WMU Essential Studies course only on the basis of the proposal change. The committee cannot bring up new issue with the course being included in the WMU Essential Studies program.
- f Provide feedback regarding why a course was not approved

3.15 Curriculum Committee of the Educator Preparation Governing Council (EPGC)

The EPGC must:

- 3.15.1. 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 Human Development and proposals for programs that originate in other colleges

4 Appeals

There are two different types of appeals: academic officer appeals and University-level council or committee appeals.

Academic officer decisions may be appealed as follows:

- 4.1.1. A department chair's decision can be appealed to the dean of the college.
- 4.1.2. A dean's decision can be appealed to the Provost.
- 4.1.3. Academic officer's appeals must be acted on, and communicated in writing to all chairs impacted, by the dean or Provost within 30 calendar days of the appeal.

If good faith discussions for interdisciplinary proposals do not yield a compromise, the proposal can be appealed, in writing, at the college level for intra-college issues and at the Provost level for inter-college issues. The decision of the dean or Provost is final and cannot be appealed once that decision has been made.



4.2 University-Level Decisions

University-level council or committee appeals can be made once a proposal has been moved on to the Curriculum Manager for further forwarding and can only involve deviations from the curriculum process, not content. University-level decisions can be appealed on the basis of process violations as follows:

- 4.2.1. Appeals must be acted on at the first possible meeting of the appealing body.
- 4.2.2. Decisions of the Undergraduate Studies Council and the Graduate Studies Council can be appealed to the Faculty Senate Executive Board and then to the full Senate.
- 4.2.3. Decisions of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee can be appealed to the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee.

4.3 Appeal of a Proposal Based on a Process Violation

Any representative(s) of an impacted unit who witnesses a process violation can appeal a decision of a Faculty Senate council or committee. Examples of a process violation include, but are not limited to:

- 4.3.1. failure of the council/committee to allow discussion or debate, failure to permit presentation of relevant information, exclusion of interested parties, a demonstration of bias among the council/committee, allegations of a conflict of interest, or failure to provide feedback and/or guidance on how to remedy deficiencies in the proposal.
- 4.3.2. Examples of what is not a process violation include, but are not limited to:
 - 4.3.3. not attending meetings,
 - 4.3.4. not sending a representative, or
 - 4.3.5. disagreeing on a content decision.

5 Appeal Process

Anyone in attendance at the council or committee meeting who believes a process violation has occurred can make an appeal. In the WMU Faculty Senate parliamentary process, the first and most appropriate course of action would be to make a motion or ask that the motion be reconsidered during the meeting. If someone at the council/committee meeting still believes that there was a process violation, an appeal can be made after a council/committee meeting was adjourned. The appellant(s) must:

- 5.1.1. Submit an appeal in writing to the Faculty Senate Executive Board Ex Officio to that council/committee within five business days of the alleged violation so the appeal can be presented to the Faculty Senate Executive Board at their next available meeting.
- 5.1.2. Include in the appeal reasons behind the appeal and any information supporting the appeal. There will be no opportunity for extended in-person appeals or oral arguments.
- 5.1.3. The Faculty Senate Executive Board must:
 - i. Respond to appeals in writing.
 - ii. Investigate all allegations listed in the appeal.
 - iii. Seek clarifications from the appellant(s) or others, if they so choose, in writing, giving the appellant(s) 10 business days to provide the information requested.
 - iv. Respond to the appellant(s) in writing within 10 business days of their decision.
 - v. Provide any appeal documentation as an attachment so that the documentation moves forward with the proposal.
 - vi. A process appeal is not considered an appeal of the decision, but rather a general process irregularity that must be resolved by the Executive



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate

General Principles of Curriculum Change

Board. The Executive Board may find that fundamental errors in process merit reconsideration of the proposal by the original council or committee, or that there was no process violation. These decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

5.1.4. Appeals of WMU Essential Studies Courses

New WMU Essential Studies courses, or substantial changes of WMU Essential Studies courses, are evaluated by the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee. If a course is not approved, the chair of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee must provide comments explaining why the course was not approved. These comments must provide guidance to the originator about why the proposal was not approved.

If a course is not approved after the comments have been addressed and the proposal resubmitted, this decision can be appealed to the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee. The appeal must be made by the originator, in writing, within five business days of notification from the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee that the proposal was not approved. The appeal should state clearly why the course should be included and address the feedback provided by WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee. The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee must evaluate the appeal at the next available meeting, and respond, in writing, to the appeal within 10 business days of the decision. The decision of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee is final and cannot be appealed.

Appeals to the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee can also be made based on a process violation, following the process in Section 5 above.

6 Curriculum Change Deadlines and Approval Routes

Table 2 provides a quick reference for these deadlines and the text provides more detail on these deadlines and approval routes.



Table 2: Adding or Deleting Courses in Interdisciplinary Programs

New academic programs

- Can only begin at start of a fall semester
- Approvals to President must be completed by December of prior calendar year
- Remaining approvals must be completed by April of the preceding spring semester

Revision of programs

- Can only begin at start of a fall semester
- Approval of college and dean must be completed by October 31 of preceding calendar year

Deletion of programs and academic program name changes

- Take effect only at the start of a fall semester
- Approvals to President must be completed by December of prior calendar year
- Remaining approvals must be completed by April of the preceding spring semester

Revised graduation requirements

- Take effect only at the start of a fall semester
- All approvals must be completed by December of preceding calendar year

New WMU Essential Studies Courses and WMU Essential Studies program changes

- Take effect only at the start of a fall semester
- Approval of college and dean must be completed by October 31 of preceding calendar year

New or deleted courses and changes to existing courses

- Can take effect in fall or spring semester
 - fall: approved by October 31 of preceding academic year
 - spring: approved by March 31 of preceding academic year

6.1 New Academic Programs

New academic programs can begin only at the start of a fall semester and must be approved by the department, college curriculum committee, dean, Educator Preparation Governing Council (EPGC) (if needed), Faculty Senate 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 MASU must be completed no later than April of the preceding spring semester. New minors are final upon approval by the Board of Trustees. For example, a new program to start in fall 2026 must have completed the approval process through the Provost's approval no later than December 2025, with approval from the President, Board of Trustees, and MASU no later than April 2026. Some new programs, including offering programs in new locations, may also require approval of the Higher Learning Commission. Note: If a department wants to wait until a new program is listed in 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 2026 class were prepared in the spring of 2025.



6.2 Deletion of Programs and Name Changes of Academic Programs

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 MASU 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.

6.3 Revised Graduation Requirements

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 2026 must be approved by the end of the fall 2025 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 Educator Preparation Governing Council (EPGC). Revised graduation requirements for graduate programs require approval by the department, College Curriculum Committee, dean, and graduate dean.

6.4 New WMU Essential Studies Courses and WMU Essential Studies Program Changes

New WMU Essential Studies courses and changes to WMU Essential Studies program can take effect only at the start of a fall semester and must have received all the necessary approvals through the college and dean by October 31 of the preceding calendar year. Thus, a proposed change for fall 2026 must be approved by October 31, 2025. WMU Essential Studies courses require approval by the department, College Curriculum Committee, dean, WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee and the WMU Essential Studies Faculty Director. Changes to the WMU Essential Studies policy are managed according to the policies of the Faculty Senate.

6.5 New Courses and Changes to Existing Courses

New courses and changes to existing courses are available for scheduling in a fall or spring semester. A new course or a course change starting in fall semester must be approved by October 31 of the preceding academic year. A new course or course change starting in spring semester must be approved by March 31 of the preceding academic year.

No exceptions can be granted to the deadline for new programs, program name changes, or program deletions, since those deadlines are set by MASU. Exceptions to the deadlines for other types of changes can be made by the Curriculum Manager, in consultation with the Provost and Registrar.

7 Key Definitions/Glossary

- 7.1 Accelerated Graduate Degree Programs (AGDP)
- 7.2 Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)
- 7.3 Board of Trustees (BOT)
- 7.4 Educator Preparation Governing Council (EPGC)
- 7.5 Graduate Certificate Programs (GCP)
- 7.6 Graduate Studies Council (GSC)
- 7.7 Haenicke Institute for Global Education (HIGE)
- 7.8 Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU)
- 7.9 Undergraduate Certificate Programs (UCP)



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- 7.10 Undergraduate Studies Council (USC)
- 7.11 WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee
- 7.12 WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee

8 Academic Programs Definitions

Academic programs are defined to include:

- 8.1 Major: a major is the primary field of study for an undergraduate or graduate student. Undergraduate majors must have at least 24 credit hours.
- 8.2 Minor: undergraduate programs of 15 or more credit hours of courses representing a student's secondary field of study.
- 8.3 Curricula: requirements that apply to a larger group of majors, such as the College of Arts and Sciences Essentials (CASE) 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
- 8.4 Cognates: a course, or a group of courses, related to a major or minor. Cognates may include courses from outside the department of the degree program. Courses used as cognates do not count towards the minimum 24 hours required for the major and may be used to satisfy requirements in another major, minor, or other academic program.
- 8.5 Graduate Certificate Programs: graduate certificates may be approved for students in a degree program or as separate entities. Per MOA-16/01: Revise Credit Requirements for Certificate Programs and Second Master's Degrees in the Graduate Catalog, certificate programs will be a minimum of 9 credit hours.
- 8.6 Undergraduate Certificate Programs: Undergraduate certificates may be approved for students in a degree program or as separate entities. Per MOA-21/05: Revision of MOA-16/03 for Undergraduate Certificate Programs, certificate programs will be a minimum of 15 credit hours to a maximum of 24 credits/semester hours. However, individual certificate programs may exceed the maximum commensurate with the breadth and depth of the preparation for the external professional license or certificate (e.g., the needs of the intended professional training).
- 8.7 Emphasis, Track, or Focus Area: this is a set of related courses within a major that provide a student with a specialization in an area that may prove advantageous in their future careers. These are not reported on the diploma or in a student's transcript but can be used by the student on their resume.
- 8.8 Interdisciplinary Programs: interdisciplinary programs are academic programs that include courses from more than one department. Interdisciplinary programs may be intra-college or inter-college. Many programs are implicitly interdisciplinary—there is no language in the catalog that highlights that these courses come from more than one department. There are also academic programs that are explicitly interdisciplinary. These programs are listed in the catalog under an interdisciplinary heading. As interdisciplinary programs involve more than one department and, perhaps, more than one college, the curriculum process needs to consider the impact curriculum changes have on resources.

9 Academic Units Definitions

Academic units are defined to include:

- 9.1 Departments and Schools, as they have been established by the Board of Trustees and organized into colleges.
- 9.2 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.
- 9.3 Centers, as established by the policy on centers and institutes. Centers do not offer courses or degrees.



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10 Additional Information

Concentrations were previously defined as separate academic programs in the July 8, 2015 revision of this policy. Concentrations have evolved since that time and in practice are technically the same as a major. To simplify the curriculum, no new concentrations will be created, and any curriculum change to existing concentrations must also change the concentration to a major.

11 Related Policies

- 11.1 Process for Organizational Changes of Academic Units is retained as a separate policy and is not affected by this policy.
<https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2021/OrganizationalChangesAcademicUnits.April2021.pdf>
- 11.2 Verification of Faculty Credentials. <https://wmich.edu/policies/verification-faculty-credentials>