

UCC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE  
GUIDELINES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## Purpose & Overview

The purpose of this manual is to collate and make more accessible the guidelines, policies, and practices that guide the work and decisions of the UCC Programs Committee and to assist faculty, departments, and colleges, in the process of proposing new programs and revisions to programs.

The Programs Committee (PC) is a standing committee of the University Curriculum Council (UCC), as established by the Ohio University Faculty Senate. “The Program Committee is concerned with addition, and first follow-up of new programs, as well as deletion, relocation, and changes in existing academic programs, degrees, master curriculum file prefixes, and major codes,” ([Faculty Handbook](#) VII.B.7.).

PC recommends approval to UCC all new and revised academic programs (certificates, minors, and undergraduate and graduate degrees) that are documented on OHIO’s official transcripts. PC also serves as a communication mechanism for curricular notifications and archival documentation.

Per UCC resolution,

- Any university credential bearing the term DEGREE, MAJOR, MINOR, or CERTIFICATE must follow program requirement policies outlined in this manual.
- Use of the term DEGREE, MAJOR, MINOR, or CERTIFICATE for university or university-sponsored training or credentialing that do not meet UCC program requirements is strictly prohibited.
- University or university-sponsored training or credentialing that do not meet program requirements may choose to use alternative terms such as training, badge, or micro-credential.
- Use of third-party certifications as a component of academic, co-curricular, extra-curricular, or professional development learning and training are permitted.

### Ohio University Review Levels (in order)

Department/School Curriculum Committee (optional)

Department Chair/School Director

College Curriculum Committee

College Dean

Programs Committee (in consultation with the General Education committee for undergraduate programs, if needed, and [Graduate Council](#) via Bridge Committee for graduate programs)

University Curriculum Committee

Executive Vice President and Provost

President

Board of Trustees

### Review Levels Beyond Ohio University

1. Ohio Department of Higher Education  
Academic Program Approval  
Educator licensure and endorsement programs

Chancellor’s Council on Graduate Studies (CCGS)- (Contact the Associate Dean in the Graduate College of any new graduate program proposals or change requests as early as possible.)

2. Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

*A new curricular offering cannot be announced or advertised until it is fully approved by ODHE, CCGS (for graduate programs only), and HLC.*

## **Guidelines for Submitting New Programs, Minors, & Certificates**

It is critical that all program submissions follow the instructions listed in these guidelines. New programs must go through all levels of approval—including, if relevant, state approval and HLC—before they may be advertised.

Templates are available on the UCC Programs Committee website. Responses must be provided for all items on the template.

### New Undergraduate Proposals

- Undergraduate Major
- Undergraduate Minor
- Undergraduate Certificate

### New Graduate Proposals

- Graduate Degree Program
- Graduate Professional Degree Program
- Graduate Certificate
- Accelerated Graduate Pathways (AGP)

### Program/Certificate Change Proposal

## **Submission Instructions**

[OCEAN 1.9](#) is used for the submission of new programs and program changes. OCEAN 1.9 tracks approvals from the submission by the contact to the vote at UCC. Comments and discussion can be added to the Discussion tab at any level.

## **New Program, Certificate, Minor or AGP**

1. Contact the Catalog Editor and Program Management Specialist in the Registrar’s Office to initiate a new program. A form will be created in [OCEAN 1.9](#) and a temporary program code will be issued. The new program will be located in your Worklist.
2. Complete the OCEAN 1.9 form
3. Upload a pdf document addressing all questions in the relevant template and any other supporting documentation to the Relation tab and click submit.

The proposal document should be saved with the date and program code in the name of the document, e.g., MAXX01LawJusticeCulture 112523.

## Program Change Proposal

1. Generate a pdf of the current program requirements from the appropriate catalog.
2. Attach a pdf proposal document addressing all the questions on the Program Change template.

Save the document and program number in the name of the document, e.g.,  
BS6417CustomerService 112523.

3. Request that the Catalog Editor and Program Management Specialist in the Registrar's Office make the existing program available in your OCEAN 1.9 worklist. When the program is in edit mode, many items will be editable. **DO NOT CHANGE ANY ITEMS IN OCEAN.** Any changes made in OCEAN will not be communicated to the catalog.
4. Upload your proposal to the Relations tab and click submit.

## UCC Review Process and Timelines

New Programs and program changes to the undergraduate catalog must be completed before the catalog is published in the late spring for the upcoming academic year (with specific deadlines set by the Office of the Registrar). All necessary external approvals must be in place before information is published in the catalog.

As outlined in the Faculty Handbook, the PC, in conjunction with the Bridge Committee from Graduate Council, will review graduate proposals, provide feedback, and make recommendations to the full UCC membership regarding all proposals.

Approval by majority vote of UCC is required for proposals to be forwarded to the Provost, the Ohio University Board of Trustees, and the Ohio Department of Higher Education. Some proposals may require Higher Learning Commissions (HLC) notification and/or review. All approvals must be obtained before programs can begin marketing and accepting students.

## New Program Approval

New programs recommended to UCC are presented for first reading and UCC vote contingent on a two-week comment period. Unless questions or concerns arise during the reading or comment period, the new program is approved. If questions or concerns arise, the proposal will be presented for approval at the next UCC meeting. It is important to note that all courses included in a new program must be approved by the Individual Course Committee (ICC) either before or concurrent to the program approval.

## Program Change Approval

Program changes recommended to UCC are presented for first reading and UCC vote. Unless questions or concerns arise during the first reading, the program change is approved. If questions or concerns arise, UCC votes on the program change at a second reading.

The PC and UCC process takes time. The meeting dates are on the PC website. Agendas for meetings are distributed one week before each meeting. Complete proposals in OCEAN 1.9 must

be at the PC level, i.e., approved by the college dean, by the Monday, the week prior to the meeting date to be considered.

### **Expedited Program Change Requests**

Upon approval at the college level, when the College Curriculum Committee (CCC) believes the proposed changes are eligible for expedited review, they may request such by adding the note, “Expedited Review Requested,” in the discussion tab of OCEAN 1.9. PC may also recommend program changes as expedited. Program changes that qualify for expedited review are considered by the PC and the Registrar’s Office. If approved, the expedited change proposal is included on the next UCC agenda for documentation and notification purpose only. No voting or multiple readings at UCC is necessary.

### **Timing of New/Changed Programs in Conjunction with New/Changed Courses**

All course approvals are completed by UCC’s Individual Course Committee (ICC). PC will review new program proposals and program change proposals that include new courses and course revisions that have not yet completed all levels of approval. PC will not make recommendations to UCC for approval until new courses/course revisions are either approved or being recommended to UCC concurrently as the new program/program change.

### **Appeals Process**

Because curricular proposals do not normally go to the full UCC for a vote without PC approval; and in some cases, a majority opinion of the PC may constitute a minority opinion of UCC, the following appeal process is available.

If the PC either refuses to approve a proposal or requires revisions that the proposer considers unacceptable and informal consultation has not resolved the issue, the proposer may appeal the committee decision within two committee meetings of the decision or request. The college designee for UCC should represent the proposing faculty member or unit at the committee meeting, supported by the faculty member and/or disciplinary representatives. If the committee and the college are unable to reach an agreement, the proposal will move to UCC as a whole for an up-or-down vote.

Informational note: Extraordinary circumstances may occasionally require approvals to be revisited. In accordance with Sturgis’s parliamentary procedures, any member of UCC may move to reconsider a UCC vote. Normal voting rules govern motions to rescind a previous motion (approved course or program).

### **Notifications and Consultations Regarding Cross Departmental Requirements**

A department or school that wishes to require its students to take a course offered by another academic unit must obtain written approval from the chair or director of the unit in which the course is offered. Documentation of the approval must be uploaded to the Relation tab in OCEAN 1.9 prior to PC recommendation for approval.

A department or school that has decided to drop from its curriculum a required course offered by another unit should inform the affected unit, preferably at least a year in advance of when the students would ordinarily enroll in the course. In situations that require or would permit faster action, the department planning to drop should consult immediately with the offering unit to see

if the drop would cause any scheduling problems. Documentation of the notification must be uploaded to the Relation tab in OCEAN 1.9 prior to PC recommendation for approval.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Departments, Schools, Colleges, and the UCC Programs Committee**

The curricular process for new programs and program revisions seeks to assure that programs will be sustainable, will serve the mission of Ohio University, will provide high quality educational opportunities, and will avoid conflicts with university or external requirements or processes that will prevent the program from meeting its goals.

The process requires departmental, college, and UCC approval because each phase of the process brings different kinds of expertise and knowledge to bear. In practice, the department or school is exclusively responsible for all disciplinary aspects of the program and departmental or school resources; the college is responsible for discussing college needs, resources, policies, and overlaps; and UCC is charged with negotiating the needs and prerogatives of other programs, ensuring that the program itself is consistent with university policies, and verifying that the program is in accordance with state requirements. Because the university depends on this curricular process to serve all its students and to protect the quality and brand of the institution, each committee in the program approval process should briefly document that it has reviewed the aspects of the program for which it is responsible.

The department or school is primarily responsible for ensuring that:

- the program content and structure are appropriate and represent high quality and current approaches within the field or discipline.
- the program serves the needs of students likely to enroll at the university.
- resources within the department/school are or will be sufficient to offer the program or, if the program is significantly interdisciplinary, that the contributing units have sufficient resources to sustain it
- any necessary academic support resources, including technology and library support, are available and adequate to the program.
- any applicable accreditation requirements for department or program-level accreditation are met.
- All OHIO general education requirements are met, and the program demonstrates how it meets the State OT36 requirement.
- the program is sufficiently differentiated from others currently offered at Ohio University.
- other departments/schools that potentially overlap with this program in their course offerings and disciplinary subfields have been consulted and that their concerns have been addressed (with the understanding that departments may not be aware of all overlaps).
- any other units offering courses that are required or available as electives within the program have been consulted and their concerns have been addressed.
- the accessibility of the program to transfer students and, for Athens programs, students relocating from regional campuses has been considered.
- resemblance to or overlap with programs at other Ohio public institutions is justified.
- any applicable state and university requirements are met, including



- Minimum credit to degree
- Justification for exceeding accepted maximum credits to degree
- ODHE OT36 requirement
- program admissions and graduation requirements are clear and practicable.
- requirements and course sequence, including requisites, are coherent, practicable, and unlikely to delay graduation.
- the Registrar's office has been consulted about DARS coding issues.
- the proposal information is complete and clearly presented, and that the outcomes are present and measurable.

The college committee is responsible for confirming that:

- the program fills a need within the college (assuming that the program is primarily offered within one college).
- college resources are or will be sufficient to offer the program (or that documentation of resources outside the college for interdisciplinary programs is present).
- any applicable accreditation requirements for college-level accreditation are met.
- the program is sufficiently differentiated from others currently offered at Ohio University.
- other departments/schools that potentially overlap with this program in their course offerings and disciplinary subfields have been consulted and that their concerns have been addressed (with the understanding that colleges may not be aware of all overlaps).
- any other units offering courses which are required or available as electives within the program have been consulted and that their concerns have been addressed.
- the accessibility of the program to transfer students has been considered.
- resemblance to or overlap with programs at other Ohio public institutions is justified.
- any applicable state and university requirements are met.
- program admissions and graduation requirements are clear and practicable.
- program requirements and course sequence, including requisites, are coherent, practicable, and unlikely to delay graduation.
- the proposal information is complete and clearly presented, and that the outcomes are present and measurable.

PC and UCC are responsible for confirming that:

- appropriate documentation of college-level discussion is present, including the date of the college meeting.
- the program is sufficiently differentiated from others currently offered at Ohio University.
- other departments/schools that potentially overlap with this program in their course offerings and disciplinary subfields have been consulted and their concerns have been addressed.
- any other units offering courses which are required or available as electives within the program have been consulted and their concerns have been addressed.
- the accessibility of the program to transfer students has been considered.
- resemblance to or overlap with programs at other Ohio public institutions is justified.

- all OHIO general education requirements are met including the State OT36. any applicable state and university requirements are met.
- program admissions and graduation requirements are clear and practicable.
- program requirements and course sequence, including requisites, are coherent, practicable, and unlikely to delay graduation.
- the Registrar’s office has been consulted about DARS coding issues.
- the proposal information is complete and clearly presented, and that the outcomes are present and measurable.
- all required courses are approved or have reached at least the college level of review.

## **Program Requirements**

This section includes OHIO, ODHE, HLC, and Federal requirements for Undergraduate and Graduate programs.

### **University Requirements for Undergraduate Programs, Minors & Certificates**

#### **Degree Programs**

University requirements for all undergraduate degree programs are outlined in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#). The catalog includes information regarding basic requirements (e.g. minimum credit hours and residency) and general education requirements. Specific college–level, department–level, and/or school–level requirements for majors and minors are explained under the appropriate college, department, or school listing in the catalog. University requirements include the following for undergraduates:

- A minimum of 120 semester hours of credit is required for a bachelor’s degree, with all other requirements met. An associate degree requires a minimum of 60 semester hours.
- A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required for a bachelor’s degree while enrolled at Ohio University, and a minimum of 50% of coursework taken to fulfill a major concentration is required in residence. A minimum of 18 semester credit hours for an associate degree while enrolled at Ohio University is required and a minimum of 50% of coursework taken to fulfill a major concentration is required in residence.
- A minimum of 15 semester credit hours completed in the minor is required, and there are no minimum requirements for a major. The specific requirements are determined by the major (and minor, where selected) department/school and are included in the catalog.
- A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (C) is required on all hours attempted (including work taken at another institution if a transfer student) and in the major or equivalent as determined by your college. A college may have additional GPA requirements.
- All bachelor’s degree students must complete OHIO’s General Education requirements (minimum of 38 credit hours; see Appendix A). Honors Tutorial College students are required to meet the learning objectives of our general education program through alternative means. Associate degree students must complete the first-year English composition and quantitative skills requirements.

## **Minors**

- Provide significant academic experience within a single discipline.
- Are open to any student pursuing a baccalaureate program at Ohio University.
- Have a minimum of 15 semester credits and a maximum of 24 semester credits.
- Are administered by a single academic unit and generally consist of courses from that unit.
- Normally it must include at least 2 courses at the 3000 level or above. If administered by a college, it may consist of courses from multiple departments or schools in the college at the 2000 level or above, e.g., the business minor.

## **Departmental Honors**

Colleges and/or departments may offer undergraduate [departmental honors programs](#) (outside of and separate from the Honors Tutorial College). The requirements for departmental honors recognition are not overseen by UCC.

## **Undergraduate Certificates**

These programs are for bachelor's degree seeking undergraduate students and provide a significant interdisciplinary academic experience intended to complement the major, broaden career possibilities, or allow study in an area of interest from a variety of perspectives. Students will be awarded the certificate and receive official recognition on their transcript when they graduate with a bachelor's degree. These certificate programs require:

- courses from at least two disciplines, typically distinct departments
- 12 credits minimum
- 24 credits maximum
- Courses at the 3000 level or above are encouraged

## **Curricular Overlap**

As outlined in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#), to complete the requirements for two baccalaureate degrees (e.g., B.A and B.S.), you must meet the requirements for both degrees and must complete a total of 135 semester hours of college work, with a minimum of 45 semester hours of residence, or the equivalent, at Ohio University.

Colleges or schools may have restrictions on the amount of course or credit overlap allowable between majors, minors, and certificate programs taken within a single degree program. Please consult the undergraduate and graduate catalogs for details.

PC recommends at least a 5-course difference between majors when colleges allow students to select multiple majors within a single degree. When the course requirements for new programs significantly overlap other programs, colleges should supply PC and UCC with a statement regarding the curricular distinction of the new program being proposed. Please be aware that the registrar's office cannot systematically limit the amount of course overlap between programs.

## **State Requirements for Undergraduate Programs**

ODHE's complete requirements, definitions, and processes for approval of programs can be found in their document, Guidelines, and Procedures for Academic Program Review [ODHE Guidelines](#).

### **Degree Programs**

Some ODHE requirements of note:

- bachelor's degree programs require the completion of 120 semester credit hours and should not exceed 126 semester credit hours unless it can be shown that the additional coursework is required to meet professional accreditation or licensing requirements
- associate degree programs require completion of 60 semester credit hours and should not exceed 65 semester credit hours unless it can be shown that the additional coursework is required to meet professional accreditation or licensing requirements.

### **Educator licensure and endorsement programs**

Educator licensure and endorsement programs require ODHE approval with specific additional requirements. Contact the Patton College of Education Director of Assessment and Academic Improvement.

## **University Requirements for Graduate Programs and Certificates**

### **Degree Programs**

University requirements for graduate programs are outlined in the Graduate Catalog. Some requirements of note:

- A minimum of 30 graduate (semester) hours is required for conferral of a master's degree.
- A minimum of 70 graduate (semester) hours beyond the bachelor's degree or 36 beyond a clinical/professional master's degree must be completed for conferral of a professional doctoral degree.
- A minimum of 90 graduate (semester) hours beyond the bachelor's degree must be completed for conferral of a doctoral degree.

### **Graduate Certificates**

Please also see the "REQUIREMENTS REGARDING FINANCIAL AID-ELIGIBLE CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE TO NON-DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS" in the section of this document on "Proposals for New Graduate and Undergraduate Certificate Programs" for information on U.S. Department of Education requirements.

#### ***Interdisciplinary certificates***

These certificates provide a significant interdisciplinary academic experience intended to complement a major program of study, broaden career possibilities, or allow students to study an area of interest from a variety of perspectives and may be for degree and/or non-degree seeking students. Graduate interdisciplinary certificates require: courses from at least two disciplines, typically distinct departments

- 14 credit minimum
- 20 credit maximum

### *Specialized certificates*

These certificates are not required to be interdisciplinary but provide an opportunity for skill development or achievement often for non-degree-seeking students in the workforce and may be related to external agency licensure, endorsements, or certifications, but they may also be available to degree-seeking students. Graduate specialized certificates require:

- 9 credit minimum
- 20 credit maximum

### *Stackable certificates*

These certificates should provide a coherent academic course of study that may be within a single discipline or program or may be multidisciplinary. These certificates may be Interdisciplinary or Specialized. A stackable certificate is intended to be combined (“stacked”) with other stackable certificates and/or other requirements to lead to a graduate degree but may be for degree and/or non-degree seeking students. A capstone or integrating experience is required for graduate degrees composed of stackable certificates. Graduate specialized stackable certificates require:

- 9 credit minimum

### Graduate Curricular Overlap

As outlined in the Graduate Catalog, a maximum of ten (10) semester hours can be shared between each degree program. Academic programs can set more restrictive limits to shared credit.

- Individual courses cannot be shared between certificate programs.
- Individual courses cannot be applied to more than two degree programs.
- Each degree must have a separate capstone project (e.g., thesis, portfolio, recital), and courses covering these cannot be shared.
- Dissertation courses or any course designated “doctoral” cannot be counted toward a concurrent or subsequent master’s degree or certificate.
- Programs can apply more restrictive limits to applying courses to additional degrees or certificates.

### Accelerated Graduate Pathways

Accelerated Graduate Pathways are intended to meet the demand for 3+1, 3+2, 4+1, etc. programs with policies that will shorten the time to a graduate degree while protecting the financial and academic interests of both our students and our academic units. This does not replace the current Senior for Graduate Credit or Early Admission policies in the Graduate Catalog, but it will make graduate coursework for graduate credit accessible to a much greater number of students in strategically targeted ways.

Before initiating an AGP, consult with the Associate Dean in the Graduate College.

### Policy Highlights:

- Under the AGP, students must apply to the graduate program and receive conditional admission in order to earn graduate credit.
- AGP students may earn up to 16 graduate hours prior to conferral of the bachelor's degree.
- An AGP may choose to allow students to count up to 9 graduate hours in place of undergraduate hours toward the bachelor's degree requirement. I.e., these students may receive the undergraduate degree with 111 undergraduate hours if graduate credits bring up the total to 120.
- Per ODHE, AGP students must be "exceptionally well-prepared." The university minimum GPA is 3.2 over all or 3.0 over all with a 3.5 in the most recent 30 hours.
- AGPs will have dedicated program codes and must be approved by UCC prior to enrolling students. The approval process will include specifying eligibility criteria beyond the university minimum.
- Students may apply to the graduate program through the AGP after 60 UG credit hours and may begin earning graduate credits after 75 undergraduate credit hours AND after meeting program-specific eligibility requirements.
- AGP students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 on both the graduate and undergraduate transcripts to maintain eligibility. Graduate hours do not affect the undergraduate GPA.
- AGP students will have an AGP/graduate program advisor and an undergraduate advisor, with two advising holds.
- AGPs may be combined with Early Assurance Programs (see Definitions, below), but either one may exist separately.

### Additional State Requirements

- Students must pay undergraduate tuition until conferral of bachelor's (min. 120 total hours).
- Annual reporting on program is required.
- Pathway must assure that students meet learning outcomes of the undergraduate program.

### *Definitions*

Accelerated Graduate Pathway (AGP)—intentional blending of undergraduate and graduate degree progress to shorten the total time toward the graduate degree.

Early Assurance Program (EAP)—conditional admission to a graduate program for a future term. Most EAPs are offered for incoming first-year or transfer students, and nationally they are most found in health fields (especially medical school).

Early Admission—student has completed all baccalaureate requirements except minimum hours AND switches to graduate status/graduate appointment eligibility when beginning graduate work. This is the existing OHIO policy applicable to any major/graduate degree. Note that Early Admission can only happen after the Tier 3 requirement is met, i.e., a semester after the start of senior status.

Senior for Graduate Credit—student has a maximum of 6 credits required before completion of the bachelor's degree. Such a student may take up to two graduate classes, normally in the same semester, with permission of instructors. This is the existing OHIO policy and does not imply admission to a graduate program.

Conditional Admission—admission to a graduate program contingent upon meeting certain requirements set by the program. For EAPs and AGPs, the conditions always include completion

of the baccalaureate degree, but also a defined minimum undergraduate GPA, requisite undergraduate coursework, etc. Students conditionally admitted to an OHIO program may not hold graduate appointments until the conditions have been cleared.

**Graduate Courses for Undergraduate Credit**—HTC students, OHIO Honors students, and departmental honors students may take up to 9 hours of graduate courses *for undergraduate credit*. This does not generate a graduate transcript, and the courses do not apply toward a graduate degree.

<sup>1</sup> This is different from taking graduate courses for undergraduate credit only. All honors students at OHIO may take up to 9 hours of graduate courses, but those courses do not create a graduate transcript or “count” toward graduate degrees.

## State Requirements for Graduate Programs

The Chancellor’s Council on Graduate Studies (CCGS), part of ODHE, oversees the peer review of new graduate program requests. For an overview of graduate degree change and proposal processes, see the Graduate College Handbook. Departments should consult the Associate Dean of the Graduate College early in the process of developing a new program or drafting changes to an existing one. Contact the Associate Dean of the Graduate College for a copy of the current ODHE/CCGS requirements for graduate programs.

### Degree Programs

Some requirements of note:

**Master’s Degree:** An award that requires the successful completion of at least 30 semester credit hours of work beyond the bachelor’s degree. Research master’s degrees are the M.A. and M.S. These degrees “involve preparation to carry out significant research and to discover new knowledge, whether the particular field of learning is pure or applied.” Master’s degrees which do not emphasize research and prepare students to create new knowledge are categorized as professional master’s degrees and should have the degree title “Master of [Field of Study]” (e.g., Master of Business Analytics).

**Doctoral Degree:** The highest award a student can earn for graduate study. Doctoral degrees generally require the successful completion of at least 90 semester credit hours of work beyond the bachelor’s degree or at least 60 semester credit hours beyond the master’s degree. Deviations from these credit hour guidelines require proper justification and state approval. The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is a research degree and involves preparation for the conduct of independent research and the discovery of new knowledge. Doctoral degrees may also recognize preparation for professional practice. Examples of professional practice doctoral degrees include the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) and Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT).

All graduate degree programs require a culminating experience. From the CCGS Guidelines: “Examples of suitable culminating experiences include, but are not limited to preparation of a thesis, dissertation, or other creative written work; capstone or exit projects, which may be applied in nature and not necessarily involve research; comprehensive examinations; supervised field experiences, or any other integrated learning experience. With proper planning, the culminating experience may be integrated within coursework required for the degree.” (Please note that any culminating experience that is part of required coursework must still be an “integrated learning experience.”)



## Certificates

Some requirements of note:

Certificates awarded for completion of a substantial program of graduate study in a discipline(s)/professional area(s) where the university already has graduate degree authorization require further review. A substantial certification program is defined as one requiring the successful completion of 21 or more semester credit hours of graduate-level courses. Current OHIO certificate requirements do not permit certificates of more than 20 hours, so under normal circumstances no new certificate program will require CCGS review.

## **Federal Requirements Regarding Financial Aid-Eligible Certificates Available to Non-Degree Seeking Students**

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*The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships typically submits information to the U.S. Department of Education twice a year. Please be aware of this extended timeline in your planning process.*

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### **U.S. Department of Education approvals and timelines**

Financial aid-eligible certificates must be approved by the U.S. Department of Education prior to advertising the program or accepting students into the program. All necessary university, state, and accrediting agency approvals (e.g., UCC, Ohio University Board of Trustees, ODHE, HLC) must be completed before submission for approval to the U.S. Department of Education. The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships typically submits information to the U.S. Department of Education twice a year. The approval process itself is lengthy, in some cases well over a year. Please be aware of this extended timeline in your planning process.

Due to gainful employment regulations related to federal financial aid, students in non-degree programs are not eligible for financial aid unless the proposing program provides detailed information at the proposal stage, agrees to the ongoing requirements for tracking of students, and receives approvals from the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships *prior* to the initial offering of the certificate. Federal law includes certain disclosure and reporting requirements for which the proposing program is responsible. Institutions must include specific information in promotional materials to prospective students and on its Web site, as well as report this information to the U.S. Department of Education.



## Higher Learning Commission Requirements for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

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*The Office of Institutional Research serves as OHIO's liaison to HLC for both undergraduate and graduate program notifications and approvals.*

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While the HLC's [Criteria for Accreditation](#) do not include requirements that impact the specifics of academic program development, HLC policy does outline several circumstances that require either notification to or approval from that body prior to launching new or changed academic programs. Review HLC's [Institutional Changes Requiring Prior Approval or Notification](#) for complete information regarding the change process. Additionally, HLC also has [Guidelines on Faculty Qualifications](#) which should be reviewed by program developers. Substantive changes that typically require HLC approval or notification involve the following:

### Programs

Competency-based education programs  
Certificate programs  
Length of term affecting allocation of credit  
Branch campuses and additional locations  
Distance delivery  
Consortia arrangements  
Contractual arrangements

## Program Change Requests

Changes to program descriptions in the catalogs that do not impact the curriculum should be made outside of UCC processes. All changes to program requirements should be submitted through UCC processes. Many program changes are eligible for expedited review (see Expedited Review section of this document).

Section 11 of the Graduate College Handbook outlines curricular reform and new delivery, format, and location procedures for changes to graduate programs.

ODHE requires administrative approval of program change requests:

- To change the name or title of the academic program when there is no substantive change to the program's requirements.
- For a substantive change (defined as a modification of 50% or more of the requirements for the academic program) to the curriculum of a degree, major, or educator licensure or endorsement preparation program.
- To open a new off-campus location where more than 50% of the requirements of an approved degree or major will be delivered (requests to open new campus locations,

academic centers (i.e., regional campuses or new campus locations) are handled in consultation with the Chancellor per Ohio Revised Code 3333.04).

- To offer more than 50% of an approved degree or major at an existing off-campus location.
- To deliver more than 50% of the requirements for an approved degree or major in an online/blended format.

## Expedited Program Change Requests

Because we expect departments/schools to ensure that standards of disciplinary excellence and programmatic needs are met and colleges to ensure college needs and resources have been appropriately anticipated and planned for, proposals must have been thoroughly vetted by two levels of review before being presented to the PC for consideration for expedited review. This requirement may make proposals from units without the traditional department and college structure, such as the Voinovich School and International Studies, ineligible for expedited review.

Additionally, proposed changes must meet all the criteria listed below to be considered for an expedited process.

- No impact on programs, schools, or departments outside the originating college. The college is responsible for facilitating inter-departmental communication and collaboration.
- No change in total credit hour requirements.
- No impact on student's ability for timely completion of program.
- No conflict with existing University requirements, such as residency or general education requirements.
- Needing no additional approvals due to external policy bodies such as accreditors or the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

*Note that UCC expedited review does not mean changes can be enacted immediately. Program changes may still need ODHE/HLC approval before changes can be implemented.*

Examples of typical program change requests which DO NOT require approval of UCC and therefore are eligible for expedited review:

- Re-arranging of course groupings (electives or requirements) with no overall change in total hours and no negative impact on student ability to complete the program.
- Addition and deletion of courses within a program where all changes are within the program's home college.
- Revising program learning outcomes.
- Program name changes, unless proposed terminology is like that being used by other areas of the university. Please note that all program name changes necessitate a new program code.

- Creation of program codes for things that are not really programs (special student populations, e.g., University College Summer Transition Students).
- Changes to admissions standards
- Adding a modality to an existing approved program.

## **Department and/or College Level Curricular Change**

Only one program change document is required, if the same curricular change applies to multiple program areas within a department and/or college. A program change template in OCEAN 1.9 should be initiated for one of the affected programs. All affected program codes should be listed within the program change template. Upon approval of the program change, the UCC administrator will ensure the program change document is loaded to all other affected programs in OCEAN.

## **Notification Process**

Some changes that do not require UCC approval use the UCC process for notification purposes. Notification of these changes, including a rationale, should be submitted in writing to the chair of the Programs Committee.

These include:

- New course prefix request
- New ND codes (unless the ND code serves as a pre-major. In this case, they should be submitted to OCEAN).
- Requesting a new dual degree program (only applies if there are no curricular changes being made and both programs are already approved).

## **Department/School level Changes**

Department/School changes, including moving departments/schools within a college without program elimination and/or department/school name change.

A memo-based notification process from the department chair/school director to the Chair of the PC is required. The memo should be signed by the dean and department chair/school director of the affected unit. The memo should describe:

- The rationale for the change
- Effective date
- Impact on current students (majors and minors)
- Impact on all current faculty
- Evidence that the process followed ensured broad input from affected faculty

## **Suspending Admissions to a program and/or certificate**

Suspension of admissions to programs and/or certificates, including suspending admissions to programs at specific locations require notification.

A memo-based notification process from the college to the Chair of the PC. The memo should be signed by the dean and department chair/school director of the affected unit/location. The memo should describe:

- The rationale for the suspension

- Effective date
- Impact on current students (majors and minors) including a [teach out plan](#)
- Impact on all current faculty
- The process followed to ensure broad input from affected faculty
- Intentions to restart program later (include anticipated date)

Following UCC notification, consultation with the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and/or Associate Dean for Graduate College and the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics is necessary to determine if ODHE and/or HLC notification is required.

## **Eliminating a Program/ Program Deletion**

When the UCC and/or Programs Committee receives a notification of the elimination of a program, the department and the program, where appropriate, will be notified. They will be told of their opportunity to submit evidence to the Programs Committee and UCC about their program's elimination.

See [Faculty Handbook section II.D.4.c](#) related to implications regarding faculty contracts:

### D. Appointments, Tenure, and Renewal of Contracts . . .

#### 4. Termination of Appointment by the University . . .

- c. If the termination arises from the elimination of a program or department of instruction for educational reasons, the procedures set forth in this section, rather than regulations described below under "Loss of Tenure" will be invoked. The decision to eliminate a program or department will be based on educational considerations. Educational reasons for discontinuance would include the lack of a continuing need for the program; they would also include a lack of educational quality. Considerations about the need for the program would include a significant and persistent trend of insufficient enrollment. Educational quality considerations would include the quality of instruction, scholarly achievement, intrinsic academic worth, or curricular value to other academic areas. Schools and regional campus divisions are equivalent to departments for purposes of this policy.

A program is defined as a course of studies leading to a degree (including an associate degree), a recognized major under a degree, or an option or concentration under a degree that is generally comparable to a major at the University.

A proposal for elimination of a program or department will be considered at the college level before being submitted to the University Curriculum Council. The college curriculum committee will consider the proposal and submit its recommendation to the dean. The dean will also consider the matter and provide a recommendation. The dean will forward the proposal to the University Curriculum Council if either his/her recommendation or that of the college curriculum committee

is for elimination of the program or department. The department or program can submit evidence to each of the committees considering the proposal.

The Programs Committee of the University Curriculum Council will be charged with determining whether

1. the activities to be eliminated are consistent with the definition of a program;
2. the reasons stated for elimination are indeed educational in nature;
3. the individual(s) designated for loss of tenure are identified primarily with the program.

In the case of the proposed elimination of a graduate program, the Programs Committee of UCC will obtain the recommendation of the Graduate Council. For the purpose of this policy, to be primarily identified with a program it must be shown that a majority of the faculty member's teaching effort is in that program. In addition, if a faculty member whose position is being eliminated has, within the last five years at Ohio University, been identified primarily with another existing program or programs, he/she will have the right to return to that program. A positive decision of all three determinations is necessary to forward the proposal to the University Curriculum Council.

The University Curriculum Council, by a majority vote of the membership, will then determine whether the stated reasons are of sufficient gravity to warrant discontinuance of a program leading to loss of tenure. Only a positive recommendation will be forwarded to the Provost. If the Provost favors the recommendation, it will be forwarded to the President and through him/her to the Board of Trustees. Faculty members affected by such a decision may appeal the Provost's decision to a committee consisting of all faculty senators in the third year of their term. This committee shall consider only whether the faculty member or members have received due process in the above procedure. Elimination of a program or department that leads to the loss of tenured faculty requires favorable action by the Board of Trustees.

Before terminating a tenured appointment through elimination of a program or a department, the administration shall make a bona fide effort to place the faculty member concerned in another suitable position in the University. If the effort is successful and the new employing unit desires additional training for the faculty member, the University will provide financial and other support for a reasonable period of training. When the new position is tenurable, tenure may be granted in the new department immediately (see [Section II.C.6.](#)). Transfers of this nature, being within the University, do not require advertisement of the new position to which the faculty member is appointed.

If the program or department is re-established within a period of three years, the released faculty member shall be offered reappointment. In all cases of termination

based on elimination, the faculty member concerned shall be given 12 months' terminal notice or severance salary equivalent to his or her current contract base amount. The University shall determine which option is to be used.

## **Program Relocation**

Program relocation is a two-part process, with part 1 applying to the relocation itself and part 2 applying if any program changes are made because of the relocation.

### **Part I: Program Relocation Process**

A memo-based notification process for relocation review is recommended:

1. College-level memo to the Chair of the Programs Committee signed by the deans of the affected units, describing
  - a. the relocation(s),
  - b. the reason(s) and intended effect(s) of the relocation, including educational effects,
  - c. impact on current students (majors and minors), including the transition process,
  - d. impact on current faculty, including pre-tenured faculty,
  - e. the process followed to ensure broad input from affected programs and faculty.

Colleges may choose to address multiple related relocations involving multiple colleges in a single memo, if reasons, effects, and impacts are included for all relocations.

2. Program-level memo(s) from all affected programs to the UCC signed by department/school chairs, presenting the program's position (positive, negative, or neutral) on the relocation and their perspective on the process that was followed in making the relocation decision.

For affected graduate programs, Graduate Council review will be sought as is customary.

The PC will review the relocation documents (college-level and program-level together), and after ensuring sufficient detail is included for evaluation will forward the documents to the UCC with a recommendation. The UCC will follow its standard practice of two readings for proposed relocations. A UCC vote to 'support' the relocation indicates that based on all the information in the relocation documents, UCC believes that broad input from affected programs and their associated faculty was considered in the relocation decision and believes that the relocation decision is in the best interests of the university about its overall educational mission.

### **Part II: Additional Information for Relocations with Program Change**

Any program change proposal that results from or is part of a relocation will follow the process outlined in this manual for program change requests. These include, but are not limited to:

- actual changes to program requirements
- program name changes
- program code changes
- course prefix changes

## **Offering Approved Programs at Other OHIO Campuses**

The goal of this process is to ensure that there has been broad consultation in the decision-making process; that adequate facilities and resources will be available at the new location; that

continued interaction and shared decision-making between the originating and new locations will occur; and that all necessary approvals are received before the program is offered.

The process will use a memo-based format like the memo-based program relocation process:

The new location will submit a department/school/campus-level proposal to the chair of the Programs Committee that outlines any issues that will affect academic areas at the new location, including the need for new courses and the potential for both increased enrollment in courses outside the program and increased need for general education courses. The proposal should show evidence of consultation with the Vice Provost for RHE and Partnerships and the dean of the specific RHE campus(es).

The originating program will submit a program-level memo signed by the department chair or school director to UCC that specifies the originating program's position—neutral, affirmative, or negative—on the request to offer the program at a new location. The Dean of the unit that is the home of the originating program, the department chair or school director as well as the Athens and the relevant RHE dean of the unit, should sign this memo. The memo should be submitted to the chair of the Programs Committee.

The Programs Committee will review the memos and will submit a recommendation to UCC outlining their position on the new location, including any specific concerns about the new program location. A UCC vote to receive the Programs Committee's recommendation indicates that based on the information in the memos, UCC (1) believes that broad input from affected programs and their associated faculty was considered; and (2) believes that critical financial, staffing, and academic quality issues have been adequately addressed; and (3) believes that there will continue to be significant consultation and interaction between the home program and new program locations.

\*For graduate programs, academic units should contact the Associate Dean for Graduate College to inform them about the proposed new location. The Graduate College will facilitate the state approval process.

General guidelines:

- Certain aspects of the original program remain the same regardless of location, such as admission standards, curriculum, minimal qualifications expected of instructors, and so on.
- Changes to a program apply to all offerings of the program, regardless of location. All program changes must be approved by the originating program.
- New program locations will be reviewed at the same time as their originating program.
- Faculty, staff, and administrators at all locations will be expected to participate fully in program review and accreditation when applicable.

### **Adding an Online Modality to an Approved Program**

Consultation with the Vice President of OHIO Online should take place prior to submitting a program change.

### **Exemption from Program Requirements**



## Overview

In an era where exploration of new curricular structures is essential, existing policy practices lead to unacceptable alternatives: avoid curricular experimentation that violates policy until policy is revised to accommodate new structures or go forward in violation of policy. The former creates a significant hurdle and substantial time delays that will often lead to curricular stasis, and the latter undermines the integrity of policy and effective risk and resource management of innovative and experimental curricular initiatives. A better alternative is to create, in policy, a formal exemption process. Such a process will enable innovative faculty to pursue experimental programs in a way that respects collective faculty responsibility for curricular decisions by allowing such programs to go forward in violation of existing policy as appropriately controlled experiments that may, in the long run, inform changes to policy.

This policy exemption process applies to credentialed programs requiring University Curriculum Council (UCC) approval such as certificates, minors, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree programs. This process will take effect once approved by UCC and will not be required for any programs that have already gained UCC approval.

*The exemption process is not a mechanism for circumventing review, but a way to review, approve, and pilot programs that violate current policy. Thus, Programs Committee (PC) and UCC, and college level curricular review processes and responsibilities remain in place.*

## Exemption Process

Program proposers interested in offering an innovative program that violates existing policy may request an exemption with their program proposal but will be required to articulate why the University should support such an exemption. Program proposers, departments, and colleges will be required to understand and address risks at the local, State, and Federal level, and where appropriate, the international level. They will need to be sensitive to the challenges placed on administrative units that arise in extending limited resources this way. Programs granted an exemption to policy will be given a date upon which the program will expire unless further action is taken, as outlined below. To formalize these considerations, we propose the following exemption process:

Proposals requesting an exemption from current policy will be considered by UCC when the following is documented by the program proposer:

1. Provost's office confirms the process articulated in this document has been followed and accepts institutional risks associated with offering a program that violates current policy
2. The dean, or equivalent, including the Dean of the Graduate College for graduate-level programs, accepts the risks associated with violation of current policy and confirms that any risks associated with the program will be monitored and that the resources are available to do that.
3. The department chair, or equivalent, will identify all risks associated with the program owing to the exemptions requested. They will identify all units they have approached regarding these potential risks and provide their responses. Those responses should include a description of the potential outcome at risk and, if possible, the likelihood of its occurrence.



4. PC and UCC confirm the program uniqueness and integrity through standard curricular review with the exception that the proposed program does not align to existing university policy and that the approval is not indefinite (i.e., the approval will expire unless a formal review extends it prior to its expiration or policy is altered).

A number of crucial issues arise in initiating such programs, and these involve resources and risk management that spans faculty and administrative offices. A working group convened by the chair of the UCC, will be responsible for annual review of the exemption process to ensure the process is working (e.g., risks are being well managed, the process is not being used to bypass curricular review, etc.) and to identify trends that may indicate a need for revision of institutional policies. This working group should be comprised of representatives from UCC, PC, Individual Course Committee, faculty senate, university registrar, graduate college, financial aid and scholarships, institutional research, admissions, and the dean of students, the vice provost for undergraduate education, the associate provost for faculty and academic planning, the executive dean of regional higher education, and the senior vice provost for instructional innovation.

When an exemption is approved by UCC, the Chair of the UCC Programs Review Committee will do a review of the program based on the agreed upon expiration date. The Programs Review Committee will report on these reviews as usual to UCC. Note that because these programs have an approved end date, the review will need to take place in such time that allows for appropriate review and action prior to that end date in order to maintain a seamless program (i.e., if a program is approved with an end date of June 30, 2018, the review will need to be completed well before that date; otherwise, the program would be stopped on June 30 while the review continues).

In addition to the standard details required for program proposals as determined by colleges and PC, requests for policy exemptions should include the following:

- Identified risks and mitigation strategies (especially, but not solely, as related to student risk and accreditation concerns)
- Financial/resource impact on university (e.g., reporting, staff effort to work around administrative system limitations) and anticipated revenue
- Requested duration of pilot necessary to deliver informative results (with an upper limit of 3 years), with a suggested expiration date to be agreed upon by PC and UCC
- A plan for students enrolled in the pilot to reasonably complete the program without loss of academic progress or increases in costs if the program expires.

## **Tips for Efficiency and Clarity in Program Proposals**

- Read all of the applicable sections of this document before drafting your proposal.
- The course level is the smallest unit of differentiation available to a program. Individual sections of courses, e.g., sections taught by specific instructors, are not trackable or manageable in advising or via DARS. The only exceptions to this would be “C” courses (service-learning designated) and “A” courses (OHIO Honors Program designated), e.g., MATH 1200C.
- Major revisions of programs may be interpreted as new programs. According to CCGS, a graduate program is new when more than 50% of the curriculum changes. Consultation with the Associate Dean of Graduate College and the Associate Provost for Institutional

Effectiveness and Analytics is highly recommended at the early stages of significant program revision.

- Be precise with language, e.g., say “Take 3 courses for at least 9 credits at the 3000 or 4000 level” rather than “take 3 advanced courses” or “take 3 courses at the junior level.”
- Because some courses are available for variable credit hours, specify both the number of courses and the number of credit hours required.
- Typically, special topics courses should not be included as requirements in programs. They do not have articulated learning outcomes that can be assured from one section to the next, even when it is the same topic. Sometimes it is appropriate to include a specific special topics course in a new program proposal when the intent is to build it into a standard course as the program builds out. If you must include a special topics course in program requirements, be precise with the topic and credit hours in the proposal.
- If required courses have prerequisites, please include those courses as requirements.

#### Appendix A

More information about individual course requirements can be found in Appendix F of the ICC Guidelines.

Category	Requirement(s)	Min. Hrs.	Notes
Foundations (min. 11 credit hours)	Written Communication	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>First Writing</i> .
	Advanced Writing	3	May be at any undergraduate level and from any discipline.
	Quantitative Reasoning	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Mathematics, Statistics, and Logic</i> .
	Intercultural Explorations	2	Must be at the 1000 or 2000 level. May also fulfill a Pillar or Arch requirement. <b>Cannot</b> complete the Bridges: Diversity & Practice requirement.
Pillars (min. 12 credit hours)	Humanities: Texts and Contexts	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Arts and Humanities</i> .
	Humanities: Arts	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Arts and Humanities</i> .
	Natural Sciences	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Natural Sciences</i> .
	Social and Behavioral Sciences	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Social and Behavioral Sciences</i> .
Arches (min. 9 credit hours)	Constructed World	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Mathematics, Statistics, and Logic</i> <b>or</b> <i>Arts and Humanities</i> .
	Natural World	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Natural Sciences</i> .
	Connected World	3	Must be <a href="#">OTM-approved</a> as <i>Social and Behavioral Sciences</i> .
	Speaking & Listening	1	May be at any undergraduate level and from any discipline.

Bridges (min. 4 credit hours)	Ethics & Reasoning	1	May be at any undergraduate level and from any discipline.
	Diversity & Practice	1	May be at any undergraduate level and from any discipline. Courses that fulfill the Diversity & Practice requirement <b>cannot</b> also complete the Foundations: Intercultural Explorations requirement.
	Learning & Doing	1	May be at any undergraduate level and from any discipline.
Capstones (min. 2 credit hours)	Capstone or Culminating Experience	2	May be specific to the major, an Arch requirement, or combined with a Bridge requirement.