



University Community (faculty, staff and students)

SUBJECT (R*)

NEW DEGREE PROGRAM PLANNING AND APPROVAL

EFFECTIVE DATE (R*)

July 1, 2014

POLICY NUMBER (O*)

350.010

POLICY STATEMENT (R*)

In order to promote and maintain high quality academic programs, the University may over time develop new academic degree programs or discontinue existing programs.

Program authorization is the formal creation of a degree program, program major, program tracks, specializations, concentrations, areas of emphasis, program minors and/or certificates, as defined.

REASON FOR POLICY (O*)

To specify the standards required for university program authorization.

DEFINITIONS (R*)

All new academic programs must adhere to the following hierarchical structure and related criteria and guidelines. Academic programs are defined as follows:

Degree Program – An organized curriculum leading to a college degree in an area of study recognized as an academic discipline by the higher education community, as demonstrated by assignment of a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code. Degree Program is the highest level within the academic program structure. Bachelor’s degrees require a minimum of 120 credits, Master’s degrees a minimum of 30 credits post baccalaureate, and Doctoral degrees a minimum of 75 credits post baccalaureate.

Program Major – An organized curriculum offered as a major area of study that is part of an existing or proposed degree program and does not constitute sufficient distinct coursework, faculty, and instructional resources to be considered a separate degree program. A major requires completion of a minimum of 30 credits in addition to general education course requirements. There are cases where the Major and degree program names are synonymous, thus creating only one major. Some Majors have unique names in which case the major must be reasonably associated with the Degree Program under which it is offered and share a minimum of 15% of common core or prerequisite courses with other Majors within the same degree program. The total number of credit hours required in the Major must be no less than that required for the Degree Program.

Program Tracks, Specializations, Concentrations, Areas of Emphasis, Etc. - Any organized curriculum that is offered as part of an individual student’s degree plan and which enhances or complements the degree to be awarded in a manner that leads to specific educational or occupational goals. In order to establish some uniformity across degree programs, this level of categorization should be termed a Track unless a different terminology is required for accreditation purposes. A Track must be reasonably associated with the Major under which it is offered and share a minimum of 15% of common core or prerequisite courses with other Tracks within the same Major. The total number of credit hours required in the Track is the same as required for the Major.

Program Minors – Minors consist of an organized curriculum offered to students who are not obtaining a degree in the Major of which the Minor is a component. Minors require a minimum of 12 credits.

Certificates – Certificates consist of an organized curriculum offered as a distinct area of study that leads to specific educational or occupational goals. The minimum number of credits for an Undergraduate Certificate is 18 and the minimum for a Graduate Certificate is 15 credits.

Substantive changes to existing degree programs will require a restructuring of the current program in order to comply with above criteria.

PROCEDURES (O*)

When a School or College determines that there is a need for a new degree program, the academic unit through the office of the dean initiates the following process:

1. At the time the school or college wishes to formally explore, within its budgetary constraints, a new degree program, the dean submits the "New Academic Degree Program Authorization Pre-Proposal" form to the Vice Provost.
2. If the Pre-Proposal is accepted by the Provost, the VP of Academic Affairs submits the form to the Board of Governors' (BOG) Council of Academic VPs for discussion.
3. Upon favorable review by the Council, the Provost adds the program to the FIU-BOG Work Plan under "New Programs to Be Considered by University" in the next three years. The FIU Board of Trustees approves the Work Plan in June.
4. Upon approval of the Work Plan, the college/school is requested to begin work on the Feasibility Study which includes the basic elements of the "BOG Request to Offer a New Degree Program" form. The academic unit should work with Academic Planning & Accountability and Academic Budget & Personnel to complete the Study.
5. The Feasibility Study is reviewed by the Office of the Provost and, if approved, is returned to the college to begin the established collegial governance process.
6. Proposals must utilize the common SUS degree proposal template and tables (BOG Request to Offer a New Degree Program). Proposals are reviewed by the department and college curriculum committees, dean, and Faculty Senate.
7. Proposals that are endorsed by the Faculty Senate are submitted to the Dean of the University Graduate School (for graduate programs) or to the Dean of Undergraduate Education (for undergraduate programs).
8. Proposals approved by the graduate or undergraduate dean are forwarded to the Office of the Provost.
9. If the program requested is a doctoral program, the VP of Academic Affairs arranges for an external consultant to conduct a review.
10. Proposals approved by the Provost are submitted to the Academic Policy Committee of the Board of Trustees for review and recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
11. Proposals approved by the Board of Trustees are forwarded, in accordance with Board of Governors policy, to the Office of the Chancellor.

New program majors at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level as well as all new program tracks, specializations, concentrations, areas of emphasis, program minors and certificates are approved as follows:

1. Proposals are submitted in university approved format appropriate to the type of request (e.g., major, track, certificate).
2. Proposals are reviewed by the department and college curriculum committees, dean's office, and Faculty Senate.
3. Proposals that are endorsed by the Faculty Senate are submitted for review to the Dean of the University Graduate School (for graduate programs) or to the Dean of Undergraduate Education (for undergraduate programs).
4. Proposals approved by the graduate or undergraduate dean are forwarded to the Office of the Provost.
5. Proposals become effective upon the approval by the Provost.

HISTORY (R*)

Effective Date: November 15, 2007; Revision Date: July 1, 2014.

RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT (R*)

Division of Academic Affairs
Florida International University

RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT (R*)

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***R = Required *O = Optional**