

502. Establishing New Programs

I. Policy Statements

- A. Primary responsibility for the planning and execution of academic programs begins with the faculty and staff of each System campus.
- B. The Board and the Chancellor encourage adaptation of resources to meet changing academic needs in the State.
- C. The institutions of The University of Alabama System are required to submit requests for new programs to the Chancellor, with a copy to the System Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, for review and approval. Upon the approval of the Chancellor, the new program request will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval.
- D. Efforts at collaboration and sharing, including cooperative, joint, and shared programs, should be explored at the campus and System levels whenever a new degree program of instruction is considered. Campuses are expected to address this when notifying the Board that a proposal is pending.
- E. Guidelines and procedures for the development, submission, review, and approval of new programs are developed and administered by the System's Office of Academic Affairs.

II. The Guidelines for Establishing a New Degree Program

With the elimination of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education's Notice of Intent to Submit a Proposal (NISIP) process, University of Alabama System campuses are expected to present a Notification of Pending Proposal (NPP) form to the System Office of Academic and Student Affairs at least one full month prior to the deadline for receiving Board items for the meeting agenda on which the campus will be requesting the new program proposal to appear. This will allow time to confirm that the need and/or demand for a new academic program has been properly assessed at the campus and System levels and ensure that an opportunity for review and feedback has been provided to other UAS campuses, and appropriate System administrators, before a full program proposal is presented to the Board of Trustees for initial approval.

A. Pre-proposal Process

- 1. The faculty completes the UAS Notification of Pending Proposal (NPP) form.
- 2. Campus committees review the NPP.

3. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs reviews the NPP.
4. The NPP is reviewed and approved by the President and forwarded to the Chancellor, with a copy to the System Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, for review no later than one month prior to the deadline for Board materials for the meeting at which the proposal will be considered by the Board of Trustees.
5. The System Office sends the completed NPP forms to the other System campuses for review and feedback.
6. The NPP is adjusted, as necessary, and submitted by the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs to the Chancellor for review and feedback. If there are no further concerns, the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs will notify the campus that the proposal may be submitted to the Board portal for inclusion on the agenda and recommendation to the Board of Trustees for initial approval.

It is expected that proposed degree programs that are submitted as part of the pre-proposal process are already listed on the campus's Three-Year Academic Program Planning Report that is submitted annually to the Board. If the proposed program is not currently listed, an explanation is to be provided in the appropriate area on the NPP form.

B. Program Proposal

1. The faculty develops a full program proposal, which must be inclusive of the completion of: (1) The ACHE "Proposal for a New Degree Program" form, which supports both undergraduate and graduate programs; (2) ACHE's New Academic Degree Program Summary and Business Plan; and (3) The updated University of Alabama System "New Academic Program Proposal Supplement".
2. Campus committees review the proposal.
3. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs reviews the proposal.
4. The President approves the proposal and forwards it to the Chancellor for review.
5. The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs reviews the proposal, which could include a meeting with the provost, program administrator, and the lead faculty member(s).

6. The System Office sends the proposal to the other System campuses for review and feedback.
7. If substantive proposal modifications are necessary after System-wide review, the System Office of Academic and Student Affairs will work with the Provost's Office of the proposing campus to discuss steps for addressing the concerns and/or to determine if more time is needed before the proposal is placed on the Board's agenda. The campus provost will determine if any recommended modifications of the proposal require additional review and approval by the proposing department, faculty, etc. All new program proposals that appear on the Board's agenda for consideration must be approved by the proposing campus's President and recommended to the Chancellor for review and submission to the Board of Trustees as part of the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs committee agenda.
8. During the meeting at which the proposal is to be formally considered, the campus provost will present the full proposal as an action item to the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee and the Board for initial approval and authorization to submit it to ACHE for approval by the Commission. In addition to the required UAS and ACHE proposal information, each proposal should be accompanied by a resolution for individual action and a copy of a letter of approval and support for the proposed program from the campus Provost to the President and from the President to the System Chancellor. A copy of the completed Notification of Pending Proposal (NPP) form should also be included as a supplemental document, along with the letters of support and any other relevant materials endorsing the program.
9. Following the Board's initial approval of the program, each campus submits the proposal to the ACHE web portal where it is subsequently locked by System personnel, signaling that it has been authorized for submission to ACHE by the Board. ACHE will notify the UA System Office of Academic & Student Affairs and/or the respective campus if there are questions or adjustments are needed.
10. Upon ACHE approval, the proposal is presented to the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee and the Board of Trustees for its final review and approval. Following final Board approval, the campus then implements the program.
11. If ACHE fails to approve the proposal, the Board may then choose to have the campus revise the proposal and resubmit it to ACHE, approve the proposal, or discontinue consideration of the proposal.

C. Initial New Program Review

The campuses will review each new program within a time period set forth by the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, but in no event later than five years after any new program's implementation. The campuses shall provide the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs with a report providing performance data and an evaluation of whether the new program is achieving the goals and objectives set forth in the program proposal. The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs will distribute the reports to The Board and the Chancellor, which shall be in a format with sufficient detail for effective review.

III. The Guidelines for Establishing a New For-Credit Non-Degree Certificate Program

Certificate programs require Board action (and an appropriate resolution) if they are 30 or more undergraduate credit hours or 18 or more graduate credit hours in length. A certificate program with less than the above criteria should meet individual campus guidelines and be presented to the Board as an information item.

- A. The faculty develops a For-Credit Non-Degree Certificate program proposal.
- B. Campus committees review the proposal.
- C. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs reviews the proposal.
- D. The President approves the proposal and it, along with a completed ACHE "Non-Degree Certificate" form, are forwarded to the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for review.
- E. Depending on the number of credit hours and the level of the program as previously noted the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs presents the For-Credit Non-Degree certificate program by "locking" the item in the ACHE Web portal. (Campuses should consult ACHE policy for additional information regarding certificate levels and expectations for Commission review of For-Credit Non-Degree Certificates.)
- F. Following Board approval or presentation of the certificate program to the Board, the UAS Office of Academic and Student Affairs notifies ACHE of the Board's approval of the For-Credit Non-Degree certificate program as an information item, of the Board's approval or review of the certificate program by "locking" the item in the ACHE Web portal. (Campuses should consult ACHE policy for additional information regarding certificate levels and expectations for Commission review of For-Credit Non-Degree Certificates.)

IV. Courses and Curricula for Board-Approved Programs

The Board is vested with the broad and ultimate authority over all operations of its campuses, including all courses and curricula. Pursuant to Article V, Section 3 of the Board of Trustees' Bylaws, the Board holds the respective Presidents and Provosts responsible for ensuring the courses and curricula on their campuses are lawful and comply with applicable Board Rules.

Note: UAS Campuses should obtain all required forms through the University of Alabama System Office of Academic and Student Affairs and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) website, as appropriate.

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