Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

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The Bill that established the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), Act 188 of 1982, empowers PASSHE to create new undergraduate and graduate degree programs without being subject to the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. The Chancellor's Office will apply this authority by participating in the internal program approval processes.

A. The Graduate Committee

The University-Wide Graduate Committee (UWGC) is responsible for the development and review of policies relating to graduate education. As part of this function, the UWGC also provides interpretations for the School of Graduate Studies and Research (SGSR) about policies adopted by the Senate. It is responsible for peer review of graduate programs and courses prior to consideration by the full University Senate. The UWGC is composed of the Dean of the SGSR, Dean's Associate of the SGSR, an APSCUF appointed faculty co-chair, an elected faculty co-chair, eleven other faculty members, a secretary, and three graduate students. Every college is represented on the UWGC; members of the Graduate Committee may remove themselves from committee deliberations when programs from their department are under consideration.

Peer review is designed to ensure that the standards of the University and its accrediting organizations are met. The Graduate Committee is concerned with ensuring that rationales for proposed graduate programs and courses are articulated effectively, that they are integrated appropriately within the context of graduate education, that adequate resources are available, and that sufficient pedagogical standards are met in the delivery of these programs and courses. As a committee of colleagues, the UWGC views itself as helping faculty through the curricular process and facilitating the goals of departments and the university. Programs are encouraged to contact the committee co-chairs and/or the Dean's Associate of the SGSR early in the process for help in preparing proposals and developing new programs.

As a committee of the Senate, all UWGC meetings are open. During deliberation, the committee may enter executive session, at which time only members of the committee remain. Proposers are given the opportunity to address the committee, if they choose, and the committee may ask proposers to attend a meeting if clarification and discussion of a proposal is deemed necessary.

Purpose of the Handbook: The PASSHE Academic Policy of March 19, 1985 (see Appendix A), dictates the content and procedures for graduate curriculum proposals. This Handbook has been created by the Graduate Committee to assist IUP faculty with developing proposals, ensuring that all the necessary information is provided. The streamlining of the format also facilitates the review process. The UWGC strongly recommends consultation with the Dean's Associate of the SGSR and the Co-Chairs of the Graduate Committee early in the process of developing a proposal.

B. The Approval Process (Summary)

Stage One (Notification of Intent**):** (Required ONLY for Level I Proposals) All new program proposals and major program revisions ("Level I" proposals) must first be approved in principle. This approval is obtained through development of a Notification of Intent, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Once the Notification of Intent has been approved, the proposal follows the Stage Two approval process discussed below.

Stage Two: The flowchart on the following page summarizes the approval process for ALL graduate curricular proposals, indicating the progression of the proposal and the order of required signatures.

Signatures: At each step in the process approval with respect to academic integrity and resources is indicated by the appropriate signature on the Graduate Curriculum Authorization Form(s) (Appendix D). The steps are discussed in detail below and are numbered as such on the flowchart.

1. Graduate curricular changes normally originate within the academic department. The SGSR Dean's Associate and the Co-chairs of the Graduate Committee are willing to meet with proposers to assist in proposal development from the early stages. After a fully developed proposal has been approved by the department curriculum committee, the department chairperson must approve the change. *Graduate course(s) or program changes involving*

teacher education or Pennsylvania Department of Education certification must be reviewed and approved by the Teacher Education Coordinating Council (TECC) before being forwarded to the College Curriculum Committee.

2. The proposal is submitted to the appropriate college committee. In some colleges this committee will be the College Curriculum Committee; in other colleges the Dean's Advisory Committee will review curriculum proposals.
3. Upon approval by the college committee, the proposal is submitted to the dean of the appropriate college. Dual-Level course proposals are submitted to the University Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UWUCC) for approval prior to submission to the recording secretary of the Graduate Committee (i.e., UWUCC approval must be obtained first, prior to submission to the UWGC).
4. Once the college dean has indicated his/her approval by signing the Graduate Curriculum Authorization Form(s) (Appendix D), the complete proposal, with the *original, signed* Authorization Form(s), is given to the recording secretary of the Graduate Committee. The recording secretary will oversee the transmittal of the proposal to the graduate dean and the Provost, who indicate their approval by signing the Authorization Form(s). The Provost will, if the proposal seems feasible, forward Level 1 proposals to the Chancellor with a cover letter indicating that the proposal still has his or her preliminary approval. The Provost will send copies of the cover letter to the department chair, college dean, graduate dean, and Graduate Committee chair. Once the signatures of the graduate dean and the Provost have been obtained, the proposal will be returned to the originating department, where copies can be made for submission to the Graduate Committee.

   Copies: After *all* necessary signatures are obtained on *all* the Authorization Form(s), the proposing department submits *the original plus 18 copies* of the final proposal to the recording secretary of the Graduate Committee. Proposals lacking the necessary signatures for both academic integrity *and* resources will be returned to the proposer without further consideration. (NOTE: Of the 18 copies, only three copies need the full CVs of the participating faculty.)
5. **Graduate Committee**
   a. **Review:** When the recording secretary of the Graduate Committee receives the 18 copies of the fully signed, complete proposal, the proposal is distributed to the full committee and assigned by the chair of the Graduate Committee to a subcommittee for a detailed review. *At the time of assignment to subcommittee, the proposal will be considered "in*

progress" and will be reflected as such on the UWGC agenda. The subcommittee reports its findings to the full Graduate Committee, which then deliberates on the proposal. In addition, the APSCUF co-chair of the Graduate Committee presents a summary of the proposal to APSCUF Executive Committee for consideration of any issues that are relevant to the CBA. Representatives from the department of origin are welcome to address the UWGC, and at times the UWGC may request representatives to attend the meeting.

b. Graduate Committee Report: A UWGC report is generated by the committee co-chairs and can reflect three possible courses of action:

1) Approval of the proposal as submitted and indication of the date when it will be brought before the University Senate, pending receipt of final copies as described below;

2) Request for further information and/or clarification before any action can be taken.

3) Rejection of the proposal, with UWGC rationale and recommendation for revision.

When further information, clarification, or changes are requested, proposers will be asked to write a rejoinder to the Graduate Committee review and submit 18 copies of the rejoinder, plus *only those portions of the proposal that require changes*, unless requested otherwise. Submission of complete copies of the full proposal for a second review is usually unnecessary and can cause delays in the review process. However, three complete copies of the fully revised proposal must be submitted to the UWGC before the proposal can go to Senate. Final approval by the Graduate Committee is based on a simple majority vote. Support by a co-chair or any Graduate Committee member is not a guarantee of approval by the full committee.

Editorial note: A frequent cause of delay in the approval process has been editorial problems. Awkwardly written and poorly organized proposals are most difficult to read and understand. Please proofread proposals for logical development, coherence, and consistency. It is important that the proposal be correct with respect to content, grammar, and spelling. Other suggestions include:

- All pages of the proposal should be numbered for easy reference
- All acronyms should be spelled-out for easy understanding
- Sufficient rationale and resources for programs/courses should be provided
- Bibliographies should be current and "graduate-level"
- Similar programs/courses at other institutions should be indicated and documented
- IUP library resources should be indicated and documented

- When available, support from professional organizations should be provided.

6. **The Senate and Beyond:** Once the proposal is approved by the Graduate Committee, the department must prepare the related Senate agenda item and submit three hard copies and one electronic copy of the agenda item, as well as three final (fully revised), complete hard copies of the proposal, to the recording secretary of the Graduate Committee, *at least 14 days before the next Senate meeting.* The proposal is then submitted to the University Senate for action. If approved by the Senate, the proposal must then receive final approval by the President, the Council of Trustees, and the Board of Governors of the PASSHE. It is only upon the approval of the Council of Trustees that any proposed changes can be implemented (except for new courses and course revisions, which need only Presidential approval). After approval by the Graduate Committee, some items are submitted to subsequent bodies for information only. Please see Appendix A for details.

   It is important to note that, once approved; a program becomes a contract that the University will offer the program as approved by the Senate. Any unapproved changes in the program are a violation of that contract. Changes must be approved by the UWGC, the Senate, the President, and the Council of Trustees before they can be published, advertised, or implemented.

C. **Categories of Program Proposals**

In an effort to reduce the workload involved in preparing many proposals, the Graduate Committee has created three levels of program proposals. The designation of a proposal as Level I, and the contents of such a proposal, are mandated by the PASSHE Academic Policy of March 19, 1985 (see Appendix A). A **Level I** Program Proposal must be submitted for the following:

LEVEL I

1. A new graduate degree program
2. A change in the program name
3. A change in degree designation or certification
4. The addition of a degree designation
5. The addition of a track or area of emphasis
6. The addition of a minor

A **Level II** Program Proposal must be submitted for the following:

LEVEL II

1. A change in the total number of credits required for a degree

2. A change in four or more of the courses in a program, excluding non-required electives, OR a change in 50 % or more of the courses (required, core, electives, etc.) of a program
3. A new Certificate of Recognition (COR)
4. Any change to an existing COR

A **Level III** Program Proposal is required for program changes not covered by Levels I and II. If the proposed program constitutes a "substantial" change from the existing program (e.g., adding multiple new courses, deleting multiple unused courses, restructuring an existing track or area of emphasis), a Level II Program Proposal may be more suitable than a Level III Proposal. When in doubt, please consult with the Dean's Associate of the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

Exceptions: Deletions of tracks or areas of emphasis in a program, of minors, or of entire programs technically fall under the Level I category. Although deletions still require PASSHE approval, many of the components of a Level I proposal are unnecessary. Thus, deletions are covered in a separate Chapter (see Chapter 6).

D. Required Components of Proposals

The checklist below summarizes the required elements of the three levels of program proposals. Detailed descriptions of the components can be found in the related chapter.

Program Proposal Checklist
(What needs to be included in the proposal)

Key: R = required, m = may be requested, NR = not required

Component	Level I	Level II	Level III
1. Appendix D – with all signatures except Graduate Committee Chair (one form for every change)	R	R	R
2. Introduction (a) Rationale	R	R	R
2. Introduction (b)Summary of Proposed Changes, including side-by-side old vs. proposed	R	R	R
3. Statement of Appropriateness to Mission	R	NR	NR
4. Need and Impact (a) Show need exists	R	m	NR
4. Need and Impact (b) Assess Impact	R	NR	NR
5. Academic Integrity (a) Outline program requirements	R	R	R

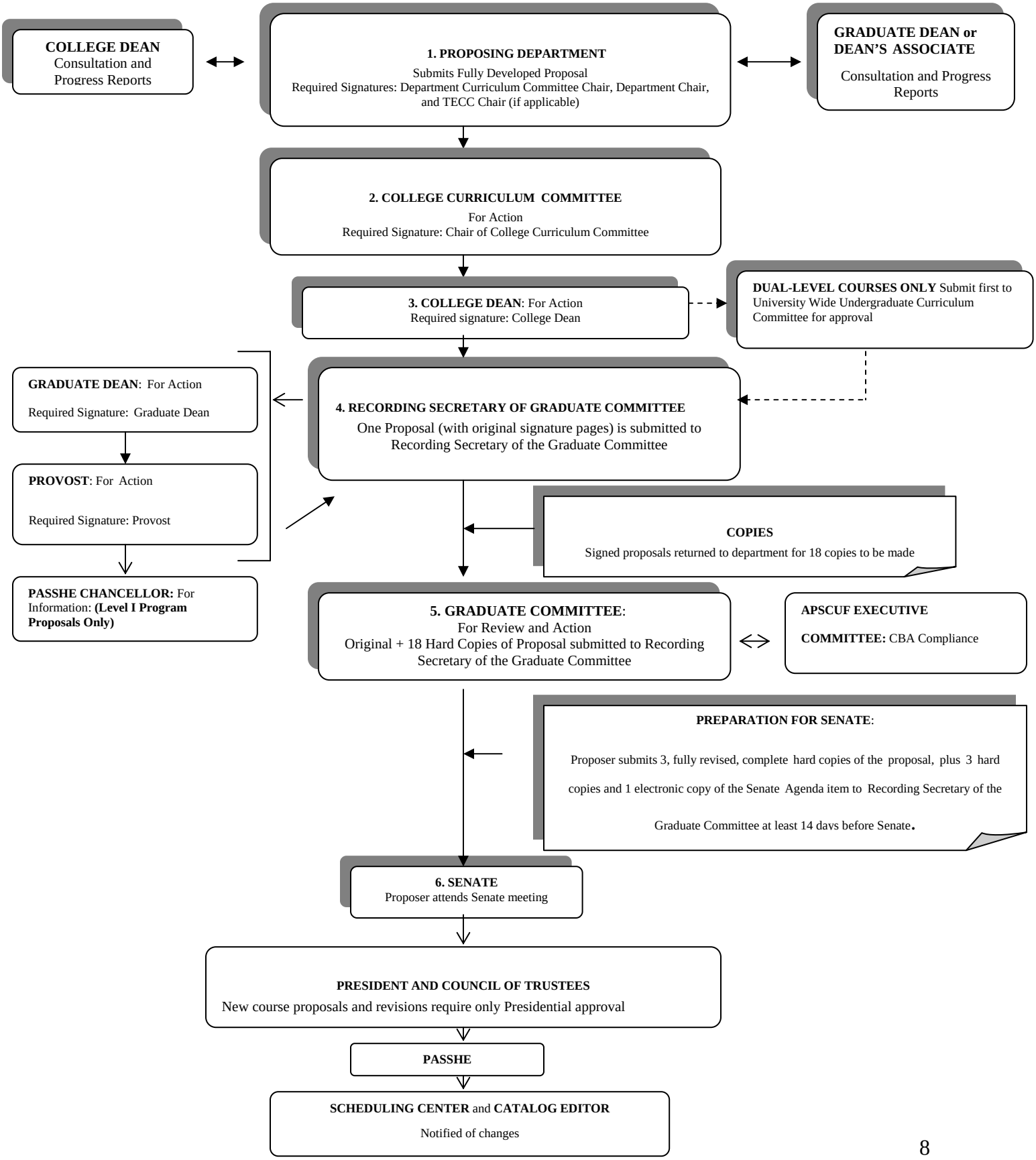
5. Academic Integrity (b) Sample student progression	R	m	NR
5. Academic Integrity (c) Descriptions of all new courses	R	R	R
5. Academic Integrity (d) Description of faculty	R	m	NR
5. Academic Integrity (e) Statement of Uniqueness	R	m	NR
5. Academic Integrity (f) Letters of Support	R	R	R
5. Academic Integrity (g) Statement of CBA compliance	R	R	R
6. Coordination with Programs at other institutions.	R	NR	NR
7. Periodic Assessment (a) Program Evaluation	R	NR	NR
7. Periodic Assessment (b) Student Learning and Outcome Assessment	R	R	R
8. Resource Sufficiency (a) Faculty Workload tables	R	m	NR
8. Resource Sufficiency (b) Resource availability	R	R	R
8. Resource Sufficiency (c) Budget table	R	m	NR
9. Impact on Educational Opportunity (a) recruitment plan	R	m	NR
9 Impact on Educational Opportunity (b) Presence of minority & women faculty	R	m	NR
9. Impact on Educational Opportunity (c) Inclusion of under-represented groups	R	m	NR
10. Catalog Description	R	R	R
11. Senate Agenda Item (after Graduate Committee review)	R	R	R

Key: R = required, m = may be requested, NR = not required

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR GRADUATE CURRICULAR CHANGES

STAGE ONE: The Notification of Intent (Only required for Level I Program Proposals – see Page 10)

STAGE TWO: The Proposal (Required for all proposals)



NOTE: Only boxes with shading require participation by the proposer.