



## PA State System of Higher Education Administrative Procedure

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS' POLICY 1985-01: REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIATION OR CHANGE OF CREDIT-BASED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

Approved: October 9, 2003

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#### **A. Procedures**

The Office of the Chancellor shall, in consultation with State System Universities, establish and review criteria for the initiation or change of credit-based academic programs.

1. The University shall submit a notification of intent, containing summary information on the proposed academic program, to Academic and Student Affairs at the time the possibility is introduced in internal planning documents, or first reviewed by an appropriate committee within the University. The Office of Academic and Student Affairs shall communicate approval or disapproval of the intent. While all criteria in section B. will be considered, appropriateness to mission and need shall be the key variables determining approval or disapproval. When an intent is disapproved, institutions may appeal the decision by writing to the chancellor within ten business days after receiving the decision. When approval is given, academic and student affairs staff shall assist in program development and assessment throughout the planning and review process. A schedule will be developed by the Office of Academic and Student Affairs to accommodate policy implementation.
2. Each program proposal shall emanate from an institutional program approval process, which assures appropriate faculty, administrative, and trustee review. The proposal must address completely the criteria in section B.
3. Academic program proposals shall be subject to action by, or notice to, the Board of Governors or chancellor, as follows:
  - a. Board of Governors' Action  
**New major program**—Full proposal covering criteria in section B. of the administrative procedure required.
  - b. Office of the Chancellor Action  
**New minor program when no major exists**—Full proposal covering criteria in section B. of the administrative procedure required.

**New certificate program when no major or minor exists**—Full proposal

covering criteria in section C. of the administrative procedure required.

**New degree designation**—Letter containing rationale and supporting materials required.

- c. Office of the Chancellor Notification

**New minor when major exists, certificate when major or minor exists, track, concentration, focus, option, specialization, emphasis, or equivalent**—Letter required.

**Other program changes in the academic data file, including program name or title changes, termination, or moratorium**—Letter required.

**B. Criteria for Approval of all New Programs Except Certificate Programs when no Major or Minor Exists**

The Office of Academic and Student Affairs in the Office of the Chancellor shall develop procedures to ensure that proposals address the following areas:

1. Appropriateness to Mission

The proposed academic program must be appropriate to the State System mission and to the University mission.

2. Need

The proposal shall include, depending upon type of program, sufficient information relative to the intellectual value, student demand, regional and national market demand for program completers, as appropriate, and value to such things as student breadth, faculty vitality, and community enhancement.

3. Academic Integrity

The proposal shall include sufficient information to demonstrate the adequacy and appropriateness of the proposed curriculum, standards, instructional staffing, and other resources. For graduate programs, and for certain undergraduate programs where the university lacks sufficient experience or involvement, the University and Office of Academic and Student Affairs shall cooperate in identifying an appropriate consulting individual or team to assist in evaluating and enhancing the proposal.

4. Coordination with Other Programs

For purposes of possible resources sharing, student transfer, or articulation, and avoidance of unnecessary duplication, the proposal shall report communication with other appropriate departments at the University; other Universities; business and industry, when appropriate; and with other institutions.

5. Assessment and Accreditation

The proposal shall include information on the plan for continuing assessment of student learning outcomes and periodic institutional, professional, and regional accreditation reviews, as well as plans to seek specialized accreditation, if

appropriate.

6. Resources Sufficiency

The program proposal shall detail the need and availability of such resources necessary to support the program during the initial and subsequent four years. This statement shall include a description of the internal reallocation process by which such resources are assured:

- a. Staff—Faculty and support
- b. Learning resources—books, periodicals, films, cassettes, compact disks, etc.
- c. Facilities or facility modifications
- d. Other

7. Impact on Educational Opportunity

The proposal shall include appropriate information regarding probable impact of the new program on goals for enhancing both educational opportunity and assurance of civil rights.

**C. Criteria for Approval of Credit-Based Certificate Program when no Major or Minor Exists**

The Office of Academic and Student Affairs, in the Office of the Chancellor, shall adopt appropriate forms and develop an expedited process in conformance with local curriculum processes that ensures that Universities may respond quickly to emerging needs for credit-based certificate programs when no major exists at the University. Proposals shall be abbreviated and shall briefly treat the following program characteristics:

1. Appropriateness to Mission

The proposal shall address the appropriateness of the credit-based certificate program to the State System mission and to the University mission.

2. Need

The proposal shall include information on need for the program as well as demand.

3. Academic Integrity

The proposal shall include information on the proposed curriculum and instructional staffing.

4. Resources Sufficiency

The proposal shall delineate the need for, and availability of, resources to support the program during the initial and subsequent two years.