

Establishment of New Academic Degree Programs

Report due to IHL: As needed by institution (See 2024-25 deadlines)

Template: New Academic Degree Program Proposal (Appendix 8)

File Types to Submit to IHL: PDF format with signatures

Corresponding Board Policies: 201.0507, 501, and 502

New degree program requests are considered by the Board of Trustees at seven (7) Board meetings: February, April, May, June, August, October, and November.

When required by SACSCOC guidelines for substantive change, institutions must adhere to SACSCOC procedures for proper notification and/or approval. New degree programs that are substantive changes will not be added to the Academic Program Inventory and institutions are prohibited from admitting students until the Office of Academic and Student Affairs receives documentation that the program has been included in the scope of the institution's accreditation.

When approved by the Board of Trustees and there are no substantive change limitations for admitting students, a new degree program shall enroll students within two academic years of approval. If the program has not enrolled students by the end of the second academic year, Board approval is rescinded, and the program will be deleted from the Academic Program Inventory.

It is expected that all new degree programs:

- Will be consistent with the role and mission of the institution;
- Will be considered only when all university degree programs within that discipline have professional accreditation (if available) and have met the minimum standards of productivity;
- Will be considered only when professional accreditation will be sought for this program (if available);
- Will require no more than 124 credit hours towards graduation if the request is for an undergraduate program, unless it meets the standard for exception;
- Will be consistent with the curricula of similar programs in this discipline and will meet any licensing or certification needs;
- Will meet local, state, regional, and national educational, societal, or cultural needs;
- Will not be unnecessarily duplicative of other programs within the System;
- Will be funded through documented resources; and
- Will include procedures for program effectiveness.

Process

1. A university requesting a new degree program shall submit an electronic, signed PDF copy of the ***New Academic Degree Program Proposal*** to the OASA two months prior to the Board meeting at which action is expected.
2. Request for new degree programs will be evaluated by OASA during the two months prior to the Board meeting at which action is expected and placed on the agenda of the Chief Academic Officer's Council meeting one month prior to the Board meeting at which action is expected. Requests for new degree programs are presented to the Chief Academic Officers (CAO) by the Associate Commissioner of Academic and Student Affairs at the CAO meeting one month before the Board meeting at which action is expected. This will allow the university to have at least one month to address concerns prior to the Board meeting at which action is expected. Comments and/or concerns raised by other institutions' representatives will be shared by the Associate Commissioner to the Board in the Academic Affairs Committee meeting. CAOs are invited to participate in the Academic Affairs Committee meeting and

may be called on to address program proposal and any comments/concerns raised.

3. The Associate Commissioner of Academic and Student Affairs will apprise the respective Chief Academic Officer of OASA's evaluation of the requests for a new degree program.
4. If the Associate Commissioner of Academic and Student Affairs renders a positive decision, the requests for modification to an existing academic degree program will be placed on the Board of Trustees' Regular Agenda.