

# Augusta University

## Policy Library

### Curriculum and Academic Program Approval

**Policy Owner: Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Augusta University (“AU”) faculty, as defined in the Bylaws of the University Senate, develop and approve curricula for all academic programs, which includes degrees, certificates, and minors. This policy articulates the approval process for changes to the curriculum by any college or department at AU. Such changes may include modifications of existing academic programs and degrees (e.g., addition or deletion of courses, changes to admission requirements or academic regulations, changes to existing courses), additions of new degree programs, majors, minors, certificate programs, and other changes affecting the content of the AU Catalog.

#### **AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS**

*Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:*

- Alumni       Faculty       Graduate Students       Health Professional Students  
 Staff       Undergraduate Students       Vendors/Contractors       Visitors  
 Other:

#### **DEFINITIONS**

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#### **PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

General Overview

There are two main processes whereby curriculum proposals are approved. The Simple Approval Process is for proposals affecting only one college and not affecting the undergraduate general education core curriculum (Areas A – E) as specified by the University System of Georgia. The Complex Approval Process is for all other proposals.

#### **Simple Approval Process**

Proposals affecting only one college (and not affecting undergraduate general education core curriculum, Areas A - E) are approved at the college level and by the Vice President for Academic and Faculty Affairs (VPAFA). Upon approval by the VPAFA, proposals are forwarded to the University Registrar for entry into the Catalog for which the change is effective.

The Simple Approval proceeds through these specific steps:

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#### **Office of Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Use Only**

**Policy No.:** 3714

**Policy Sponsor:** Vice President for Academic and Faculty Affairs

**Originally Issued:** Not Set

**Last Revision:** 06/05/2017

**Last Review:** 06/27/2017

1. Originates from any faculty member of the University community.
2. Follows approval process as outlined in the relevant college's bylaws.
3. Sent to VPAFA for approval.
4. Once approved, sent to the University Registrar to be entered into the Augusta University Catalog.
5. Registrar confirms to originator that proposal has been entered into the Catalog.

### **Complex Approval Process**

Proposals requiring the Complex Approval Process include proposals affecting the undergraduate general education curriculum (Areas A – E) and proposals crossing multiple colleges. Proposals crossing multiple colleges require approvals by each of the involved colleges in accordance with each of the relevant colleges' bylaws, approval by University Senate Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (USCAPC), and the VPAFA. Proposals approved by the VPAFA are forwarded to the University Registrar for entry into the Catalog for which the change is effective.

The Complex Approval Process follows these specific steps:

1. Originates from any faculty member of the university community.
2. Follows approval process as outlined in the originating college's bylaws.
3. Follows approval process as outlined in other affected colleges' bylaws.
4. Sent to USCAPC for review and approval.
5. Sent to VPAFA for approval.
6. Once approved, sent to the University Registrar to be entered into the Augusta University Catalog.
7. Registrar confirms to originator that the proposal has been processed.

#### Special Considerations in the Complex Approval Process

**The Graduate School:** Proposals which affect programs or courses that will be or are part of The Graduate School must be approved by Graduate Council. Once approved by the Graduate Council, proposed curricular modifications are sent directly to the VPAFA, not to USCAPC.

**Core Curriculum Area A – E:** Curriculum changes affecting the Core Curriculum Areas A through E must be approved by the University System of Georgia General Education Council. The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will ensure the appropriate review occurs after approval by the USCAPC.

**Core Curriculum Area F:** Changes affecting Area F must be approved by the appropriate Regents' advisory committee for the discipline(s) of the department(s) affected. These changes should be approved after college-level approval but prior to university-level review.

## Approval of New Programs and Degrees

Approvals of new degrees and programs require approval at the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia office. This approval process is in addition to the University's regular curriculum approval process, and the proposal development should be accomplished in coordination with the Vice President for Academic Planning and Strategic Initiatives (VPAPSI), the Vice President for Academic and Faculty Affairs (VPAFA), and the Provost.

### Guidelines for Submitting a Potential New Degree

#### Stage 1

1. College/program leadership initiates conversations with the Vice President for Academic Planning and Strategic Initiative (VPAPSI).
2. College/program faculty complete Concept Paper for New Academic Programs in Curriculog.
3. The Dean of the originating college must approve the concept paper for it to move forward. If the program will be part of the Graduate School, the Dean of the Graduate School must also approve the concept paper for it to move forward.
4. The VPAPSI presents the concept paper to Provost's Operations Management Team (POMT).
5. POMT approves, rejects, or recommends changes to the concept.
6. If approved, the proposed degree and/or program will be added to the USG Academic Forecast.

#### Stage 2

7. If approved to be included on the Academic Forecast, faculty submit through Curriculog the fully developed program proposal which must then go through the appropriate AU Approval Process (Simple or Complex) outlined above, depending on the nature of the proposal.
8. The VPAPSI shares proposal with Provost's Operations Management Team (POMT). At the prerogative of the Provost, the program proposal may be submitted to external reviewers to determine feasibility, viability, and effectiveness.
9. Once approved by the Provost, the VPAFA submits proposal to USG for action.

## Approval of Certificates and Minors

Requests to create new certificates or minors follow a similar, but not as extensive, process as the approval of new degrees. Any proposed certificate or minor must be consistent with the AU mission. Proposals should be submitted via the Certificate and Minor Form in Curriculog.

Any proposed certificate will be determined to be either "stand-alone," "embedded," or both. If a certificate is classified as stand-alone, the completion of the certificate may be awarded independent of another degree program. If a certificate is classified as embedded, the certificate is awarded conterminally with another degree program. Students must meet the

admissions requirements of AU to be enrolled in a certificate; as such, certificate programs will not be considered as a “backdoor” to admission.

### **Approval of Concentrations**

Requests to create new concentrations are managed through the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. Any proposed concentration must be part of an existing academic program and consistent with the AU mission. Proposals should be submitted via the Curriculum Revision Form in Curriculog. In addition to the regular information provided on the Curriculum Revision Form, a four-year enrollment forecast in the concentration and a financial impact analysis must be attached.

Concentrations at the undergraduate level should require at a minimum twelve (12) distinct credit hours in the concentration. Fifteen (15) or more distinct credit hours is preferable.

Concentrations for graduate level programs should require at a minimum nine (9) distinct credit hours in the concentration.

### **Distance/Online Education**

New online courses and programs must meet the same requirements as courses and programs offered through face-to-face instruction, and therefore must be approved through the processes previously described. Depending on the nature of the proposed change, additional approvals by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents and/or the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools Commission on College may be necessary.

### **REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Board of Regents Policy Manual, Section 3.3. Curriculum.

<http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section3/policy/C338>

University System of Georgia Program Approval Documents

[http://www.usg.edu/academic\\_programs/new\\_programs](http://www.usg.edu/academic_programs/new_programs)

### **RELATED POLICIES**

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### **APPROVED BY:**

President, Augusta University and CEO, AU Health System    Date: 06/27/2017