

## Section 4

### 4. EDUCATIONAL POLICY GOVERNANCE

The educational objectives and responsibilities of Washington State University are based upon specific requirements and enabling provisions of state and federal statutes, and by action of the board of regents, as stipulated in the Faculty Manual. The Faculty Senate, serving as the legislative body of the faculty in all matters requiring faculty action or approval of curricular and educational policies of Washington state university, makes recommendations to the provost and executive vice president, president and the Board of Regents.

Senate committees assist the senate in its review and appraisal of all academic matters including:

1. Standards of admission
2. Curricula and courses to be offered and the amount of credit for each course
3. Standards of scholarship
4. Requirements for graduation
5. The academic calendar

With the dissolution in 2012 of the state of Washington’s higher education coordinating board, which previously approved proposals to initiate, modify, consolidate or terminate programs at the public four-year institutions, the Faculty Senate leadership and the Office of the Provost collaborated to update the procedures for these major changes.

Any member or group of members of the faculty, or other interested person, may submit proposals for changes in the Academic Regulations to the Faculty Senate office for consideration. These changes may pertain to the university in general—enrollment, registration— rather than to the curriculum of a specific unit.

Changes in academic policy, unless otherwise stated, become effective the fall semester subsequent to their adoption by the Faculty Senate. (Senate, 3/9/72)

EPPM 1996; rev. 2012-18 (degree changes); rev. 2024

## Section 5

### 5. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

#### 5.1 Organizational and degree changes

Requests for organizational and degree offering changes are reviewed by the Office of the Provost prior to evaluation by the Faculty Senate. These changes include:

<b>Organizational:</b>	<b>Degrees:</b>
New academic units	New degrees
Discontinuation of academic units	Discontinuation of degrees
Change in the name of academic units	Change in the name of degrees
Extension of an academic unit to another location; establishment of instructional sites	Extension of existing degree to another campus, instructional site, or location
Moratorium and suspension of academic units	Moratorium and suspension of degree

Decisions regarding organizational changes are made by the provost's office with input from Faculty Senate. Decisions regarding degrees are made by the Senate, following initial review by the provost's office. The provost's office ensures that the necessary components and administrative signatures are included before forwarding the proposal to the Senate.

Because these changes potentially impact student progress toward a degree they have been admitted to; federal financial aid; or substantial university resources, they must be reported to WSU's accrediting agency and ultimately to the federal government. Thus, they must undergo a more extensive evaluation than ordinary curricular proposals. Departments or initiating units should plan realistically for the length of the review process.

Guidance regarding forms and process can be found on the Provost's Office website:

[https://provost.WSU.edu/procedures/degree-approval/Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) between the Provost and Faculty Senate regarding the Creation, Movement, Renaming or Elimination of Academic Programs, Departments, and Colleges \(2018\)](https://provost.WSU.edu/procedures/degree-approval/Memorandum_of_Understanding_(MOU)_between_the_Provost_and_Faculty_Senate_regarding_the_Creation,_Movement,_Renaming_or_Elimination_of_Academic_Programs,_Departments,_and_Colleges_(2018))

#### Rev 2024

#### 5.2 Substantive changes and accreditation

WSU's regional accrediting agency, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) requires notification of substantive changes as defined by the NWCCU. From the NWCCU Substantive Changes Manual: "Whenever an accredited or candidate institution plans a substantive changes in its academic programs, mission, scope, ownership, form of control, area served, or other significant matters that could potentially have an impact on the resources and capacity of the institution, NWCCU requires the institution to submit a substantive change proposal." These proposals will be submitted on behalf of WSU through the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) in the WSU Office of the Provost.

If NWCCU determines that a site or program has been advertised or implemented without obtaining the necessary approval, WSU will be required to cease enrollment at that site or for that program until the substantive change approval(s) has been obtained. Noncompliance may also lead to a sanction that will trigger increased NWCCU scrutiny and oversight of the academic programs and operations of WSU. Departments and other units initiating substantive changes, as defined by NWCCU, should therefore be advised that the programs of instruction cannot be implemented nor advertised prior to receiving approval from NWCCU. NWCCU approval will be communicated by the Office of the Provost and the University's ALO.

Substantive changes fall into three categories.

#### ***Category 1: Program Inventory Updates***

These updates are submitted through the NWCCU Portal by the WSU ALO and typically are typically approved by the NWCCU within 30 days. These updates include the following changes.

- Renaming a Program
- Updating a CIP Code
- Changing the number of credits associated with a program (less than 25% change)
- Changing an existing program's method(s) of delivery (face-to-face; distance delivery; hybrid)
- Closing or suspending an existing additional location (teach-out-plan required for permanent closure)
- Entering into a contractual agreement for the delivery of any education-related services by another institution who is the member of an accreditor recognized by the US Department of Education

- Adding a third or more additional domestic location, prison education program, or international location where at least 50% of an educational program is offered
- Adding new academic programs, including Title IV eligible degree/certificate/diploma programs, that do not represent a significant departure (less than 25% change) from programs previously approved

### **Category 2: Minor Substantive Changes**

A *minor* change has minimal impact on the resources and capacity of the institution. Most changes, such as adding programs of instruction that are allied with existing offerings, or dropping programs of instruction, and changes in method of instructional delivery, are categorized as minor changes. Minor changes take 30-60 days to complete after receipt by NWCCU. *Minor changes* include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adding program content, or academic program(s), including Title IV eligible certificate programs, that represent a significant departure (25% or more aggregate change) from programs previously approved.
- Changing institutional prior learning procedures to accommodate a customized pathway or modifications of programmatic content to support learning outcomes
  - Accommodate and recognize a students' existing knowledge, such as knowledge attained through employment or military service
  - Close competency gaps between demonstrated prior knowledge or competency and the full requirements of a particular course or program
- Entering into a contractual agreement for education-related services with a non-accredited organization

### **Category 3: Major Substantive Changes**

A *major change* has significant impact on the resources and capacity of the entire institution. A *major change* is of a magnitude to alter an institution's mission, objectives, and supporting core themes; the scope or degree level of its offerings; its autonomy, sponsorship, or the locus of control; its offering of academic programs for credit through contractual relationships with external organizations; its offering of programs for credit outside the NWCCU region; or, its campus locations including a branch campus or the establishment of an additional location apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program. Major changes are take 3-6 months to complete after receipt by NWCCU. Major changes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Acquiring or merging any program of another institution
- Establishing a Prison Education Program (first two locations only)
- Establishing an international location where 50% or more of the program requirements can be earned via face-to-face instructional delivery (first two locations only)
- Substantial change in institutional mission, objectives of the institution, or programs offered
- Change in the legal status, form of control, or ownership of the institution
- Acquiring or merging with another institution or location of another institution
- First degree at a new degree level (associate, bachelor's, master's, doctorate)

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## 5.3 Organizational and degree changes

### 5.3.1 Policy

Proposals for substantial changes such as the creation or discontinuation of an academic department are submitted to the Office of the Provost, which then sends them to Faculty Senate for review and input. Substantial changes such as the creation or discontinuation of a degree require submission of the appropriate form and supporting documentation to the Office of the Provost prior to submission to the Faculty Senate for review and approval. Documentation required for these proposed changes includes but is not limited to a full description and reasons for the proposed change, cost analysis (added cost or savings), facility needs, faculty/staff arrangements, enrollment data, and other special considerations.

### 5.3.2 Process

#### 5.3.2.1 Department-initiated changes

Study committee and/or accreditation recommendations should also accompany the proposal when applicable.

#### 5.3.2.2 Changes initiated from the administrative level

Changes initiated by council of academic deans, the provost and executive vice president, or the president, should be submitted to the steering committee of the Faculty Senate. The steering committee is responsible for seeing that the appropriate senate committees investigate the proposal, giving deans, directors, chairs, faculty, and students an opportunity for timely and effective consideration and input. Except for the early coordination efforts of the steering committee, the process follows the current curriculum change procedures.

EPPM 1996; Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Provost and the Faculty Senate regarding the Creation, Movement, Renaming, or Elimination of Academic Programs, Departments, and Colleges 2018; provost's degree manual 2017

#### Related policies:

NWCCU, substantive change policy

Rev. 2024

## **Section 13**

### 13.1.5.4 Curricular change process

1. The department should submit the major curricular change form with a detailed course syllabus that indicates the specific requirements for 500-level enrollees and those for 400-level enrollees.
2. The different requirements and explanation of how the course will provide for significant time for graduate students to interact with the instructor should be summarized on a separate sheet and approved by the department chair and dean of the college.

Senate 2024

## **Section 22**

## 22 CURRICULAR CHANGE POLICIES AND PROCESSES

### 22.1 Major curricular changes

#### 22.1.1.1 Policy

The Faculty Senate considers all major curricular changes for the undergraduate, graduate, and professional health sciences programs. The Faculty Senate approves all curricular changes by vote. Minor changes are sent as informational items to the Faculty Senate.

Academic policies are reviewed by the appropriate committees and forwarded to the Faculty Senate for review and approval.

Actions of the Faculty Senate are reported to the provost and executive vice president, president, to the board of regents, and to the NWCCU (if appropriate) for final approval.

Changes become effective the fall semester subsequent to their adoption by the Faculty Senate (senate, 1972; catalog subcommittee, 1982; EPPM 1996; updated by registrar 2018; senate 2024).

#### 22.1.1.3

Major curricular changes are normally initiated from the faculty and chair of an academic unit, or through the cooperative efforts of deans, directors, and chancellors.

#### 22.1.2 New Degrees and Extending Existing Degrees

Proposals to establish new degrees or to extend an existing degree to another campus require completion of the appropriate form available from the Provost's Office. The content of the form is determined by the provost in consultation with the Senate and Registrar. The completed form should be submitted to the provost by October 1 of the year before the degree will be implemented. Once the provost's office is satisfied the proposal is ready for Senate review, it forwards the proposal to the Senate Principal Assistant and the Executive Secretary. Proposals are reviewed by the relevant committee and forwarded to the Senate for review and approval. Faculty Senate notifies the Provost's and Chancellors' offices of the Senate action. The Provost's Office manages reporting of the Senate to the President, Board of Regents, and the NWCCU.

Senate 2019; 2024

#### 22.1.3 Major curricular changes -- requirements

To add a new major or option to an existing degree requires the submission of the new requirements major curricular change form, available from the registrar. The content of the form is determined by the registrar and Senate. Supporting documentation must include a rationale statement and requirements for completion. The graduation requirements for majors must be shown as a four-year schedule of studies. Requirements for minors and certificates may be submitted in paragraph form. Requirements must include all university requirements and specific coursework. References to a department or website for a list of approved courses are not allowed.

Changes to requirements for majors, minors, or certificates and the like requires the submission of the revise requirements major curricular change form. Supporting documentation must include a rationale statement and include the current requirements modified to show the requested changes.

Proposals are reviewed by the relevant committees and forwarded to the Senate for review and approval.

New and revised requirements become effective the fall semester subsequent to their adoption by Faculty Senate.

Senate; 2024

#### 22.1.4 Major curricular changes – Courses

Requests for new or restored courses require the submission of the new or restore course major curricular change form. Requests for revisions to an existing course require the submission of the revise course major curricular change form or a minor curricular change form, depending on the change being proposed. Supporting documentation must include a rationale statement and a course syllabus. Courses are reviewed by the university community through the Senate course review page. Courses that pass review are sent to the Senate for approval.

Senate 2024

#### 22.3 Major curricular change form instructions

Changes in academic policy, unless otherwise stated, become effective the fall semester subsequent to their adoption by the Faculty Senate. (Senate, 3/9/72)

##### 22.3.1 Completion of major curricular change form

Major curricular change forms are to be submitted electronically. Forms and detailed instructions can be found at [Registrar Curriculum \(wsu.edu\)](https://www.wsu.edu/registrar/curriculum). All requested information should be provided and supporting documentation should be uploaded. Submitters must identify their chair and dean. Submissions will be routed to the chair and dean prior to consideration by the catalog subcommittee.

The signatures of the department/unit chair and dean are required for all major curricular changes. To establish or drop crosslisted or inter-disciplinary courses, the signatures of all cognizant department chairs and deans are required.

Rev. 2024

##### 22.3.2 Processing

Changes initiated from the administrative level, e.g., council of deans, the provost and executive vice president, or the president, should be submitted to the steering committee of the Faculty Senate. The steering committee is responsible to see that the appropriate senate committees investigate the proposal, giving deans, directors, chairs, faculty, and students an opportunity for timely and effective consideration and input. Except for the early coordination efforts of the steering committee, the current curriculum change procedures should be followed. In rare cases where the steering committee, together with the central administration, determines that review by the senate, or departmental faculty is deemed unnecessary or inadvisable, due to special circumstance, the steering committee must report to the senate and inform the university community of the change being made. (Faculty Senate 2/21/85)

1. The administrative officer of the academic unit reviews the proposal and initiates the electronic curricular change process.
2. The chair and dean (or designate) receive a copy of the electronic submission and review the material for quality, clarity, and conformity to policy and procedures, and electronically indicate approval.

3. The secretary for the catalog subcommittee (assistant registrar) checks material for conformity to regulations, style, and policies.

New degrees and requirements are referred to the catalog subcommittee.

1. The catalog subcommittee reviews and recommends to the relevant Senate committees those major changes that have been approved.
2. When material is found unacceptable by the catalog subcommittee, the department will be notified in writing of the committee's reasons for the disapproval of the request. The unit involved may appeal by submitting in writing additional information about the request that directly addresses the committee's concerns. The department chair may be requested to meet with the committee to present additional information.

(Catalog Subcommittee 4/22/81; Senate 2024)

### 22.6 Curriculum approval timetable

UCORE Committee		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews requests for UCORE courses.</li> </ul>		
All-University Writing Committee		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews requests for writing in the major [M] courses.</li> </ul>		
Catalog subcommittee (CSC)	Beginning second week of fall (meets weekly)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews all degree and requirement change requests; reviews courses for compliance with Academic Regulation 27.</li> </ul>		
Academic affairs committee (AAC)	Beginning mid-September (meets every two weeks)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews undergraduate degrees and requirements</li> <li>• requests that have been approved by CSC.</li> </ul>		
Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)	Meets periodically	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews graduate new degrees and requirements</li> </ul>		
Professional Health Sciences Committee (PHSC)	Meets as needed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviews degrees and requirements for medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine.</li> </ul>		
Faculty Senate	(fall) Typically meets 4 times	(spring) typically meets 6 times
<p>reviews all curricular changes that have been approved through the other committees or have passed the course review process. Note: approval process takes two meetings—at the first meeting the changes are on the agenda as a discussion item; at the next meeting the changes are voted on.</p>		

**Routing Chart for Curricular Changes\***

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**Section 29**

29.3 Curriculum Approval Timetable

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