

Montana State University – Billings

Manual for the Preparation of Curricular Materials for Consideration by the Academic Senate

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*Academic Senate
Manual for the Preparation of Curricular Materials*

I. Definitions of Terms (from BOR Policy 303.1)

Degree - A specific designation of letters representing the words on the diploma indicating completion or attainment, e.g., B.A., B.S., B.Arch., B.B.A., M.A., M.F.A., Ed.D., D.A., Ph.D.

Certificate - Awarded upon successful completion of entry-level programs, a specialty within an occupational area, and/or upgrading skills and knowledge within an occupation. Usually, certificate programs are 30-60 semester hours in length.

Major - The specific field of concentration for the degree. A designated and coherent sequence of courses in a discipline, related disciplines, or professional area in which a student concentrates as a part of a baccalaureate degree program. The requirements of the major are usually defined by one academic department, but may be defined jointly by two or more departments in the case of an interdisciplinary major. Majors may range from 30 to 48 semester hours, half of which must be at the upper division level. Study in the major will conclude with a capstone, integrating experience in which the knowledge and skills learned in the major are applied or demonstrated.

Extended Major - Where required by professional expectations or specialized accreditation standards, extended majors may be offered in undergraduate programs. The extended major may require up to 80 hours.

Minor - The supporting or complementary field undertaken along with a major for a degree. A designated and coherent sequence of courses in a discipline, related disciplines, or professional area which provides support or enhancement of a student's major in a baccalaureate program. Minors may range from 18 to 30 semester hours of credit, one-third of which must be at the upper division level.

Option - One of two or more alternative tracks available to students in an associate degree, baccalaureate minor or major or graduate degree program. Each option consists of a core of required courses in the program plus required and/or elective courses in the specialty area indicated by the title of the option. The core of required courses must constitute at least one-third of the hours required for the program.

New postsecondary educational programs - All proposals for a new series of courses arranged in a scope or sequence leading to a certificate, option, major, or minor where a major does not already exist.

II. Procedure for Requesting New Programs Established by the Board of Regents – Policy 303.1

A. Board policy:

1. All new postsecondary educational programs: certificate programs, degrees, and addition of majors to existing degrees, options within majors, or minors where a major does not exist shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Higher Education who will formulate recommendations for the Board of Regents through the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.
2. Changes in the names of degrees shall be approved by the Board of Regents.

B. Procedures:

1. These programs shall be presented in the following manner:
 - a. specify the objectives to be reached by the addition of this program;

- b. specify in detail present faculty, facilities and equipment, and library holdings in support of this program, and compare them to known or anticipated minimum standards for accreditation;
 - c. additional faculty requirements should be detailed as to qualifications, salary, and recruitment;
 - d. increased costs will be submitted in detail for the first year, for the biennium, and an estimate of the continuing costs of the program over a five-year period. These costs should reflect new faculty, increased library costs, space requirements, equipment, other facilities' needs, and identify sources of funding;
 - e. a new program will be carefully scrutinized as to the effect on enrollment, numbers of students (both graduate and undergraduate) with lower and upper division course breakdowns, and the number expected to graduate over a ten-year period;
 - f. list the new courses this program will add to the curriculum and specify the course requirements for the degree;
 - g. indicate the inter-departmental implications of additions to this program or supporting courses in departments which contribute to the new program of studies;
 - h. explain how the recommendation to submit this proposal to the Board of Regents was made: Include information about process followed, faculty involvement, employer or community input, market demand for graduates, employment prospects and starting salaries, as well as other justifications.
2. In all cases the Board of Regents may require an appropriate report from outside, objective consultants to assist the Board in analyzing the proposal and arriving at a just decision.
 3. A copy of every curriculum proposal shall be forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and to the chief academic officers of the campuses of the Montana University System as soon as it has been approved by the campus concerned. Copies of all proposals for associate degree programs and vocational-technical programs shall also be forwarded to the chief academic officers of the community colleges. In addition, proposals for vocational-technical programs shall be forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs and to the chief academic officers of the colleges of technology.

III. Board of Regents Policy Governing Institutional Organization – Policy 218

A. Board policy:

1. The following matters require review and approval by the Board of Regents before they can be announced and implemented.
 - a. formation, elimination or consolidation of a college, division, school, department, institute, bureau, center, station, laboratory or similar unit;
 - b. establishment, elimination or change in scope of an off-campus resident center;
 - c. designation of a lead institution;
 - d. movement of an academic unit from one college, school or division to another;
and
 - e. changes in the names of any of the entities covered in 1.a. above.

B. Procedures:

Proposals for centers and institutes shall:

1. identify its purpose;
2. state its objectives;
3. briefly describe its anticipated activities;
4. identify all agencies, organizations and/or institutions which will be involved and include advisory council information;
5. identify its organizational structure within the institution;
6. describe the interrelationships between it and the institutional mission, including information about which departments on campus will be involved and how the center or institute will contribute to the academic programs of the institution;
7. identify first year and continuing finances necessary to support it including the sources of funding;
8. describe other similar programs in the state and surrounding region;
9. identify faculty expertise available for participation in its activities;
10. state the internal campus review and approval process which has occurred prior to submission to the Commissioner's Office.

IV. Levels of Academic Proposals: Determining the Level of Involvement by the Board of Regents

Two factors determine the level to which the Board of Regents becomes directly and formally involved in the process of approving or denying the development, implementation, suspension, and/or elimination of academic and research programs:

1. the degree to which the proposed program "fits" with an institution's approved mission, and
2. the relationship between:
 - a. the resources needed,
 - b. the resources available to implement and sustain the program fully, and
 - c. the projected benefit of the program to the socio-economic welfare of the State and its citizens.

Two levels define these factors:

A. Level I Proposals

(Approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education or Designee)

1. Level I Proposals are those that may be approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education or the Commissioner's designee. The approval of such proposals will be conveyed to the Board of Regents at the next regular meeting of the board. The institution must file the request with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education by means of a memo to the Deputy Commissioner.
2. Level I proposals include campus initiatives typically characterized by (a) minimal costs; (b) clear adherence to approved campus mission; and (c) the absence of significant programmatic impact on other institutions within the Montana University System and community colleges. Examples include:
 - a. Re-titling existing majors, minors, options and certificates (e.g. from B.S. in Mechanized Agriculture to B.S. in Agricultural Operation Technology);
 - b. Eliminating existing majors, minors, options and certificates via a Program Termination Checklist;

- c. Adding new minors or certificates where there is a major;
- d. Departmental mergers and name changes;
- e. Program revisions; and
- f. Distance delivery of previously authorized degree programs.

Further, with Level II documentation circulated to all campus chief academic officers in advance, the Commissioner or designee may propose additional items for inclusion in the Level I process. For these items to move forward, the Commissioner or designee must reach consensus with the chief academic officers. When consensus is not achieved, the Commissioner or designee will move the item to the Level II review process.

Examples of Level I proposals of this type include:

1. Options within an existing major or degree;
2. Eliminating organizational units within larger institutions such as departments, divisions and colleges or schools *with the exception of the five Colleges of Technology where changes require Board action*;
3. Consolidating existing programs and/or degrees.

Certificate or Associate of Applied Science Degree Programs may be submitted as Level I proposals, with memo and backup documentation, when they are offered in cooperation with and/or at the request of private or public sector partners and the decision point to offer the program is not consistent with the regular Board of Regents program approval process. Level I approval for programs under this provision will be limited to two years. Continuation of a program beyond the two years will require the normal program approval process as Level II Proposals. All other Certificate or Associate Degree programs may be placed on submission at any Board of Regents meeting. They will be placed on action agendas at subsequent meetings. All campuses agree to insure that all other campuses receive program information well in advance of submission.

B. Level II Proposals

(Approved by the Board of Regents)

Level II proposals require approval by the Board of Regents. These proposals entail more substantive additions to, alterations in, or termination of programs, structures, or administrative or academic entities typically characterized by the (a) addition, reassignment, or elimination of personnel, facilities, or courses of instruction; (b) rearrangement of budgets, cost centers, funding sources; and (c) changes which by implication could impact other campuses within the Montana University System and Community Colleges.

Board policy 303.1 indicates the curricular proposals in this category:

1. Change names of degrees (e.g. from B.A. to B.F.A.)
2. Implement a new minor or certificate where there is no major;
3. Establish new degrees and add majors to existing degrees;
4. Expand/extend approved mission; and
5. Any other changes in governance and organization as described in Board of Regents' Policy 218, such as formation, elimination or consolidation of a college, division, school, department, institute, bureau, center, station, laboratory, or similar unit.

Forms can be found here: <http://mus.edu/che/arsa/Forms/AcademicForms.asp>

Please contact the Provost and Academic Vice Chancellor's Office for more information about this process.

V. MSU-Billings Procedures for Proposing New Programs: Majors, Minors, Options, Emphases, Areas, Certificates, and Courses

A. Internal Criteria Established by MSU-Billings

To assure that a high standard of quality is present before serious consideration of a major, minor, option, emphasis, area, or certificate takes place, the following criteria are minimum requirements:

1. The academic department responsible for proposing a new academic program must first satisfy the following requirements:
 - a. decide the program's/project's title and purpose;
 - b. document need and evidence of an appropriate "fit" within the institution's role and mission;
 - c. estimate student enrollment for the first three biennia after the program/project is implemented;
 - d. describe methodology by which the program/project will be assessed—i.e. continued need, quality, student satisfaction, benefit to the citizens and the State of Montana;
 - e. delineate currently available resources and describe future needs;
 - f. indicate program location and means of delivery—i.e. justify why programs at distance cannot utilize telecommunications as an alternative to at-distance travel by faculty and/or students;
 - g. provide an approximate date for submission of the final proposal;
 - h. note impact, if any, that the program will have on students and student services—including a tabular summary of sources and the uses of funds, personnel, equipment, and facilities;
 - i. analyze the adequacy of current library holding, current facilities and equipment, and current personnel.
2. Describe, document, and defend the demand for a new program in terms of appreciable needs in the MSU-Billings Service Area.
3. Show that the department responsible for a new program will be able to demonstrate a reasonable comparison of the proposed program with similar programs at comparable institutions. If desirable, the services of a consultant should be utilized.
4. Complete the form entitled *Form to Submit a New Academic Program, Format for New Academic Program Requests*, and *Financial Model* available on the Academic Senate website at www.msubillings.edu/senate/forms/formshome.htm.

B. Procedures

The initiative for developing a program request and the responsibility for preparing the form and supporting materials lies with the Department.

Proposed development and paperflow will adhere to the following route:

1. The proposal will be developed by means of collegial department effort (faculty sign on the "Originating Faculty" line)

2. The department/department chair will review and forward the proposal with appropriate recommendations.
3. The Department will review and forward the proposal with appropriate recommendations to the College Curriculum Committee.
4. The College Curriculum Committee review and forward the proposal with appropriate recommendations to the College Dean.
5. The Dean will review the proposal, initial it, and forward the proposal to the Academic Senate Office.
6. The Academic Senate Administrative Assistant will assign the proposal a number (if this has not been done already) and forward it to the:
 - a. Teacher Education Committee, as appropriate (the Dean's Office may also do this step)
 - b. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, as appropriate
 - c. MSU-Billings Graduate Committee, as appropriateThe above Committees will review and forward the proposal with appropriate recommendations to the Academic Senate. The University-wide hearing concerning undergraduate curriculum proposals will take place at scheduled UCC meetings. The University-wide hearing concerning graduate curriculum proposals will take place at scheduled MSU-Billings Graduate Committee meetings.
7. The Academic Senate will review and forward the proposal with appropriate recommendations to the Provost with the exception of Level I & II items, which will be forwarded to the Chancellor.
8. The Provost shall have final approval on each proposal with the exception of Level I & II items, which will be approved by the Chancellor..

C. For proposals which involve two or more Colleges, the initiating department will inform the appropriate department in the other College(s) so that necessary consultation will occur. Such consultation must precede the presentation of proposals to the appropriate college curriculum committee.

D. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Dean of the College to review all programs and courses with designations in the College concerned (the Dean does not recommend).

E. Forms

1. Submitting New Courses

Forms for new courses must be submitted on the form entitled *New Course Proposal Form*, which is available on the Academic Senate website at www.msubillings.edu/senate/forms/formshome.htm.

2. Modification or Deletion of Existing Courses

Proposals which entail changes in or deletions of existing courses must be submitted on the form entitled *Form for Changing or Deleting Existing Courses*, which is available on the Academic Senate website at www.msubillings.edu/senate/forms/formshome.htm.

3. Modification of an Existing Program

Changes or alterations in existing degree programs include such items as modification in elective or specific course requirements, specified general education

requirements, and/or alteration in required course sequences. Proposed changes must be submitted with a brief rationale for the change(s) and both the current and proposed degree requirements. Proposals which entail changes in existing programs must be submitted on the form entitled *Form to Submit Modifications to an Existing Program*, which is available on the Academic Senate website at www.msubillings.edu/senate/forms/formshome.htm.

4. Deletion of a Program

Deletion of an existing academic program requires final approval by the Board of Regents through Policy 303.4, which follows:

Board policy:

1. An institution may impose an academic program moratorium to allow for program review, to deal with a temporary shortage of faculty or facilities, to deal with student enrollment pressures beyond what the program can handle or for similar reasons. The imposition and removal of a program moratorium shall be reported to the Commissioner's Office. After a three-year period, an academic program moratorium becomes a withdrawal unless the Board of Regents approves continuation of the moratorium.
2. Academic program withdrawal requires approval of the Board of Regents. Subsequent reinstatement of a program also requires approval of the Board of Regents.
3. If in the past an academic program has been withdrawn without Board of Regent approval, or an approved program has never been implemented, then the program remains in withdrawn status and Board of Regent approval is required to reinstate or implement the program.

Definitions:

Program withdrawal: the academic program has been (or will be) withdrawn from the catalog and no students will be admitted to the program.

Program moratorium: the academic program remains in the catalog and on the approved list of programs, but the institution has temporarily suspended admission to the program.

Program Termination Guidelines:

<http://mus.edu/che/arsa/Forms/AcademicForms.asp>

Proposals to delete an existing program must include a rationale for the proposed action and be submitted on the form entitled *Form to Delete an Existing Program*, which is available on the Academic Senate website at www.msubillings.edu/senate/forms/formshome.htm.

Board of Regents Policy and Procedures Manual can be found here:

<http://mus.edu/borpol/default.asp>