GRACE
COLLEGE &
SEMINARY

Policy: Procedure for Curriculum Changes
Effective: May 13, 2021
Policy Type: Faculty
Responsible Department: Registrar Office

NEW OR CHANGED COURSES AND PROGRAMS

Policy: New and revised curriculum, whether initiated by the department, school, or the administration, is evaluated and endorsed through a faculty reviewed process prior to its implementation.

The procedures below describe the details of the faculty review process.

Procedures for Submitting Changes to Existing Department-Specific Courses:

Departments are encouraged to update their courses based on assessment of student learning, changing best practices, and alignment with the mission, vision and values of Grace College. Generally, revisions to existing courses within a discipline should be managed within the department and through the school dean. Faculty, programs, or departments that make changes to courses should consider the following checklist:
1. Make sure changes are documented in annual Program Learning Outcomes Reports or Program Reviews.
2. If the course is taught online in any version, then notify the School of Professional Online Education.
3. If changes may affect library collection development or student/faculty research needs, then notify the library.
4. If changes will affect other disciplines, such as a major or minor from another department, then notify the Academic Affairs Committee and the Registrar's Office.
5. If the course revisions do not require a new course name and number, and points 1-4 are addressed, the change process is complete.
6. Whether or not #4. applies, if the modifications are substantial enough to merit reclassifying the course with a new name and course number, then submit a new course request form to the Registrar's office, and, if necessary, meet with them.

Specific Procedures for Submitting Changes to General Education Courses:

7. Notify the Director of General Education, who will determine if the changes are extensive enough to require notifying the Core Committee. The Core Committee does not need to be notified in situations such as
    a. changes because of course assessment,
    b. changes brought on because of structural changes to the Core that have already passed a faculty vote.
    c. pilot versions of a new course.
8. If the Core Committee is notified, then, following a summary of the changes by the Director of General Education or the Core lead faculty, the Core Committee should vote to either approve the changes or request more information.
9. If more information is requested, then the following should occur, in order:
    a. The Core lead faculty should collaborate with the Director of General Education on a short document that describes the old and new learning outcomes, as well

as the reasons motivating the changes such as assessment, best practices, program reviews of the Core, or program reviews of the department of the Core Lead Faculty.

b. The Core Committee should discuss whether the changes align with Core Program Learning Outcomes as well as assessment or program reviews, and then vote on the matter.

c. The Director of General Education should notify the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and then the full faculty.

Procedures for Submitting a Request for a New Course:

1. Departments may make changes they deem necessary to existing courses to ensure that they best meet the academic needs of students and include the most current and relevant content. Generally, departments will submit proposals for new courses to the Academic Affairs Committee when the new course(s) is/are part of a more extensive set of changes proposed by the department (this includes courses from partner institutions). The department should consult with the committee chair before proceeding to determine whether a formal proposal to the committee is necessary.

2. Departments in which new courses are created should submit this information to the Registrar using the **New or Changed Course Request Form**. A copy of the request form will also be sent to the chair of the Academic Affairs Committee by the Registrar.

3. New courses, particularly those that may affect the requirements of other majors, should be approved by disciplines affected by the change before the change gains final approval (i.e., if a course services another discipline or is serviced by another discipline).

4. New courses with an online component or proposed as part of online degree programs should be approved by the Dean of School of Professional Online Education (SPOE).

5. New courses should be discussed with the library staff as they may affect collection development and student/faculty research needs.

Procedures for Structural Changes to the Core

Structural Changes to the Core include any changes such as those that would affect checksheets or information for advising students.

1. The Director of General Education should write or collaborate on documentation of the proposed structural changes to the Core, explaining motivations such as assessment, program reviews, etc.

2. The Core Committee should vote on the changes. If the changes pass, then the Core Committee should determine, based on the scope of the changes, whether it is necessary to do any of the following:
   a. Notify the Vice President of Academic Affairs
   b. Notify the Academic Affairs Committee and request feedback
   c. Convene a meeting between the Director of General Education and the Registrar's Office
   d. Notify each school, including SPOE, during a school meeting and request feedback

3. If there are no major changes after the completion of step 2, then the changes should be voted on by the full faculty as presented by the Director of General Education.

Procedures for Submitting Changes to Existing Programs (Majors, Minors and Certificates):

1. Departments may make changes they deem necessary to existing programs to ensure that they best meet the academic needs of students and include the most current and relevant content.
   a. Generally, revisions to existing majors within a discipline should be managed within the department and through the school dean. Changing the name of a course, modifying content, reduction in credit hours from 4- to 3-credits, or combining existing courses are examples of changes that departments may make without submitting the change to Academic Affairs or the Deans' Council. These changes should, however, be communicated to the Registrar's Office using the New or Changed Course Request Form with consequent changes made on Check Sheets and in the catalog the next year.
   b. If the proposed change results in conflict with another department or requires the second department to add courses or faculty to compensate for the change, the proposal should be sent to the Academic Affairs Committee and Deans' Council with details about the points of conflict for resolution.

2. For certificates and other programs earned from partner institutions that do not require adjustments to Grace programs or courses, but are designed to complement these programs, no formal proposal is necessary. Instead, a description of the certificate or program including course descriptions and a rationale as to how the program will benefit Grace students is to be submitted to Academic Affairs and the Dean's Council for consideration, followed by approval by the faculty.

3. For partner institution programs that are designed to be combined with Grace programs, and require adjustments to Grace programs (for instance, combining a Masters degree from another institution with a Grace degree), a modified proposal is required. Contact the Chair of the Academic Affairs committee and the Accreditation

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Liaison Officer for details. Changes that involve an online component more than basic Web-facilitation of a course should be discussed directly with the Dean of SPOE.

4. Changes to majors that are outside the guidelines provided by the institution (e.g., changes that increase the number of credit hours needed to complete the major to more than 120 credits) should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee and Deans' Council.

5. All proposed new programs (including majors, minors or certificates) shall be discussed with the Accreditation Liaison Officer to investigate whether additional HLC approval is required for implementation. The outcome of this investigation will dictate the required Grace College proposal process that must be followed.

Procedure for Requesting a Major to be Eliminated:

1. The request to eliminate an existing major may be initiated by the department or by administration based on enrollment, employment trends, changes in educational focus, financial, or other reasons.

2. If the request is initiated by the administration, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will discuss the rationale with the school dean and/or the department chair. If the decision is final, the dean or chair will notify the appropriate campus offices, including the Registrar's Office and the Accreditation Liaison Officer, of the change so that at the earliest possible date, the Web site, marketing, catalog, admissions office, and other offices and publications can be updated to accurately reflect the department's offerings.

3. If the request to eliminate a major is initiated by the department, the chair should submit the request and rationale to the Academic Affairs Committee for evaluation against the offerings and curricular needs of other departments. The committee's recommendation is sent to the Deans' Council for final approval. If the request is approved, the dean will notify the appropriate campus offices of the change so that at the earliest possible date, the Web site, catalog, admissions office, and other offices and publications can be updated to accurately reflect the department's offerings.

4. Contact the Accreditation Liaison Officer to discuss the program that will be cancelled or suspended in order to determine whether prior HLC approval or notification is required. If prior approval is required, submit a provisional plan for teaching out students in the program. See HLC's Teach-Out Procedure for details about this process and instructions for creating and submitting a provisional plan.

Procedures for Submitting Proposals for a New Program:

1. New academic programs may be initiated by the department, school, or by administration. In both situations, the Academic Affairs Committee and the

Accreditation Liaison Officer should be contacted as soon as possible in the process to provide guidance and oversight in the development of the program. Prior HLC approval or notification is required for all new degree programs, including majors, minors, concentrations, and specializations.

2. The proposal of a new program that is already closely aligned with an existing major or minor, will not require new courses, and will not require new faculty may not need to be reviewed by the committee (e.g., a new track or emphasis in an existing major that does not require new courses or new faculty). The department making the proposal should consult with the Academic Affairs Committee chair and Accreditation Liaison Officer, however, before proceeding.

3. If it is determined that a proposal is required, the department desiring to begin a new degree program should work with the faculty in their department and school to develop the concept of the program. Once approved by department and school, a formal, comprehensive proposal will be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee and Deans' Council. The format of this proposal is described below.

4. The Academic Affairs Committee typically reviews the proposal with the chair present at the committee meeting. The committee may choose to request additional information before making its final recommendations.

5. The Academic Affairs Committee brings its final recommendations to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Deans' Council for considerations related to budget and resources. Following approval by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean's Council the proposal will be brought before the entire faculty for discussion and a faculty recommendation regarding the curriculum. The proposal can go to the faculty without a favorable recommendation from the Academic Affairs Committee.

6. Upon receiving final approval from Faculty, Deans, and regional and specialized accreditation (e.g. Higher Learning Commission), the department chair works with the dean and others to develop a plan for recruitment, promotion of the program, and implementation.

7. Proposals should be approved by the Faculty and the Deans' Council by the end of Fall semester prior to the academic year they will be available to students.   The process of implementing new programs requires the actions of many departments, including the Registrar, Admissions, and Marketing, which will occur during the Spring term. This also allows time to include new programs in the annual Spring update processes for the academic catalog, course offerings, and checksheets among others.

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Proposal Guidelines for New Programs:
The proposal from the department is an explanation about what the new or revised program is and will do (e.g., the program's goals and outcomes, activities, resources), including how resources and activities link to results. The proposal should include an explanation of the following components. Guiding questions are supplied to help construct the proposal, but are not meant to be exhaustive. The assumptions and beliefs that influenced the development of each component should be explicitly stated as a part of the explanation, including relevant biblical principles, institutional values, and the norms and values of the discipline or profession connected to the program. Completion of the proposal is designed to involve cooperation with other offices on campus (Accreditation Liaison Officer, admissions, finance, etc.). Please use the following format for the proposal:

TITLE OF PROGRAM AND NATURE (MAJOR, MINOR OR CERTIFICATE):

PROJECTED START DATE:
CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAM:

1. Identify the basic characteristics of the proposed educational program as indicated below:

   a. The full name of the proposed program, the specific degree (if applicable) or the instructional level (if not a degree program), and the six-digit 2010 CIP code XX.XXXX of the program (CIP codes, program name, and additional description [optional])
   b. Total credit hours for completion of the program
   c. Normal or typical length of time for students to complete the program
   d. Proposed initial date for implementation of the program
   e. Primary target audience for the program (e.g., full-time, part-time, traditional college age, working adults, transfer students, military personnel, or particular ethnic group)

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING FOR NEW PROGRAM

2. Describe the planning process for determining the need for this new program, including the role of faculty in the planning and approval process.
3. Describe how the proposed program relates to the mission, vision, and values of the institution.
4. What is the evidence that a market for the new program(s) exists? How has estimated program demand been factored into realistic enrollment projections? How has this evidence been used in planning and budgeting processes to develop a quality program that can be sustained?
5. What is the competitive advantage of this program?

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CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

6. Please submit a checksheet that lists all the courses that comprise the program and identify if the program will include any new courses. Include course descriptions and number of credit hours for each new course. Be aware that undergraduate majors must include at least 39 credits, and required prerequisites not listed should not significantly expand the required credits for the major.
7. If the program is to be completed in 3 years, provide an example of course sequencing of all major (and if applicable, any required minor) courses demonstrating that current and projected course schedules will allow completion in 3 years. Including existing courses as well as projected sequencing of new courses. If it won't be possible to complete the degree in 3 years, provide a statement explaining the rationale behind this.
8. If there are any additional admissions or retention policies for this program (special standing or academic achievement required to be admitted to the program, maintenance of GPA above the institutional expectations, etc.), describe these and provide a rationale for the policy.
9. Does the institution currently offer a program at the same instructional level and with the same 4-digit 2010 CIP code (XX.XX) as the proposed program? If so, identify the program currently offered and whether it is a degree program. Will the proposed program replace the program currently offered?
10. Does the institution currently offer two or more programs at the same instructional level with the same 2-digit 2010 CIP code (XX.) as the proposed program? If so, identify the two such programs with the highest numbers of graduates during the past year, along with their numbers of graduates.
11. What is the normal or typical length of time for students to complete the program?
12. Will the program be part of contractual arrangement (see HLC's website for a definition of Contractual Arrangements)
13. Will the program will be offered in whole or in part as distance education or correspondence education (see HLC's website for definitions of distance and correspondence education).

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

14. What are the program-level outcomes?
15. Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the program.
16. Describe the process for assessing and improving student learning, including student persistence and completion, in the new program.
17. How are the stated outcomes relevant to the learner in the real world, and to the learner in relation to professional standards and expected competencies in the career(s) targeted by the program?

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INSTITUTIONAL STAFFING, FACULTY, AND STUDENT SUPPORT

18. How many and what types of faculty (full-time or part-time) will be employed in the program? Why is the number and type of faculty sufficient to support the program? How many, if any, new faculty will be hired for the program?
19. Provide a brief attachment that inventories each faculty member currently employed to teach in the program, including names, a description of each faculty member's academic qualifications, their prior instructional responsibility and other experiences relevant to the courses they will teach in the program, each faculty member's course load in the new program, and the course work each currently teaches at the institution. If faculty have yet to be hired to teach within the program, a general position description including expected qualifications should be included, specifying whether the faculty to be hired will be full or part time.
20. For graduate programs, document scholarship and research capability of each faculty member; for doctoral programs, document faculty experience in directing student research.
21. What are the physical facilities and equipment needed to support the program? Indicate the impact that the proposed change will have on the physical resources and laboratories that currently accommodate existing programs and services, or identify new laboratory and preceptor needs.
22. What library and information resources—general as well as specific to the program(s)—and staffing and services are in place to support the initiative? If the proposed new program is at the graduate level, document discipline-specific refereed journals and primary source materials.

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FINANCIAL STABILITY

23. Explain Grace's financial ability to provide the capital investment to underwrite the requested change until it becomes independently sustainable. Please provide, by semester, projections of expected revenue until the capital investment is recouped (break-even point).

    a. Total capital investment:

	Year 1 Fall Semester	Year 1 Spring Semester	Year 2 Fall Semester	Year 2 Spring Semester	Year 3 Fall Semester	Year 3 Spring Semester
# Expected Students						
Projected Revenue[1]						
Projected Expense[2]						
Projected Profit/(Loss)						

[1] Incl. tuition and student fees

[2] Incl. all direct expenses—salaries, rent, debt services, etc.—and indirect expenses, such as overhead allocations.

    b. If the proposed program were to be cancelled after implementation, are there any circumstances that will trigger a requirement for a Provisional Plan under HLC's Teach-Out policy?

24. How does this program fit into the current and expected financial picture of the institution? In particular, will the program be financially self-sufficient within three years? If not, when do you expect the program to be financially self-sufficient, and are outside funds available to allow the program to operate until then?

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Some proposal questions used by permission from the Higher Learning Commission. Link for full application can be found here:
https://download.hlcommission.org/change/AcademicProgramApplication_FRM.docx

Revision Process and History

- All revisions to the policy must be approved by the Chief Academic Officer.

Date	Description of Revision
6-10-2021	Adapted format & includes revisions approved 5-3-2021. Prior revisions 8-30-2010, 1-12-2011, 9-12-2012, 12-5-2012, 5-6-2013.