



## PROCEDURE

### Academic Program Proposal, Maintenance, and Closure

Procedure Administrator: Provost

Authority:

Effective Date: January 21, 2015; May 27, 2021

Index Cross-References: Policy I-1: Board of Trustees

Procedure File Number: 2040

Approved By: Dr. Harvey Kesselman, President

This document describes the procedures authorized by the Stockton Board of Trustees (BOT) and the State of New Jersey for obtaining approval of new degree-granting programs (or academic offerings expanded from one type of program/offering to another), for communicating changes in curriculum and/or programs to the campus community and the state, for managing programs during their life cycle, and for initiating/completing program closure.

All of the options outlined in this procedure are subject to the terms and conditions of the Master Agreement between the Council of New Jersey State College Locals, AFT, AFL-CIO, and the State of New Jersey.

#### I. DEFINITIONS

According to the Office of the (NJ) Secretary of Higher Education, a program is an academic curriculum that culminates in a degree (BA, BS, BFA, MA, MS, MBA, MFA, EdD, DPT, DNP, PhD, etc.). At Stockton, the Liberal Studies Bachelor of Arts (LIBA) is also considered a degree program.

Stockton offers a number of other academic offerings that do not result in a degree, defined below:

- A. In-Program Minor: consists of a minimum of five (5) courses in a program. At Stockton, some programs specify courses for a minor whereas other programs allow students to choose their own courses. Stockton students declare in-program minors, and they appear on the student's official transcript; however, a student does not receive a degree for a minor.
- B. Interdisciplinary Minor: consists of a minimum of five (5) General Studies courses or a minimum of five (5) courses in more than a single program. Interdisciplinary minors do not usually have a corresponding degree-granting major. Like in-program minors, students declare interdisciplinary minors, and they appear on the

student's official transcript; however, a student does not receive a degree for the minor.

- C. Concentration/Track/Area of Specialization: constitutes a cluster of four (4) or more courses within a program. At Stockton, a concentration and a track are the same type of academic offering. Concentrations and tracks do appear on a student's official transcript.
- D. Area of Interest: is used to prepare students for graduate study or for a particular career. An area of interest consists of two to four (2 to 4) courses in a major or minor focused on a field or discipline-specific topic. An area of interest does not appear on a student's official transcript and is not a graduation requirement.
- E. Certificates: According to the Office of the (NJ) Secretary of Higher Education, an academic certificate that carries college credit is a curriculum, oftentimes vocationally focused or intended for personal enrichment, that culminates in an official award of recognition from the University. Certificates appear on a student's official transcript.
- F. P-12 Educational Endorsements: a group of courses in one or more majors and/or General Studies that meets the state Department of Education specifications for an official teaching endorsement. Endorsements do not appear on a student's official transcript.
- G. Miscellaneous Academic Offerings: At Stockton, there are a number of offerings that do not fall into the categories above but that are considered non-degree-granting programs, such as Honors, First-Year Studies, First-Year Seminars, etc. Some miscellaneous academic offerings appear on the student's official transcript (Honors), and others do not (First-Year Studies).

## II. NEW PROGRAM/OFFERING GENERATION: PROGRAM PROPOSAL

New degree-granting programs generally emanate from faculty members. Such recommendations may also come from the President, Provost, and academic Deans in collaboration with faculty members. All new programs must include a tenured faculty lead as a primary or secondary co-author. This individual will be responsible for presenting or co-presenting the proposal at identified levels within the internal review process described below. Accreditors and licensing agencies can likewise request curriculum/program changes that result in a new degree-granting program requiring review and approval.

All degree-granting programs and credit-bearing certificate programs have a federally defined six-digit Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code. The code functions as an identifier and is used for tracking and reporting data such as program completions.

New program proposals should identify the appropriate CIP code before submitting a proposal to Dean's Council as the first step of the review process. Deans and program faculty should contact the Office of the Provost regarding the processes for identifying an initial CIP code.

## A. Review and Approval Processes

1. The review and approval processes have three aims:
  - a. To communicate the new program/offering to the University community through the internal governance structures on campus.
  - b. To provide helpful comments to those involved in the development of the new degree-granting program.
  - c. To prepare the Provost to recommend new program proposals to the New Jersey Presidents' Council (NJPC) which, in turn, recommends new degree-granting programs to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE).

## B. Internal Review

### **Step 1: Deans Council Review**

The Deans Council is the first recommending body in the internal review process because the creation of new degree-granting programs can affect faculty and programs/offerings in multiple Schools. The academic Deans will provide feedback to those proposing the new degree-granting program regarding duplication, competition, potential stress on faculty and programs, limits to increasing enrollment in courses/programs, etc. This step is to provide background, support, and create awareness of potential issues before the proposal moves forward to the Academic Programs and Planning Committee of the Faculty Senate. The Provost and the academic Deans may request additional documentation during this part of the process, including a study of labor market and regional demand for the program.

All new programs and offerings should have the appropriate School Dean's support, as well as letters of support from all academic Deans and program faculty affected by the new program (i.e., Dean of the School housing the program, Deans of Schools with programs impacted by the new program, and the faculty members of impacted programs). If a new degree-granting program requires new faculty lines, the letter from the Dean housing the program should include a statement that indicates their priorities related to seeking faculty for the new program. Deans' letters should be included in the new degree-granting program proposal as it moves through internal and external governance.

### **Step 2: Academic Programs and Planning Committee (APP Committee) of the Faculty Senate Review**

The Academic Programs and Planning Committee (APP Committee) is a recommending body of the Faculty Senate. Its role is to assist faculty in developing new degree-granting programs.

Those proposing new degree-granting programs will submit a proposal to the APP Committee. The APP Committee completes two readings of each proposal over a minimum period of two months, so the proposers have an opportunity to

revise the proposal after the first reading and in preparation for the second reading, before the proposal moves to the full Faculty Senate for review.

After completing its review, the APP Committee will include a summary of the proposal, and strengths and weaknesses, in its monthly report to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.

### **Step 3: Faculty Senate Review and Provost Council Review**

Faculty Senate review and Provost Council review can occur concurrently.

#### Faculty Senate Review

The Faculty Senate is a recommending body. Its role is to assist those developing new program proposals and offer helpful guidance about new program content and formatting during the internal shared governance process. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee reviews the proposal and any comments forwarded from the Chair of the APP Committee and decides whether to put review of the proposal on the agenda of an upcoming Faculty Senate meeting. Forwarding the proposal does not mean that the APP Committee necessarily endorses the program. If the Executive Committee decides not to put the proposal on the Faculty Senate agenda, the Executive Committee will send the proposal back to the APP Committee for further review.

In cases where the Executive Committee moves the proposal forward for a full Faculty Senate review, the Faculty Senate will typically conduct two readings. After the second reading, the Faculty Senate will vote to recommend or not to recommend the new degree-granting proposal and forward its recommendation to the Office of the Provost. The Faculty Senate's recommendation will include the following information: strengths of the new degree-granting program, weaknesses of the new degree-granting program, concerns, and challenges.

#### Provost Council Review

The Provost Council is an advisory body. It consists of School Deans, Directors of Centers and Institutes, Directors of instructional sites, Directors of offices in Academic Affairs, Office of the Provost managers, and Union and Faculty Senate representatives. One of its roles is to assist the Provost in new program development by reviewing new program proposals and offering helpful suggestions for revisions to proposal content and formatting.

The proposal's original author or secondary co-author as described under "II. NEW PROGRAM/OFFERING GENERATION: PROGRAM PROPOSAL" will present the new degree-granting program to the Provost Council. Provost Council members offer comments and suggestions during the presentation, which are forwarded to the Provost, and the Provost follows up, as necessary, with other relevant bodies.

Reviews from the APP Committee and from the Faculty Senate will move the proposal on to the Provost. The Provost will review all recommendations from the Faculty Senate, the APP Committee (see Step 2), and comments from the Provost Council.

#### **Step 4: Provost's Review**

Based on input from the Faculty Senate and Provost Council, the Provost will decide whether to present the new program proposal to Cabinet and President for additional consideration.

If, following Cabinet and Presidential review, the Provost recommends the new degree-granting program, the staff in the Office of the Provost prepare a resolution and executive summary for an upcoming Board of Trustees meeting.

The Provost can also not recommend the new degree-granting program. In that case, those proposing the new program can continue to work on the proposal and resubmit at a step in the process indicated by the Provost, or they can choose to discard the proposal. At any point in time, a proposer may resurrect the proposal, revise it, and submit it through internal governance beginning at Step 1.

#### **Step 5: Board of Trustees Review**

The Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Planning (BOTAPP) Committee reviews an executive summary and resolution from the Provost's Office at one of its regularly scheduled meetings. If a BOT resolution is necessary, the BOT signs it, and the resolution appears in the BOT materials. That signed resolution should be added to the proposal packet that the staff in the Office of the Provost sends to the Academic Issues Committee (AIC) of the New Jersey Presidents' Council (NJPC).

#### **Step 6: External Approval**

Once the BOT meets and gives its support to the new degree-granting program, program proposers work with staff in the Office of the Provost to prepare a proposal packet for NJPC. The presidents have a month to write letters of support or letters of objection to the new program proposal. These letters become part of the new program proposal packet. Following the month-long review by the presidents, the AIC reviews the proposal and forwards its recommendation to the NJPC which, in turn, submits its recommendation to Office of the Secretary of Higher Education for approval.

New degree-granting programs receive full vetting by the AIC; however, academic offerings that do not culminate in a degree (e.g., minors) appear on the AIC agenda as For Your Information (FYI) items. FYI items do not require the same proposal packet as required for new degree-granting programs. The staff in the Office of the Provost submits FYI items to the AIC.

Proposal packets going to the state for review and approval should conform to the guidelines and format in the current *Academic Issues Committee Manual*.

#### **C. For Your Information (FYI) Items**

Academic offerings other than degree-granting programs must progress through internal and external review processes; however, they progress through review

processes for information purposes only. FYI items include the following types of offerings:

1. In-program minors
2. Interdisciplinary minors
3. Concentrations/tracks/areas of interest/areas of specialization
4. Certificates
5. Educational endorsements
6. Miscellaneous offerings

Those proposing the new offering should present it to the Deans Council, the APP Committee, the Faculty Senate, and the Provost Council for communication purposes. Each entity requires only a single reading, as the presentation is for information only. The Provost will also present FYI items to the Cabinet and President, as well as to the BOTAPP Committee. The proposal is sent to the AIC committee of the NJPC as an FYI item as well. Those proposing academic offerings other than degree-granting programs should consult the staff in the Office of the Provost to clarify the requirements for the presentation of non-degree-granting programs to internal and external governance.

### III. MANAGING PROGRAMS DURING THEIR LIFE CYCLE: PROGRAM MAINTENANCE

#### A. Program Maintenance

1. Annual Program Reports: Each spring, the Office of Institutional Research prepares data workbooks for each degree-granting and non-degree-granting academic program, to be used in annual program reports. Completion of these annual reports is required and is specified in a locally-negotiated agreement.
2. Periodic Program Review: Similarly, on a periodic calendar maintained by the Office of the Provost, approximately 20 percent of all programs (including disciplinary majors, interdisciplinary minors, the LIBA degree, and miscellaneous academic offerings) will undertake a periodic program review each year. The Office of Institutional Research prepares data workbooks for each degree-granting and non-degree-granting academic program, according to the periodic calendar. These reports are required and are specified in a locally-negotiated agreement.
3. LIBA Review: The LIBA periodic review will contain an analysis of the numbers of students over time creating customized curriculums. It will also include recommendations, if appropriate, for any LIBA prompt/pathway or concentration to develop into a stand-alone major. Faculty interested in exploring the development of the stand-alone major can work with the appropriate academic dean(s) to request a feasibility study or a market scan from an external research consultant via the staff in the Office of the Provost.

4. External Accreditation: A locally-negotiated agreement contains provisions for programs responsible for maintaining external accreditation. Faculty representatives from the program should consult that agreement for the most current guidelines.

## B. Internal Program Revision

Program revision can include updating or redesigning curriculum. Some program revisions occur at the program level and do not necessitate internal governance review; other revisions are subject to review and approval through the procedures outlined above for FYI items. For instance, a curriculum revision that does not impact enrollments or scheduling in other programs will not require review by internal governance bodies. When an internal revision impacts other programs, it should follow the FYI guidelines above.

A revision that results in substantial curriculum changes and that may result in a new degree-granting program must follow the guidelines in the section below on Program Change/Consolidation (including Change of Degree Level). Revisions that result in a new degree-granting program or an FYI item must pass through internal governance and must also be presented to the AIC and the NJPC.

1. Timeframe: The process for revision, updating, and redesign is ongoing and a regular part of program faculty responsibility.
2. Initiation: Program faculty members or President, Provost, or academic Deans may initiate a meeting with all relevant stakeholders to discuss the program revision.
3. Vote: Faculty who teach courses in the program vote by simple majority to recommend revision, updating, and redesign, unless program bylaws specify other procedures for voting on curriculum changes. If a majority of program faculty members vote for revision, updating, and redesign, this procedure advances to the Dean. If the vote impacts other programs, notice of the vote and its results must be submitted to the appropriate Dean(s) and Deans Council. If a majority of program faculty do not vote for revision, updating, and redesign, faculty meet with the Dean to consider other options.
4. Acceptance or Rejection: The School Dean may reject or accept a faculty vote to revise, update, and redesign a program. If the Dean and the faculty disagree, the Dean meets with faculty to consider other options.
5. Implementation: Program faculty work with the School Dean and other administrative units to implement the best program revision options. Options might include: creating a new delivery method, revising the curriculum, developing new agreements with county colleges or high schools, revamping the focus of the program/offering, or following other recommendations made in the context of a periodic review. The Dean will provide assistance to the faculty in accordance with the Master Agreement and all local agreements in place during the period of program revision.

6. Workload: Program faculty continue to teach and precept, as they have in the past, during the period of revision. If appropriate, the School Dean can make in-load assignments, within the parameters of existing agreements, to facilitate the revision process.
7. Monitoring: During the revision, updating, and redesign period, the program faculty and Dean will meet at least once to monitor the impact of the revision efforts on other programs and additional administrative units and notify any affected units, including offices and centers that support academic programs such as the Center for Teaching and Learning Design, Office of Global Engagement, Financial Aid, Academic Advising, ITS, etc.
8. Enrollment: During the revision period, the program faculty and Dean will meet at least once to develop enrollment strategies in line with the University's mission statement.

#### IV. PROGRAM SUSPENSION, CHANGE/CONSOLIDATION, OR CLOSURE:

During periods of stagnation, decline, or other appropriate reason such as discipline or pedagogical shifts, program faculty or faculty teaching courses in the academic program consult with their School Dean to evaluate the necessity of pursuing suspension, change/consolidation, or closure. Such recommendations may also come from the President, Provost, or academic Deans.

- A. Suspension: A program stops accepting new students so that the School Dean and program faculty can consider options.
  1. Timeframe: The process for suspension generally takes up to four semesters, excluding summer.
  2. Initiation: Program faculty members, the President, Provost, or academic Deans may initiate a meeting with all relevant stakeholders to discuss program suspension. A representative from the program faculty notifies the APP Committee of the Faculty Senate about this meeting for informational purposes. The Dean notifies the Provost and Provost Council of this meeting for informational purposes.
  3. Vote: Program faculty vote by simple majority to recommend suspension, unless the program bylaws specify other procedures for voting on curriculum changes. If a majority of faculty members vote for suspension, this recommendation advances to the Dean. If a majority of faculty do not vote for suspension, the program faculty meet with the Dean to consider other options.
  4. Acceptance or Rejection: The School Dean may reject or accept a faculty vote to suspend a program. If the Dean and the faculty disagree, the Dean meets with faculty to consider other options. The Dean also notifies the



Provost, Deans Council, and the Provost Council of the outcome of the meeting for informational purposes.

The Provost may accept or reject the School Dean's recommendation for suspension. If the Provost rejects the recommendation, the Dean and the faculty meet with the Provost to consider other options.

5. Implementation: If the final decision of the Provost is to suspend the program, the Dean notifies Enrollment Management to cease recruiting and admitting new students for the program. The suspension process takes four semesters (excluding summer), during which time the Provost assesses the merits of suspension and decides either to maintain the program or to initiate a path to consolidation or closure. The Dean will provide assistance to the faculty in accordance with the Master Agreement and all local agreements in place during the period of program suspension.
6. Workload: Faculty continue to teach and precept, as they have in the past, during the four-semester period of suspension. If appropriate, the School Dean can make in-load assignments, within the parameters of existing agreements, to facilitate progress toward goals set for the suspension period. During the four-semester period of suspension, program faculty meet with the Dean and Enrollment Management to reach a decision about maintaining the program or initiating pathways to consolidation or closure.

#### B. Program Change/Consolidation (including Change in Degree Level)

Programs that experience a serious reduction in enrollment over an extended period of time or a dramatic shift in the discipline/field may consider change or consolidation, if suspension of the program is not an option. Student demand or trends in the field may also lead to change or consolidation. Among the possible types of change or consolidation are:

- Merging of programs/offerings
- Recasting a minor to a concentration within an undergraduate major
- Recasting an undergraduate major to a minor
- Discontinuing an undergraduate major when a graduate degree becomes the required degree level in the field
- Discontinuing a master's degree when a doctoral degree becomes the required degree level in the field
- Recasting a very specific graduate program to a concentration within a more general graduate program or the converse--to its own degree program

When substantial change or consolidation requires an adjustment of a program's CIP code, that information needs to be communicated through Stockton internal governance as outlined above in Step 6 of the New Program Proposal process and to the State of New Jersey via an FYI item to the AIC of the NJPC.

Deans and program faculty should contact the Office of the Provost regarding the processes for identifying and reporting a CIP code change to the AIC.

1. Timeframe: There is no specific timeframe for change or consolidation.
2. Initiation: Program faculty members, the President, Provost, or academic Deans may initiate a meeting with all relevant stakeholders to discuss program change or consolidation. A representative from the program faculty notifies the APP Committee of the Faculty Senate about this meeting for informational purposes. The Dean notifies the Provost and Provost Council of this meeting for informational purposes.
3. Multi-Program Meeting: When change or consolidation involves decision-making by more than one program, faculty members of the affected programs meet to discuss possible types of change or paths to consolidation.
4. Vote: Program faculty vote by simple majority to recommend change or consolidation, unless the program bylaws specify other procedures for voting on change or consolidation. If a majority of faculty members vote for change or consolidation, this procedure advances to the Dean. If a majority of faculty do not vote for change or consolidation, the faculty meet with the Dean to consider other options.
5. Acceptance or Rejection: The Dean may reject or accept a program faculty vote to change or consolidate a program. If the Dean and the faculty disagree, the Dean meets with faculty to consider other options. The Dean also notifies the Provost and the Provost Council of the outcome for informational purposes.

The Provost may accept or reject the Dean's recommendation for change or consolidation. If the Provost rejects the recommendation, the Dean and the faculty meet with the Provost to consider other options.

6. Implementation: Program faculty work with the Dean and other administrative units to implement the best program change or consolidation options. The Dean will provide assistance to the faculty in accordance with the Master Agreement and all local agreements in place during the period of program change or consolidation. Changes that result in a new degree-granting program or a change in degree level must pass through all the New Program Approval steps above, including all internal and external groups.
7. Notification: If all parties agree to the change or consolidation, the Dean notifies Admissions, Academic Advising, the Office of the Registrar, Academic Affairs, and the Office of Institutional Research of the expected timeline for the change or consolidation and any other relevant details.
8. Workload: Program faculty continue to teach and precept, as they have in the past, while the change or consolidation is in progress. During that time, program faculty and the Dean notify students of the change or consolidation and of their options for matriculating in the changed or consolidated program.

## C. Closure

Program faculty and/or the Dean may consider program closure as a final resort, if suspension of the program or change/consolidation are not viable options.

1. Timeframe: There is no specific timeframe for closure.
2. Initiation: Program faculty members, the President, Provost, or academic Deans may initiate a meeting to discuss program closure. For informational purposes, a representative from the program faculty notifies the APP Committee of the Faculty Senate of this meeting while the Dean notifies the Provost, Deans Council, and Provost Council of this meeting.
3. Vote: Program faculty who teach courses in the program vote by simple majority to recommend closure, unless the program bylaws specify other procedures for voting on curriculum changes. If a majority of program faculty members vote for closure, this procedure advances to the Dean. If a majority of program faculty do not vote for closure, the faculty meet with the Dean to consider other options.
4. Given that program closure is a serious decision, it requires steps that overlap and allow for reconsideration:
5. Acceptance or Rejection: The Dean may reject or accept a faculty vote to close a program. If the Dean and the faculty disagree, the Dean meets with faculty to consider other options. The Dean also notifies the Provost, Deans Council, and Provost Council of the outcome of this meeting.
6. Faculty Senate Level: The Provost formally notifies the Faculty Senate President of the results of the vote and the Faculty Senate President formally refers the closure proposal to the APP Committee for review. The APP Committee carries out two readings of the closure proposal, usually over the course of two months, and makes a recommendation to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty Senate completes two readings of the closure proposal, usually over the course of two months. After the second reading, the Faculty Senate votes on a recommendation regarding closure.

The President of the Faculty Senate notifies the APP Committee and the Dean of its recommendation. The Dean communicates the Faculty Senate's recommendations to the Provost. The Dean also notifies the Deans Council and Provost Council of the Faculty Senate's recommendation for informational purposes.

7. Provost Level: The Provost may accept or reject a recommendation for closure of a program.

8. President Level: The President maintains final authority regarding closure of a program and may accept or reject a recommendation from the Provost for closure of a program.
9. Detailed Plan: If a program closes, the program faculty and Dean draft a detailed plan for future roles of all faculty or staff currently considered to be part of that program. In addition, the program notifies faculty and staff of the plan for closure. All parties recognize the critical importance of the closure plan for affected faculty and staff and the significance of ensuring them the opportunity to continue employment with Stockton University. Each affected faculty and staff member, in accordance with Master and local agreements, has the opportunity to move to a similar position in another program or academic unit.
10. Notification: When the Provost receives the plan for closure, the Provost notifies all appropriate administrative offices, including the Office of the President, the Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Planning Committee, Enrollment Management, the Center for Academic Advising, Financial Aid, Human Resources, as well as the Deans and faculty of affected academic programs, the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of Institutional Research.
11. Board of Trustees Decision: The Board of Trustees has the opportunity to review the plan for closure and decide to accept/not accept the plan. After the Board of Trustees makes its decision, the Provost notifies the Academic Issues Committee of the New Jersey President's Council of the Board of Trustees' decision and forwards the Board of Trustees' signed resolution regarding closure.
12. Workload: Faculty continue to teach and precept, as they have in the past, while the discussion about closure and the closure plan is in progress. Faculty and the Dean notify students of the plan for closure and of their options for completing the program or transitioning to another program of study within the period of time specified in the detailed plan.

Review History:

	Date
Procedure Administrator	03/26/2021
Deans Council	05/28/2020
Provost Council	03/19/2021
Faculty Senate	04/16/2021
Divisional Executive	03/26/2021
General Counsel	04/26/2021
Cabinet	05/14/2021
President	05/27/2021