



WNCC Administrative Procedure

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| Title: | Creation of New Instructional Programs |
| Division: | Educational Services |
| Category: | Curriculum and Instruction |
| Reference: | BP-616 (New Programs – Academic and Non-Credit) Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Education Guidelines for New Program Requests (2008) Higher Learning Commission Substantive Change: New Academic Programs (2020) |
| Number: | AP-616.01 |
| Date of Approval: | July 26, 2023 |
| Approval: | Greg Dart, President |

Purpose

WNCC strives to provide innovative and current programs that meet the needs of students and their transfer or employment goals across all areas of the curriculum.

Scope

All new programs, both credit and non-credit will follow these procedures before being offered to students.

Procedure

Ideas for new programs come from many sources. They might be the outcome of student or community requests, college strategic goals, advances in a discipline, or the success of a similar idea at other institutions. All areas of the College are encouraged to hold periodic sessions for consideration of potential new programs by faculty, students, alumni, or community groups.

Academic, Credit-Bearing Program Approval Process

The process for new academic program approval may take as long as eighteen months.

I. Phase I – New Program Development Plan

To propose a new program, the originator(s) should consult with the appropriate dean of instruction and the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) about the idea in concept. With the support of those administrators, the originator(s) will develop a proposal that includes the following:

- Name of the Program
- Degrees/Credentials to be awarded graduates of the program
- CIP Code
- Brief Catalog Description of the Program
- Describe the Centrality of the Program to the Mission and Vision of WNCC
- Evidence of Need for the Program (include as many of the following as possible)
 - Workforce needs of business and industry in the Panhandle (including WNCC Advisory Board recommendations when possible)
 - Workforce needs of business and industry in the region or nationally
 - Level of Student Interest – survey data, studies, etc.
 - “Uniqueness” of the program to WNCC, other Nebraska community colleges, and/or other educational entities in the region
- Estimate of Resources Needed
 - New faculty
 - Equipment & technology
 - Space/Facilities
 - Annual operating budget

Once the above information has been collected, the originator(s) should work with the appropriate dean of instruction to present the idea to the CAO.

The CAO will present the proposal to the President’s leadership team. This group may approve moving forward with the new program, request additional information, or reject the development of the new program. If approved, the originator(s) will move to Phase II.

II. Phase II – New Program Proposal

Building on the evidence contained in Phase I, the originator should build on the evidence to fill out the details of the program by including:

- Program Student Learning Outcomes or Competencies
- Curriculum

- Descriptions of all new courses to be created
- An academic plan showing the sequence of courses students would follow to attain the degree/credentials
- The assessment plan for measuring student attainment of the learning outcomes or competencies for the program
- Enrollment projections for the first three years of the program
- Opportunities for partnerships with four-year colleges and/or universities (if applicable)

III. Phase III – Approvals and Implementation

- a) The Curriculum Committee will conduct an initial review of the New Program Proposal. That committee may request additional information of the originator(s). The Curriculum Committee will forward a recommendation to approve or reject the Program Proposal to the Academic Council.
- b) If the Academic Council approves the New Program Proposal, it will go to College Council for a recommendation to the President.
- c) If the President supports the proposal, it will be submitted to the Board of Governors, which approves all new academic programs of study.
- d) If approved by the Board of Governors, the proposal must also be approved by:
 - i. The Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Education (CCPE). This step may take up to three months.
 - ii. The institutional accrediting agency. This step may take up to six months.
 - iii. The U.S. Department of Education for all certificate and associate degree programs that are Title IV aid eligible. This step may take up to six months.

Once all approvals have been attained, only then can the program be marketed to potential students and built into the next available budget cycle and course schedule offerings.

Non-Credit Program Approval Process

Non-credit programs are typically designed to meet business or industry needs and result in credentials or certifications that are for a specific set of skills. Non-credit programs are overseen by the Executive Director of Workforce Development.

The Executive Director or their designee will:

1. Identify the need for a new or updated program through economic development data, employment forecasts, economic trends for the Panhandle, national workforce development data, or other data-driven sources.
2. Create a business plan for the new program including:

- Timelines for Development and Implementation
 - Projected Student Demand and Enrollment
 - Costs of Offering the Program, including:
 - resources required
 - revenue and expenditure estimates
 - Pricing & Marketing Strategy
 - Plan for Assessing Effectiveness of the Program – both student learning outcomes and program’s effectiveness at meeting community needs
 - Any other relevant decision-making data
3. Discuss the business plan with the CAO, who will discuss the program with the President and/or the President’s leadership team as necessary.
 4. Implement the program.
 5. Most non-credit programs benefit from having a community advisory board that will assist with program development and assessment. Even if a formal advisory board is not created, the Executive Director of Workforce Development should conduct a comprehensive program review to ensure the program is meeting the needs of the Panhandle and is economically viable for the College.

Revising this Procedure

This Administrative Procedure supersedes any prior WNCC policy, procedure, guideline, or handbook on this subject matter.

WNCC reserves the right to revise this procedure, as necessary, and for the changes to become effective immediately.

Original Adoption Date: July 26, 2023

Revision Date:

Sponsoring Division: Educational Services