

PROCEDURES FOR THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JOINT AND COOPERATIVE GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

A joint degree program occurs when two or more universities share the administrative, supervisory, and academic responsibility for the proposed program. A cooperative degree program occurs when the primary administrative and academic responsibilities fall to one of the participating institutions.

Proposal for a new joint or cooperative degree program is initiated by the submission of a Program Development Plan (PDP). The PDP should address, in a summary narrative of no more than five pages (exclusive of appendices, which should be kept as brief as possible), the following concerns:

1. Designation of the new program (i.e., degree name and title), rationale for that designation, definition of the focus of the program and a brief description of its disciplinary purpose and significance.
2. Description of the proposed curriculum.
3. Administrative arrangements for the proposed program: department and school or college involved.
4. Evidence of need for the new program, including the opportunities for employment of graduates. This section should also address other similar programs in the state and potential duplication of programs in the state and region.
5. Prospective enrollment.
6. Special efforts to enroll and retain underrepresented groups.
7. Availability and adequacy of the faculty and facilities available for the new program.
8. Need for additional facilities and staff and the plans to meet this need.
9. Projected additional costs associated with the program and evidence of institutional commitment and capacity to meet these costs.

If a cooperative degree program involves a non-university agency or laboratory (e.g., governmental research unit, library, art gallery), the two entities should cooperatively plan the student's experience and ensure periodic interactions between the staff members of the two institutions regarding the oversight of the academic experiences of students. In addition, the PDP should include a statement of policies and procedures for ensuring:

1. The provision of complementary educational experiences for students.
2. Supervision of students by qualified scholars at both institutions.
3. Mechanisms for joint advising and evaluation of students.
4. Mechanisms and procedures to administer the shared activities.
5. Mechanisms to maintain academic quality.
6. Procedures for covering the costs involved in shared administration.
7. Compliance with policies on such essential matters as academic freedom, intellectual property rights and affirmative action.
8. Safeguards against possible exploitation of the time and talents of students.
9. Official confirmation that ultimate academic responsibility rests with the university.
10. The precise description of any field-work experience of the student, if appropriate.

The PDP is submitted to the Educational Policies Committee (EPC) Graduate Council. If approved, the Dean of Graduate Studies sends the PDP to RACGS members for a 6-week review period. RACGS members will determine whether a Full Proposal (FP) is necessary.

If a FP is not necessary, an expanded version of the PDP will need to go through KSU's review process (department/school, academic college, EPC Graduate Council, Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees). If approved, a formal presentation of the proposal will be scheduled for a forthcoming RACGS meeting.

Presentations are about 15 minutes in length and usually include 1) a brief description of the proposed program and 2) responses to the most serious criticisms. This is followed by an opportunity for RACGS members to ask questions.

After the presentation, RACGS members vote by written ballot as a recommendation to the Chancellor. Recommendations for approval require an affirmative vote from two-thirds of all members in attendance, with the stipulation that no program will be recommended for approval with less than 8 "yes" votes. Responsibility for the final decision rests with the Chancellor.

Full Proposal

If RACGS determines that a FP is necessary, it must be submitted within two years of the submission of the PDP. Otherwise, the process must be re-initiated by submitting a new PDP.

The FP should include clarification and revisions based upon the reviews of the PDP and appendices containing such items as faculty vitae, course descriptions, needs surveys, and consultants' reports. The FP should address the following points:

1. Academic Quality

Competency, experience and number of faculty, and adequacy of students, curriculum, computational resources, library, laboratories, equipment, and other physical facilities, needed to mount the program.

a) In addition to this analysis, for entry level graduate degree programs, academic quality assessment will focus on the adequacy of the answers provided in response to the following questions:

- 1) Is the program distinctly different, both conceptually and qualitatively, from the undergraduate degree programs in the same or related disciplines? If so, is there a detailed listing of the specific differences?
- 2) Does the program emphasize the theoretical basis of the discipline as expressed in the methods of inquiry and ways of knowing in the discipline?
- 3) Does the program place emphasis on professional decision making and teach the use of critical analysis in problem solving?
- 4) Is the program designed to educate students broadly so that they have an understanding of the major issues and concerns in the discipline or professional area?

- 5) Does the design of the program include a capstone experience, such as an exit project (which would not necessarily be a research experience)?
 - 6) Does the proposed program identify faculty resources appropriate for the research component of the program? vii. Does the program curriculum offer what students need to know for competence at the expected level of professional expertise?
 - 7) What plans have been made to address standards and guidelines for professional accreditation, if applicable?
- b) In addition to the analysis given above in 1.a., ***for professional graduate degree programs***, academic quality assessment will focus on the adequacy of the answers provided in response to the following questions:
- 1) What admission criteria, in addition to the traditionally required transcripts, standardized test scores, letter of recommendation, and personal statements of purpose, will be used to assess the potential for academic and professional success of prospective students? The special consideration of student experience and extant practical skills within the admission process should be specifically noted.
 - 2) If field/clinical experience is subsumed within the academic experience, how does that experience relate to the academic goals of the professional graduate degree program? Provide a description of the involvement of supervisory personnel. Describe the level of communication between the field/clinical experience site and the academic department. Provide an outline of the anticipated student activities as well as student requirements.
 - 3) If the faculty qualifications associated with the professional graduate degree program differ from national norms and the traditional standards of faculty excellence, how do such qualifications differ and why do they differ? Provide the specific qualifications of adjunct, part-time, and special faculty who do not hold traditional academic credentials. Also, give a rationale for such faculty without academic credentials to participate in the professional degree program as regular program faculty.
 - 4) How does accreditation by the appropriate professional organization relate to the academic experience outlined in the program plan? Describe the specific aspects of the program plan, if any, that are necessary to achieve professional accreditation.
 - 5) What is the relationship between theory and practice as expressed within the proposed curriculum? Identify a set of *core courses* and show how the curriculum enhances the student's professional preparation.
 - 6) Does the number of credit hours required for graduation differ significantly from traditional graduate degree programs? How is the number of credit hours required for graduation influenced by mandated professional experiences?
 - 7) Can it be demonstrated that the culminating academic experience, such as an exit project, thesis or dissertation, will contribute to the enhancement of the student's professional preparation? In support of the response here, provide a list of possible research projects, theses, or dissertation topics.

2. Need

Examples metrics of program need include:

- a) Student interest and demand--Potential enrollment; Ability to maintain the critical mass of students.
- b) Institutional need--Plan for overall development of graduate programs at the proposing institutions.
- c) Societal demand--Intellectual development; Advancement of the discipline; Employment opportunities.
- d) Scope--Local, regional, and national needs; International need.

3. Access and Retention of Underrepresented Groups

- a) Plan to ensure recruitment, retention and graduation of underrepresented groups within the discipline.
- b) Provide as background a general assessment of:
 - 1) Institution and departmental profiles of total enrollment and graduate student enrollment of underrepresented groups within the discipline; and
 - 2) Compare underrepresented groups degree recipients from the department and university at all levels compared to national norms. Supply data by group where available.

4. Statewide Alternatives

- a) Programs available in other institutions;
- b) Appropriateness of specific locale for the program; and
- c) Opportunities for inter-institutional collaboration.

5. Institutional Priority and Costs

- a) Support and commitment of the proposing institution's central administration.
- b) Adequacy of available resources committed for the initiation of the program.

6. External Support

- a) Community, foundation, governmental, and other resources.

The FP goes through KSU's review process (department/school, academic college, EPC Graduate Council, Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees). If approved, the Dean of Graduate Studies sends the FP to RACGS members for a 6-week review period.

Following the 6-week review, the chair of RACGS will schedule a formal presentation of the proposal at a forthcoming RACGS meeting.

Response Document

The Response Document is a written response to reviewers' comments on the FP. The Response Document must include an OBR Fiscal Impact Statement and should be used to demonstrate

institutional plans for the judicious use of resources in terms of physical plant, personnel, and student support, and appropriate institutional commitment of resources to the new program.

The Dean of Graduate Studies will send the Response Document to RACGS members at least 10 days in advance of the formal presentation.

Presentation

Presentations are about 15 minutes in length and usually include 1) a brief description of the proposed program and 2) responses to the most serious criticisms. This is followed by an opportunity for RACGS members to ask questions.

After the presentation, RACGS members vote by written ballot as a recommendation to the Chancellor. Recommendations for approval require an affirmative vote from two-thirds of all members in attendance, with the stipulation that no program will be recommended for approval with less than 8 “yes” votes. Approval may be full (no associated conditions or provisions), contingent (full approval is contingent on meeting certain conditions), or provisional (approved for a specified period of time; full approval is contingent on meeting certain conditions; requires a second review, formal presentation and vote from RACGS).