

3.6.1-12 UNC General Administration Guidelines for Establishing New Doctoral Programs

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The UNC Policy Manual
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Guidelines for Academic Program Development

A. Academic Programs

1. Degree Levels Offered

Post-secondary academic degree programs in the 16 constituent universities of the University of North Carolina are offered at the following levels:

Associate of Applied Science degrees, normally requiring two years of full-time study beyond high school; offered only at North Carolina State University in the field of Agriculture;

Arts Diploma, available only from the UNC School of Arts and based on completion of the appropriate arts curriculum;

Bachelor's degrees, normally requiring four years of full-time study beyond high school;

Master's degrees, usually requiring one or two years of study beyond the bachelor's degree;

Intermediate or specialist degrees, an advanced degree falling between a master's degree and a doctoral degree;

First Professional degrees in law, education, dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine (J.D., Ed.D., D.D.S., M.D., Pharm.D., and D.V.M.), for which the bachelor's degree and sometimes the master's degree are prerequisites and usually requiring three or four years of study beyond the bachelor's degree;

Doctoral degrees (Ph.D., D.M.A., and Dr.P.H.), for which the bachelor's degree and sometimes the master's degree are prerequisites and usually requiring three or four years of study beyond the bachelor's or master's degree.

2. Degree Program Classification

The University of North Carolina uses the Classification of Instructional Programs 2000 (CIP)[\[1\]](#) to classify its programs in the UNC Academic Program Inventory (API). The CIP classifies all post-secondary degree programs into 52 major discipline divisions. Currently UNC constituent institutions offer programs in 31 of these discipline divisions. These are:

01	Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences	25	Library Science
03	Natural Resources and Conservation	26	Biological and Biomedical Sciences
04	Architecture and Related Services	27	Mathematics and Statistics
05	Area, Ethnic, Cultural and Gender Studies	30	Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
09	Communication, Journalism and Related Programs	31	Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies
11	Computer and Information Sciences and Support	38	Philosophy and Religious Studies
13	Education	40	Physical Sciences
14	Engineering	41	Science Technologies/Technicians
15	Engineering Technologies/Technicians	42	Psychology
16	Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	43	Security and Protective Services
19	Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	44	Public Administration and Social Service
22	Legal Professions and Studies	45	Social Sciences
23	English Language and Literature/Letters	49	Transportation and Materials Moving
24	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	50	Visual and Performing Arts
		51	Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences
		52	Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
		54	History

Discipline divisions are divided further into discipline specialties, which for the most part are represented by six-digit CIP codes. For example, the discipline division Engineering (14) consists of such discipline specialties as General Engineering (14.0101), Aerospace, Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering (14.0201), Architectural Engineering (14.0401), Chemical Engineering (14.0701), and Civil Engineering (14.0801), etc. UNC actually uses a twelve-digit classification code so degree level and specialized information can be represented in the CIP.

3. Programs

Degree Programs

A degree program is a program of study in a discipline specialty that leads to a degree in that distinct specialty area at a particular level of instruction. All degree programs are categorized individually in the University's academic program inventory at the six-digit CIP code level. As a general rule, in order to be considered for degree program status, a course of study should require at least 27 semester hours in the proposed program area at the undergraduate level; at least half the number of hours required for the degree at the master's level; and at least 21 hours in the proposed program area at the doctoral level. Anything less than this within an existing degree program should be designated a concentration, a decision that can be made at the campus level. For teacher education programs, the President may issue regulations and/or guidelines setting parameters for required second academic concentrations.

Certificate Programs

A certificate program provides an organized program of study that leads to the awarding of a certificate rather than a degree. IPEDS has established the following standards for reporting certificates:

A post-baccalaureate certificate is awarded for an organized program of study equivalent to 18 semester credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. It is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree, but do not meet the requirements for a master's degree.

A post-master's certificate is awarded for an organized program of study equivalent to 24 semester credit hours beyond the master's degree, but does not meet the requirement of academic degrees at the doctoral level.

Campuses may offer other certificate programs that do not meet these reporting requirements.

Teacher Licensure Programs

Constituent institutions with teacher education programs approved by the State Board of Education may offer specific course clusters in approved teacher licensure areas which meet licensure requirements of the State Board of Education but do not lead to the conferral of a particular degree or certificate. These may be at the entry level or advanced level of teacher licensure. When an institution receives authorization to offer teacher licensure in a specific area from the State Board of Education, General Administration should be notified. A current inventory of teacher licensure programs approved by the State Board of Education is available from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

B. Academic Program Development Requiring Authorization or Action Beyond the Campus Level

The chancellors of the constituent institutions shall communicate to General Administration of the University their intentions or requests with respect to instructional program development for the following:

1. Notification of intent to plan a new undergraduate or master's program.
2. Request for authorization to plan a new degree program at the doctoral or first professional level.
3. Request for authorization to establish a new degree program.
4. Request for authorization to change the name or title of an existing degree program.
5. Request for authorization to discontinue a degree or certificates program.
6. Notification of intent to establish or discontinue a certificate or teacher licensure program.

Table 1 summarizes the academic program development review and authorization requirements for actions 1 through 6 above.

TABLE 1

Academic Program Notification and Authorization Requirements

Notice of Intent to Plan or Authorization to Plan

Authority	Undergraduate, and Master's Programs	Doctoral and First Professional Programs
General Administration	Receives <i>Notification of Intent to Plan</i>	Receives <i>Request for Authorization to Plan</i> and makes recommendation to the BOG Planning Committee
BOG Planning Committee	Receives semi-annual reports on programs being planned	Grants <i>Authorization to Plan</i>

Authorization to Establish

Authority	Degree Programs	Teacher Certification Area	Certificates	Change Program or Degree Title
General	Receives Request for Authorization to Establish and makes	Receives notification from chancellor of approval by	Receives notification from	Approves program or

Administration	recommendation to BOG Planning Committee	State Board of Education	chancellor	degree title change
Planning Committee	Recommends Authorization to Establish to BOG	---	---	---
Board of Governors	Grants Authorization to Establish	---	---	---

Authorization to Discontinue/Notification of Discontinuation

Authority	Program	Certificates	Teacher Certification Areas
General Administration	Receives request and makes recommendation	Receives notice of discontinuation	Receives notice of discontinuation
BOG Planning Committee	Recommends discontinuation	---	---
Board of Governors	Authorizes discontinuation	---	---

C. Procedures for Program Development or Modification

1. Campus Program Development Procedures

Each institution must have a clearly defined process for campus review and approval of proposals to plan and, once planning is completed, a process for approving requests to establish new academic degree programs. The appropriate campus committees and authorities must approve any notification or request to plan or establish a new degree program before submitting it to General Administration.

Institutions wishing to plan new degree programs at the undergraduate or master's level must send a notification of intent to plan to General Administration. Such notification may be sent at any time, but at least six months prior to the proposed date of establishment, using the form developed for this purpose (Appendix A-400.1.1.3[G])

To assist institutions preparing to plan new programs, Academic Planning/Academic Affairs staff will make available a link to the CIP taxonomy, an up-to-date Academic Program Inventory for UNC institutions, and a 5-year history of enrollment of majors and degrees awarded by program and institution within the UNC system. Institutions planning a new degree program will be expected to contact other institutions awarding the proposed degree during the planning process regarding their experience with program productivity (applicants, majors, job market, placement, etc.).

Upon receipt of the notification of intent to plan, Academic Planning will 1) acknowledge receipt of the notification; 2) provide any additional information not yet posted regarding location of similar programs; and 3) add this program-planning activity to a list that will be maintained by Academic Planning and made accessible to all UNC institutions. All UNC institutions will be expected to consult this list periodically to remain informed about programs being planned by other UNC institutions.

Following notification of intent to plan, the institution will have one year to complete planning and submit a request to establish the proposed program. If planning is not completed within the year, the campus may, under special circumstances, request a one-year extension. If the institution fails to complete the program plan within its allotted time, it must wait one year before resubmitting notification of intent to plan that program.

The program planning activity is intended as an opportunity for an institution to make the case for need and demand and for its ability to offer a quality program. This activity, by itself, does not guarantee that program authorization will be granted.

2. Planning New Doctoral and First Professional Degree Programs

Institutions wishing to plan new degree programs at the doctoral or first professional level must seek authorization to plan the program, using the appropriate form (Appendix B–400.1.1.4[G]). Campus requests must be the result of comprehensive strategic planning. The formal request to plan must indicate how the proposed program fits into the institution’s comprehensive strategic plan and address issues such as need, demand, potential duplication, readiness of the institution to offer the program, and potential costs. Requests for authorization to plan may be submitted periodically by fixed dates established by General Administration.

UNC chief academic officers and graduate deans will be invited to discuss issues such as need and demand, opportunities for collaboration, etc. with respect to graduate education at their periodic meetings. After appropriate notification to the Graduate Council, General Administration will present recommendations regarding authorization to plan doctoral and first professional programs to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs for their consideration.

Authorization to plan a new degree program does not in any way constitute a commitment on the part of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs or the Board of Governors to approve a subsequent request to establish the program. Planning authorization signifies that the committee finds merit in the general proposition, that there may be sufficient need for the program, and that the suggested program is consistent with the assigned mission of the institution. Such authorization constitutes clearance for the institution to document and further justify the need and demand for the proposed program.

Following authorization to plan, an institution will have up to two years to complete its planning and submit a request to establish the proposed program. If the request to establish is not completed within this period, the campus may request a one-year extension. If the institution fails to submit a proposal within its allotted time, it must wait a year before resubmitting a request to plan that program. If the request to plan is denied, the institution may not resubmit this request for three years.

3. Planning New Degree Programs-Notification of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

The Board of Governors’ Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs will receive semi-annual reports, prepared by Academic Affairs, on the status of undergraduate and graduate programs being planned.

The General Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) requires that the Commission receive prior notification one year in advance if an institution is planning to introduce a degree program at a more advanced level than previously authorized (e.g., a master’s level institution planning its first degree program at the doctoral level). An institution may not initiate a degree program at a more advanced level without prior approval from SACS. When an institution receives authorization for the Educational Planning Committee to plan a new degree program at a more advanced level than those previously authorized, a copy of General Administration’s letter of authorization is sent to SACS and the chancellor of the institution is reminded to notify SACS. SACS may request additional information. The Commission on Colleges also requires prior notification and prior approval if an institution is adding a degree at the same level for which the institution is already accredited and the new program will result in a “significant modification in the nature and scope of the institution.” The following procedures have been adopted to facilitate compliance with these policies and procedures.

The UNC Academic Program Inventory (API) classifies all university degree programs into 31 major discipline divisions. Each campus also has an inventory of authorized programs listed by discipline division and degree program title. Planning a program in a different discipline division than those currently authorized is interpreted as a potential substantive change. When an institution begins to plan a program in a new discipline division, a copy of the letter of authorization (if the program is at the doctoral or first professional level) is sent to SACS, and the chancellor of the institution must also notify SACS of the potential substantive change. If SACS interprets this as a significant modification, it may request additional information. The institution should inform General Administration of any communications from SACS regarding the substantive change policy as it relates to the planning of new programs, especially if it is determined that a program in a new discipline division constitutes a significant modification in the nature and scope of the institution.

4. Establishing New Degree Programs

Requests for authorization to establish a new degree program (Appendix C–400.1.1.5[G]) may be submitted at any time after “notification of intent to plan” has been submitted for undergraduate and master’s programs and after planning authorization has been granted for doctoral and first professional programs.

In general it is expected that funding to support new degree programs will be provided through a combination of internal reallocations, enrollment increase funds, and external grants.

Following review and (where appropriate) consideration by the Graduate Council, General Administration will make a decision whether to recommend approval of the program to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and (through it) to the Board of Governors. In general, reviews will be completed within three to six months. Actual time will depend upon the quality of the proposal and the extent to which the proposal may need to be revised and resubmitted.

If the new program is at a more advanced level than those previously authorized for the institution General Administration's letter of authorization will be sent to the chancellor of the institution and the campus will also be reminded to notify SACS and to take the necessary measures to comply with its policies. If the new program is in a new discipline division and SACS has previously determined (upon being notified of authorization to plan) that this constitutes a significant modification in the nature and scope of the institution, a copy of General Administration's letter of authorization will be sent to the chancellor of the institution and the campus will be reminded to notify SACS and to take the necessary measures to comply with SACS policies.

After an institution receives authorization to establish a new degree program, it must submit two progress reports to General Administration. The first such report will cover the first one to two years of implementation, and the second report will cover the first three to four years of operation of the program. Both reports will include information on the extent to which an institution has met projected enrollments and degrees conferred or any other issues relevant to the program's development. These reports will be submitted as a part of the institution's biennial long-range planning submission.

5. Changing the Name or Degree Title of an Existing Degree Program

Requests to change the name or title of an existing degree program, accompanied by an explanation of the reason for the proposed change, may be submitted to General Administration at any time.

6. Changing the Classification of Instructional Program Code (CIP)

Any change in the CIP Code for an authorized degree program requires General Administration approval. A joint committee from Finance and Academic Planning/Academic Affairs will review any proposals to change the CIP that would result in a change of funding category for the program.

7. Discontinuing Academic Degree Programs

Requests for authorization to discontinue a degree program may be made by letter from the chancellor to General Administration at any time, giving the effective date of discontinuation and explaining the reason for the request. General Administration will request the concurrence of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and (through it) the approval of the Board of Governors. Students enrolled in discontinued degree programs must be allowed to complete their courses of study within a reasonable period of time. Notice of discontinuation of certificates may be submitted to General Administration at any time.

[1] Robert L. Morgan, E. Stephen Hunt, and Brenda Ashford (2002). Classification of Instructional Programs: 2000 Edition Washington: National Center for Education Statistics.