OP 04.05: Approval Process for New Degree Programs

DATE: March 19, 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to ensure understanding and to establish a standardized approach in approval process for new degree programs.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in May every three years, or as needed, by the Office of the Provost with recommended revisions forwarded through the provost and vice president for academic affairs to the president by June 1 of the same year.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

The new degree program process described in this OP continues only with the required approval at every stage of the request. Should approval be denied at any stage, the process ends.

Any new courses proposed as part of the new program request will be reviewed like all other new courses are reviewed with the understanding that final approval of the courses is dependent upon the final approval of the associated program.

1. Program Approval Process

   a. To initiate the approval process for a new program, the department completes the following forms:

      (1) The New Program Request Form for Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees or the New Doctoral Degree Proposal; and

      (2) The Request for Curriculum Change form; and

      (3) The Assessment Outcomes and Measures Planning form; and

      (4) The SACSCOC Substantive Change Form.

NOTE: Department chairs should confer with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) liaison and OP 02.06; Reporting Substantive Changes to SACSCOC to determine if the program qualifies as a substantive change. A letter of notification and/or prospectus to SACSCOC is prepared by the department requesting the change in cooperation with the liaison and the Office of the Provost for the President’s approval of any new program qualifying as a substantive change.
Routing of Documents

The department will submit the Assessment Outcomes form to the Director of Assessment and the SACSCOC Substantive Change form to the SACSCOC Liaison for guidance and further steps if needed.

The department will submit all final forms (1-4) to the appropriate College Curriculum Committee for approval and, if appropriate, to the Teacher Education Council and/or the Graduate Council. Finally, the Dean of the college in which the program originates will send this documentation to the Office of the Provost.

a. The Office of the Provost forwards the following document(s) to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) for its review and vote: the Request for Curriculum Change form(s) that detail the proposed program as well as forms for any course additions/changes related to the proposed program and/or course of study. Each program that the UCC considers should state that the assessment plan and the SACSCOC review has been completed.

b. Upon approval by the UCC, the Office of the Provost will send a memorandum requesting approval of the program, a board motion, and an electronic version of the new program request/proposal to the Office of the President.

c. Upon approval, the Office of the President will send the new program request/proposal and the board motion to the Texas Tech University System (TTUS) for inclusion on the Board of Regents’ agenda.

d. After approval by the Board of Regents, the Office of the Provost will submit materials to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) based on the type of program:

   (1) Doctoral and engineering programs: a letter of notification followed by an electronic copy of the new program request/proposal and a letter requesting approval of the program.

   (2) All other programs: an electronic copy of the new program request and a letter requesting approval of the program.

In cooperation with the SACSCOC liaison, the department and the Office of the Provost prepares necessary notification letters and/or prospectus materials for SACSCOC. The liaison forwards appropriate materials to the president for approval and submission to SACSCOC.

2. Approved Program

a. Upon notification(s) of approval, including SACS-COC (if required), the Office of the Provost forwards copies of the approval letters to the department, appropriate dean(s), and the Office of the Registrar.

b. Information about the new program is added to ASU publications, both electronic and hard copy, and to the Banner system.