

MEMORANDUM

TO: Committee on Academic Programs

FROM: Steering Committee

RE: Clarification of Degree Program Approval Process Policy

DATE: February 7, 2018

Background:

The Degree Program Approval Process specifies that outside consultation regarding the proposed program should occur at Step 4 of the process. College practice has been to allow this consultation to occur concurrently with the governance approval of the degree program at Step 5 of the process. However the policy appears to indicate that these steps are sequential, so that the proposal that is processed through governance reflects changes made in response to any recommendations of the outside consultant.

Steering would like CAP to clarify its intent with regards to this process and to edit the policy to clarify whether these steps are to be simultaneous or sequential.

Charge:

Steering asks CAP to clarify its intent with regards to this process and to amend the policy to make clear whether these steps should be carried out simultaneously or sequentially. CAP should consider that the outside review is a requirement of the state, and the state may expect that additional changes made to the program following the outside review should be shared with the outside reviewer for additional feedback.

At Step 2, CAP should determine whether current practice, allowing Step 4 and Step 5 to be carried out simultaneously as needed, is consistent with the intent of the policy by gathering electronic testimony from department chairs. If CAP determines that Steps 4 and 5 may be carried out simultaneously in accordance with current practice, then CAP may amend the policy to clarify this point and prepare a final recommendation with no additional testimony. If CAP determines that its expectations regarding the process are not consistent with current practice, then CAP should seek testimony from the Faculty Senate Executive Board and the Council of Deans at Step 2, and testimony on the preliminary recommendation should be solicited from the faculty following Tier II guidelines.

Testimony Tier: Tier I, provided that CAP determines that current practice is consistent with faculty understanding of the intent of the policy. Otherwise: Tier II (faculty) and Tier I(students and staff).

Timeline:

CAP should complete its work on this charge by the end of February, 2018, provided that CAP determines that current practice is consistent with faculty understanding of the intent of the policy.

TCNJ Governance Processes

Step 1 – Steering issues a charge

Step 2 - Governance prepares a Preliminary Recommendation

Once the appropriate standing committee or council has received the charge, it should start by collecting data needed to make a preliminary recommendation. It should receive input from affected individuals and all relevant stakeholder groups prior to making a preliminary recommendation. For issues that have broad implications or that affect a large number of individuals, initial testimony should be solicited from the campus community at large. For some issues, sufficient initial testimony may come from input through committee membership or solicitation from targeted constituent groups.

When, in the best judgment of the committee, adequate clarity of the principles contributing to the problem are known, a preliminary recommendation should be drafted and disseminated to the campus community.

Step 3 – The Relevant Stakeholders provide Testimony

Once a preliminary recommendation has been completed, the standing committee or council should seek testimony from the campus community. The testimony should be gathered in accordance with the Testimony Tier (see page 24) assigned to the issue by Steering.

For issues that require public testimony from the campus community, the chair of the standing committee or council should approach the president of the appropriate representative bodies to schedule the next available time slot at a meeting of that body.

Testimony should be gathered in a way that allows stakeholders to weigh in fully on the issue. Members of the standing committee or council that wrote the preliminary recommendation should be present to hear and record the testimony.

Step 4 – Governance prepares a Final Recommendation

Once the standing committee or council has received appropriate testimony, it should revise the preliminary recommendation into a final recommendation. Once the final recommendation is complete, the standing committee or council should use sound judgment to determine whether or not more public testimony is required. If, in its feedback to the original preliminary recommendation, a stakeholder representative body requests to review an issue again, the committee or council is bound to bring it back to that body. If a full calendar year has passed since the formal announcement of the preliminary recommendation, the committee must resubmit a preliminary recommendation to the campus community.

When the committee or council has completed the final recommendation, it should forward it to the Steering Committee. The final recommendation should be accompanied by a cover memo that summarizes the initial charge, how testimony was gathered and the nature of that testimony, and how the committee responded to that testimony, including a description of how the preliminary recommendation evolved as a result of testimony.

Step 5 – Steering considers the Final Recommendation

Step 6 – The Provost and/or President and Board consider the Final Recommendation

Step 7 – Steering notifies the Campus Community

Testimony Tier I – The issue requires minimal testimony from the campus community. The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant stakeholders before preparing the final recommendation, but there is no need for surveys or open fora.

For a complete description of all steps and of the other testimony tiers, see Governance Structures and Processes, 2017 Revision, pages 21 – 24.



Section:	II.1.16	
Title:	Degree Program Approval Process	
Effective Date:	July 5, 2016	
Approved By:	Board of Trustees	
Responsible Unit:	Academic Affairs (academic@tcnj.edu , 609-771-3080)	
Related Documents:	Academic Issues Committee Manual of the New Jersey Presidents' Council	
History:		
<u>Version</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1.0	June, 1995	Approved by BOT by recommendation of CUPPS
2.0	February, 2009	Revised to reflect roles of Teacher Education Program Council and Graduate Programs Council
3.0	July, 2016	Incorporates recommendations of CAP memo to Steering Committee (May 5 th , 2016)

I. INTRODUCTION

All new degree programs at the College of New Jersey must go through a series of internal and external review and approval processes before the new program can be implemented and marketed to potential students. This policy outlines the steps an academic unit must take in the degree program approval process.

II. DEFINITIONS

"Degree Program" refers to any program of study leading to the awarding of an academic degree, such as a baccalaureate degree or a master's degree. Other academic programs of study, such as certificate programs, are not considered degree programs and are covered by separate policies.

III. POLICY

Step 1: Initial Program Proposal

New program proposals begin in an academic unit of the campus, defined to be an academic department, school, or other faculty-led entity housed within the division of Academic Affairs. The academic unit developing the proposal will agree to house the program if it is approved. The academic unit proposing a new program should

develop a rationale and obtain pertinent statistics substantiating the need and demand for the program as part of the initial program proposal.

Step 2: Review

The president and the provost review the initial proposal and consider whether the proposal is consistent with the College's mission and strategic plan. Preliminary approval by the president and the provost signals the academic unit to begin a more thorough development of the proposal. As the program proposal is developed, the president and provost will share information on its development with the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Step 3: Program Development

The academic unit develops a proposal that includes the philosophy and concept of the program with emphasis on indicating how the program is consonant with the mission of the College. An outline of the curriculum will be developed which will include indicators of quality. The proposal also will include a thorough study of needed resources and consultation with the units responsible for these resources. The academic unit developing the proposal will follow the guidelines found in the Academic Issues Committee Manual of the New Jersey Presidents' Council, and include the following sections: program objectives; assessment plan; relationship of the program to the institutional strategic plan and its effect on other programs; need for the program; anticipated student enrollments; program resources; and degree requirements. Proposals for undergraduate degree programs will include all academic requirements (such as Liberal Learning and School requirements).

Step 4: Outside Consultation

An outside consultant will be appointed by the provost, in consultation with the proposing unit, and in accordance with TCNJ and Academic Issues Committee consultant selection criteria, to review the proposal for its quality and the appropriateness of resources for supporting a nationally-recognized quality program. The consultant will visit the campus. The consultant review will include detailed and substantive information and be written according to the guidelines found in the Academic Issues Committee Manual of the New Jersey Presidents' Council, with the following sections: objectives; need; educational programs; students; faculty; support personnel; finances; physical facilities; library; computer facilities; administration; and evaluation. Following receipt of the consultant's report, the proposing unit will revise the proposal as needed and prepare an institutional response to the consultant report. The revised proposal, the consultant report, and the institutional response to the consultant report are sent to the president, the provost and the dean for review and approval.

Step 5: School Curriculum Committee and College Governance

The revised proposal is submitted by the dean to the appropriate school-based

curriculum committee for approval. If recommended by the curriculum committee, the proposal is submitted by the dean for recommendation through the College's governance process. All programs involving teacher education and preparation must be reviewed by the Teacher Education Program Council (TEPC). All graduate programs must be reviewed by the Graduate Programs Council (GPC). The recommendations of the Program Councils must be forwarded to the Steering Committee, which will then charge the Committee on Academic Programs (CAP) to review and recommend. The final recommendation should indicate concurrence or non-concurrence with the proposal.

Step 6: Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees

If the program is recommended by the College's governance structure, the president or provost submits it to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. This committee is provided with the full program proposal, the consultant report, and the institutional response to the consultant report.

Step 7: Board of Trustees' Approval

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees recommends the program proposal to the full Board of Trustees for final approval.

Step 8: Program Announcement

A program announcement is circulated to the New Jersey higher education community. If objections are raised, efforts may be made to resolve them.

Step 9: Academic Issues Committee of the New Jersey Presidents' Council

The College sends the following to the Academic Issues Committee of the New Jersey Presidents' Council for its review: the program announcement; responses to the program announcement from other New Jersey institutions; consultant CV; consultant report; the institutional response to the consultant report; and the Board of Trustees' resolution. Submission deadlines and meeting dates are listed in the Academic Issues Committee manual.

Step 10: New Jersey Presidents' Council

The Academic Issues Committee recommends the new program to the New Jersey Presidents' Council. If the New Jersey Presidents' Council agrees with this recommendation, it will send the institution a resolution regarding the new program. If there is a concern, the proposal may be sent to the Secretary of Higher Education for further review.

In any and every instance of non-approval or non-concurrence there must be reasons provided in writing for such decisions.