

Section:	II.3.10	
Title:	Course Approval Policy	
Effective Date:	February 8, 2019	
Approved By:	Provost	
Responsible Unit:	Academic Affairs (609-771-3080, academic@tcnj.edu)	
Related Documents:	<input type="checkbox"/> Course Approval Form (download form so that it displays correctly) <input type="checkbox"/> Development and Approval of Online or Blended Courses <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-listed courses <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus Template <input type="checkbox"/> MOA 104 - OL/BL courses <input type="checkbox"/> MOA 62	
History:		
Version	Date	Notes
4.0	February 8, 2019	Revised
3.0	September 20, 2017	Revised
2.0	November 21, 2014	Revised
1.0	February, 2010	New policy; Initial Release

I. INTRODUCTION

This policy defines the roles, responsibilities, and required procedural components for developing and approving new courses, approving significant course changes, requesting course designations and/or alternate online/blended delivery mode, and resolving disputes. This policy must be followed for all credit-earning courses that appear on an enrolled student's transcript.

Generally, faculty will propose a course, submit a course approval packet to the appropriate curriculum committee for review and recommendation to the Dean. Once approved by the Dean, faculty may request additional course designations for the course through the appropriate governance body. Online and blended course delivery modes also require additional review by the Office of Instructional Design.

II. DEFINITIONS

Course Prefix - Affiliation label for courses offered at TCNJ (e.g. Department/Program, IDS, HON, FSP, WRI)

Course Attributes - designations are additional characteristics of a course that are independent of, but contribute to, the course learning outcomes. Herein, designations include Civic Responsibilities (including Community Engaged Learning), Liberal

Learning Breadth Domains, and Writing Intensive, approved by the Liberal Learning Council or its designee, and Advanced Community Engaged Learning, approved by the Community Engaged Learning Council.

Special Topics Course - New courses being developed by faculty members that will go through the curricular approval process, or those that are highly specialized and may be taught for a limited time.

Course Delivery - the way in which the course is delivered. Online/Blended course modes are overseen by the Office of Instructional Design.

Traditional Course - a course wherein the dominant instructional mode is face-to-face instruction. Traditional courses typically follow a traditional class meeting schedule based on the Academic Calendar. Traditional courses may feature some web-based learning at the discretion of the instructor.

Blended Course – a course wherein web-based online learning is used to replace 20% or more, but not all, of typically scheduled face-to-face instruction.

Online Course - a course wherein the instructional mode is web-based, online learning rather than face-to-face instruction

Off-Campus Course - Courses delivered off-campus include those wherein the majority of course meetings occur off campus. Such courses include those requiring travel (local and international) to sites of interest specific to the course topic and learning outcomes.

Standard Semester Schedule - Courses delivered on this schedule follow a standard semester as defined by the Academic Calendar.

Accelerated Schedule - Courses delivered on an Accelerated schedule follow a shorter than Standard Schedule, but have the same contact time and learning outcomes as if taught on a Standard Schedule. Such classes are commonly taught as a Winter or Summer course.

Sample Syllabus - a document submitted as part of the course approval packet that contains the course description, required materials, course requirements, course learning outcomes, general topics covered, and a general breakdown of assignment types, their weighting for final grades, and how they assess specific learning outcomes. The Syllabus Template is used, but the sample syllabus is not as detailed as the course syllabus distributed to students when taking the course.

Course Approval Packet - a group of documents that contains: 1) the course approval form, 2) sample syllabus, and 3) a cover sheet.

III. POLICY

1. Responsibilities

- a. Records and Registration (R&R) - Maintain a course approval website and course approval form that comply with MOA 62, MOA 104, and this policy.

- b. Course faculty - An individual faculty member (or a group of faculty) proposes a course and prepares the proposal. The proposal consists of the Course Approval Packet, defined above.
- c. Department Curriculum Committee - The department or program reviews and approves the course. The proposing faculty member works with the department or program to review the course content and write a cover letter outlining how the course connects to the program goals, learning activities, and assessment of learning. If a proposed course will be cross-listed, it is the responsibility of the department/proposing faculty member to make sure that the department in which the course is cross-listed also follows the course approval process. A course approval packet is assembled and submitted to the appropriate School Curriculum Committee(s).
- d. School Curriculum Committee - The School (or other appropriate) curriculum committee conducts a review of the course approval packet to confirm that the course reflects essential elements and that the course and program are integrally related. The school curriculum committee is responsible for assessing how the course fits into the program offerings across the entire school. If a School Curriculum Committee is responsible for reviewing any course designations, then they should also assess that designation as a separate decision (the course can be approved in general without the designation).
- e. Bodies that oversee course designations, course delivery options, and Non-Departmental/Program Prefixes (e.g. FSP, HON, IDS) - Each body will define and publish a process to request and review one or more of the following:
 - to obtain an additional designation,
 - to be delivered in an online or blended alternative to traditional courses,
 - to be listed with a non-departmental/program prefix.

Each body shall define the requirements and process for developing, assessing, and approving requests consistent with the following:

- i. The process must utilize a committee or council defined under the approved shared Governance Structure. If an alternative body is needed, it must consist of at least three institutional members, be comprised of 50% or greater full-time faculty, and be approved by the Committee on Academic Programs.
- ii. Maintain a website whereon the process for requesting

approval is published and make accessible any required forms

- iii. Establish and publish a timeline for review and response to the requestor
- iv. If the request is declined, written feedback specifically identifying deficiencies in the request must be provided to the requestor
- v. The process must define an appeal process that allows rebuttal from the requestor

2. Essential Requirements and Process Steps

The following points detail the specific requirements for course approval. After the course is approved, requests for designations and/or online/blended delivery mode may be made.

- a. The faculty proposes a course and submits a course approval form and sample syllabus to the department curriculum committee or body governing a non- departmental/program prefix. This step must be done for all proposed courses to support future faculty loading considerations.
- b. Proposed courses that will receive a non-departmental prefix should be submitted to the appropriate overseeing body by the process published by that body in accordance with section III.1.e, above. The remainder of the steps in this section are not applicable. Additional designations may be sought, as defined in section III.3, below.
- c. All proposed courses not covered by step III.2.b must be reviewed by the department or program for:
 - i. inclusion and quality of all necessary elements of the course proposal including course content,
 - ii. alignment with department/program learning outcomes and needs, and
 - iii. any applicable certification requirements.
- d. Following review and recommendation for approval of the course proposal, the department/program must add a cover sheet that outlines broader connections in terms of program/course goals, learning activities, and assessment of learning. If a proposed course is to be cross-listed, it is the responsibility of the program/department/course faculty to make sure that the department in which the course is cross-listed also reviews the course (see cross-listing policy).
- e. Course approval packets are then reviewed by the school (or

other appropriate) curriculum committee to ensure that:

- i. the sample syllabus reflects essential elements,
 - ii. the course is aligned with school level requirements, and
 - iii. when appropriate, course(s) are reviewed for their position in the school wide curriculum offered across departments or programs.
- f. Following review, the school curriculum committee prepares a recommendation for approval that is sent to the appropriate dean.
- g. Course approval packets are then reviewed by the school dean to ensure that at a minimum:
 - the process has been followed and that the essential elements are present
 - where appropriate, the course has been reviewed by other units outside the program that are impacted by the course, and
 - necessary resources or facilities are available.
- h. If agreement exists between the dean, school, and department/program faculty recommendations (and others, if applicable), the course is considered approved and the dean signs off and forwards the complete course proposal to Records and Registration to be entered into the system.
 - i. Course Attributes may be requested after the course is approved.
See section III.3, below.
- i. If disagreement exists, the school curriculum committee conducts a further review of the course approval packet and makes its recommendation. If the dean concurs with the recommendation for approval, the course is considered approved and is forwarded for entry into the system.
- j. If disagreement persists, the complete course proposal package is submitted to the Provost's Office for adjudication. If agreement is reached, the course is considered approved and is entered into the system as above.

3. Seeking Course Attribute or Approval for Online/Blended Course Delivery

- a. Any approved course may seek Course Attributes and/or for special clearance related to how the course is delivered.
 - i. Requests for Course Attributes are submitted to the appropriate evaluating body, as defined in section II, and in accordance with the

process published by that body, in accordance with section III.1.e,
above

- ii. Requests for special clearance for blended or online delivery are submitted to the appropriate body in accordance with section III.1.e, above.
- b. Best practice for such requests is to seek guidance from the appropriate body prior to submitting a course approval packet to a School Curriculum Committee to avoid changes to a course that would require re-approval by the School Curriculum Committee.

4. Special Topics

- a. Once the class is programmed for the third time, it should be brought to the school curriculum committee and be in process of review before it can be scheduled for a fourth time.
- b. Going forward it is recommended that Special Topic courses should be numbered 270, 370 and 470.
- c. Special Topics will encompass topics courses, but does not include FSP offerings.