

## TCNJ GOVERNANCE MEMORANDUM

To: Committee on Academic Programs (and Graduate Studies Council)  
From: Steering Committee  
Date: October 4, 2023  
Re: **Master of Professional Studies**

**Background:** On September 28, 2023, the Steering Committee received a request from Vice-Provost Clydesdale and Dean McCotter for CAP and GSC to review a degree program proposal for a Master of Professional Studies. As following the [degree program approval process](#) policy, this proposed program is ready for review by CAP and GSC.

**Charge:** In keeping with the timeline outlined below, Steering asks CAP to review the proposal for the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education to offer a Master of Professional Studies. GSC should review the [proposal](#) document and [cover page](#). CAP should communicate with the GSC regarding their review of the proposal. The GSC should then submit a final recommendation to CAP. CAP will then forward a final recommendation to the Steering Committee in response to the items below.

**Charge:** Steering asks CAP in consultation with GSC to:

- review the proposal to inform the committee members regarding the overall scope of the proposed graduate program.
- verify that all steps in the approval process for the proposed graduate program have been followed and that, if this program impacts other units, all the pertinent stakeholders have provided input or been notified of that proposal.
- prepare a final recommendation, indicating concurrence or non-concurrence.

**Testimony Tier: 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, and there is no need for surveys or open fora.

**Timeline:** CAP and GSC should begin work immediately on the charge, and it should provide a Final Recommendation to Steering by **November 15, 2023**.

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### 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 below) 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 re-submit 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* For a complete description of all steps and of the testimony tiers, see [Governance Structures and Processes, 2019 Revision](#), pages 23–27.