

TCNJ GOVERNANCE MEMORANDUM

To: Committee on Academic Programs
From: Steering Committee
Date: April 2, 2025
Re: Development and Approval of Online and Blended Courses

Background: In Fall 2024, the Steering Committee received a new policy from Academic Affairs for Approval of Online Programs. While Steering issued a charge to CAP to review a new policy, CAP came back to Steering asking instead to revise and update our existing policy on [Development and Approval of Online and Blended Courses](#), which is already out-of-date, to include program development and approval.

Charge: In keeping with the timeline outlined below, Steering asks CAP to review and update the policy to include the development and approval of online and blended programs and, where appropriate, that the new policy conforms to what is printed in the graduate bulletin and conforms to federal regulations. CAP should also reference the draft policy created by Academic Affairs for [Online Program Approval](#) in crafting their revisions.

Testimony Tier: Tier I. The issue requires minimal testimony from the campus community. The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant stakeholders, including the CETL team and the School of Graduate, Global, and Online Education before preparing the final recommendation, and there is no need for surveys or open fora.

Timeline: CAP should begin work immediately on the charge, and it should provide a Final Recommendation to Steering by **May 7, 2025**.

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.