

## Protocol for New Degree Program Proposals

### *When is a new degree program proposal needed?*

A formal new degree program proposal, following the exact format specified in Regent Policy (<https://www.cu.edu/regents/Policies/Policy4J.htm>), is required when an originator perceives a documentable need, demand, or compelling opportunity to create a new graduate or undergraduate degree program.

A new major may not require a new degree if that new major will still carry the exact language of an extant degree program on the diploma (e.g. students with distinct programs in accounting major or in marketing, each earning a diploma which specifies only “Bachelor of Science Business Administration”). New majors of this type do not require approvals beyond the relevant Dean’s office and the Provost’s office. Current approved degree programs for Boulder are listed at <http://www.colorado.edu/pba/degrees/approve/approvCurrent.htm>

A single proposal may cover multiple levels (bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral) of ongoing degree programs for a single content area. Protocols regarding department renames, splits, and reconfigurations are available from Institutional Analysis. See <http://www.colorado.edu/pba/concepts/index.htm>

Concurrent bachelor’s/master’s degree programs are not considered new, if they are comprised of a combination of already-approved constituent degrees. See <http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/academics/docs/GuideforConcDeg.doc>

An informal overview of the new degree program approval process, provided by the system Academic Affairs office in their ‘Academic Affairs Highlights’ series in 2009, can be found at: [https://www.cu.edu/articles/upload/BOR Academic Affairs Series1 - New Degree Programs\\_final 1 1.pdf](https://www.cu.edu/articles/upload/BOR%20Academic%20Affairs%20Series1%20-%20New%20Degree%20Programs_final%201%201.pdf) This document also describes the role of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE).

The usual time frame is typically two or more years from conception to student enrollments in the new degree program. After Regent and CCHE approval, there may be a delay of up to 18 months to accomplish federal (SEVIS) approval (required for international student enrollment) and insertion into the application for admission cycle.

### *The process at CU-Boulder*

At each stage of the usually lengthy process, regular, informal communication exchange of each draft version and plans among the originator, the assigned steward, the relevant Dean’s office (including the Dean of the Graduate School), the Provost’s office, Institutional Analysis, the Chancellor’s office and the Vice President for Academic Affairs is required.

#### **Step 1: Originator**

As soon as an originator decides to propose a new degree, the originator should ensure that the new degree program (a) conforms to campus and Regent policies, (b) falls within the mission scope of CU Boulder, as interpreted by DHE/CCHE, and (c) fits within the degree grantor’s own strategic plan.

The originator then provides a one-page written overview to the Provost's office for initial feedback. The Provost's office will begin to include the request on the campus Academic Planning Report and request annual progress updates from the originator until the new degree is either implemented or rejected.

Note: This formal notification needs to occur and re-occur annually so that the proposed degree program may be included in the annual Academic Planning Report for the campus (see <http://www.colorado.edu/pba/planning/>).

### **Step 2: Office of the Provost**

After reviewing the proposal, the Provost sets a preliminary timeline for bringing the degree forward to the Board of Regents. He then assigns responsibility for stewardship of the new degree proposal process to either the Dean of the Graduate School or the AVC for Undergraduate Education. The Provost's office then notifies and shares the proposal with the appropriate parties. These may include: the Dean of the Graduate School, the AVC for Undergraduate Education, the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), the Dean(s) of relevant schools or colleges, and Institutional Analysis (IA). This notification will allow these offices to assist the originator in further developing the proposal, as necessary.

### **Step 3: Dean of the Graduate School or AVC for Undergraduate Education**

The assigned steward should make sure that the proposal, and Academic Affairs, considers any related or otherwise affected programs including programs in other schools/colleges. It is important at this stage to make certain that the new degree has an appropriate name.

The assigned steward assists the originator in preparing a full proposal document draft. At this stage the draft needs to address each of the specific requirements identified in Regent Policy 4J and informally articulated in the CU System's Academic Affairs Highlights document referenced above, using all headings specified and including the separately listed three tables. The steward then shares the document with the VPAA, relevant Deans, the Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs, and an external reviewer, as appropriate, in order to solicit and incorporate any feedback.

### **Step 4: Dean of the Graduate School or AVC for Undergraduate Education**

After receiving feedback from the above sources, perhaps after multiple exchanges, and making any necessary modifications, the steward and the originator provide the final degree proposal to the appropriate administrator (usually the relevant Dean's office) who formally signs off by composing a letter of endorsement. The steward then prepares his or her own endorsement letter and presents the final proposal and letters of support to the Provost.

### **Step 5: Office of the Provost**

The Provost determines whether to submit the proposal to the Board of Regents and sets the timeline for doing so. The Provost considers the Board schedule, additional new degree proposals in the pipeline, and other internal factors in determining the timing for submission of the New Degree Proposal.

Once the Provost makes a decision to proceed, he prepares a letter of transmittal to the Chancellor. The Provost's office staff drafts a formal Request for Action, which must be vetted by the Chancellor's

office and Institutional Analysis for technical accuracy prior to formal submission. Once finalized, the Provost submits the formal proposal, with a transmittal letter and the RFA, to the Chancellor.

**Step 6: Chancellor's Office**

The Chancellor's office schedules the hearing with the Board of Regents and arranges for appropriate persons present the New Degree Proposal at the meeting.

**Step 7: Board of Regents**

The presentation of the New Degree Proposal is made, however the vote by the Board does not occur until the next scheduled BOR meeting following the presentation. The Board of Regents determines whether to grant approval of the New Degree Proposal.

**Step 8: VPAA, President's Office**

Once Board approval is received, the VPAA and other appropriate parties will forward to DHE/CCHE for approval and agree on a CIP code for state and federal reporting. Once all approvals have been received, the Chancellor notifies the Provost's office and forwards all related documentation. Once received, the Provost's office will notify the originator of the approval in writing, with copies to all relevant parties.

**Step 9: Registrar and other administrative offices**

The Registrar's office will coordinate the effort, in conjunction with Institutional Analysis, the Office of International Education, Admissions, Office of Financial Aid, and the originating unit and its school/college, on required permissions and notifications (federal financial aid, Homeland Security, Veteran's Administration, Higher Learning Commission, internal offices, others), ISIS academic structure setup, diploma and transcript language, start date, catalog and website revisions, and the handling of students already pursuing the proposed program. They will also work with the Office of International Education to secure approval from SEVIS, the federal International Student and Exchange Visitor Program. SEVIS approval is required before any international students can be admitted to the new degree program; getting approval takes from 2 weeks to 6 months.

**Step 10: Originator**

The unit may begin enrolling students in the New Degree Program.