

Proposing New Academic Programs

The procedure for proposing new degree programs (the Master of Arts in French Language & Literature is an example of a degree program) is similar to that for revising existing programs, but is usually more complex since *all* new programs must be approved by the Provost and University committees, as well as by the Arts & Sciences faculty. More comprehensive documentation is also required, including comparisons with similar programs at other institutions, detailed budgets and staffing plans, etc. New academic programs should be proposed only for compelling reasons, as they require significant University resources. For this reason, before you go ahead with developing a proposal, you should discuss the concept and rationale with Associate Dean Susan Jackson (undergraduate) or Jeffrey Hughes (graduate). Of course, you need the support of the faculty of your department and any other departments that are involved (if it is a joint proposal). A formal vote of each proposing department or interdisciplinary program is required to launch your complete proposal for further review; be sure to record that vote and the date on which it was held.

Once approved by its proposing department(s), a new degree proposal undergoes review in two main, College and University, stages before final approval by the University Council (comprised of deans, other administrators, and representatives of the Faculty Council). Committees at both the College and University levels will be looking for much the same information. Completeness and seamless efficiency can therefore be achieved by organizing your proposal from the outset according to the comprehensive list of 13 questions to be answered at the university level about academic components of the proposed new degree:

1. Please provide a brief description of the proposed new degree (max 500 words):
2. Please provide the learning objectives, required courses, and a sample curriculum for the proposed new degree:
3. Please provide the rationale for the proposed new degree:
4. Please describe how the proposed new degree relates to existing programs at the University:
5. Please describe the proposed enrollment or the enrollment required to cover the start-up costs of the proposed new degree:
6. Please list the participating faculty involved in the administration of the proposed new degree:
7. Please provide an administrative and advising plan for the proposed new degree:
8. For a proposed graduate program, please provide the admissions standards involved:
9. Please list the requested resources needed for the proposed new degree (e.g. space, new faculty and/or staff, computer and/or technology needs):
10. Please provide information on outside programs that are comparable to the proposed new degree:
11. Please document any accreditation implications that the formation of the proposed new degree entails:
12. Please provide an actual description of the proposed new degree that would be included in the annual bulletin:
13. Please describe how the proposed new degree fits with the Strategic Plan of the School/College and with the University plan:

A separate, fully itemized, proposed budget should also be submitted. Proposals for graduate (master's and doctoral degrees) must be accompanied by a comprehensive business plan, whose requirements you should discuss with Jeffrey Hughes. These budget documents will be reviewed by the Dean and Provost, but not by the College faculty or University committees. For any proposal, you need to solicit cognate letters indicating approval or criticism from all other departments that might be affected by the proposed program. When ready, send your academic proposal, budget documents, and cognate letters as attachments (Word documents, for later cut and paste) to Susan Jackson (sjackson@bu.edu) and Jeffrey Hughes (hughes@bu.edu). The relevant College curriculum committee (or, for graduate programs, the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee) and then the Academic Policy Committee (APC) will consider the proposal and contact you if any changes or clarification are required or if any problems are identified. With approval of the APC, the proposal is brought up at the next College faculty meeting.

After approval by the College faculty and the Dean, your proposal and supporting documents are entered by one of the associate deans into the Electronic Curriculum Approval Process (eCAP) system described here [link to <http://www.bu.edu/provost/resources/ecap/>], for review by a) the Provost's cabinet, b) Faculty Council and Council of Deans, c) University Council Committee on Curriculum & Degrees (UCCCD), and d) full University Council. You may receive queries and suggestions along the way and/or be invited to attend a meeting of the UCCCD where your proposal is discussed. Notice of final approval by the University Council is sent to the Registrar's Office, where the new program is then set up for implementation.

Although it can take quite some time to gain approval for a new academic program, degree proposals are often improved significantly by the above process. You should start the process at least a year before you intend to implement a new undergraduate program. Allow two years for a new graduate program, since, after approval, you will need to recruit students.