

Procedure for Creating a New Undergraduate Degree Program

New undergraduate degree programs must be approved by the department or program faculty, the relevant college or school, the Undergraduate Council, the Council of Academic Administrators, and the Chancellor. In addition, new degree programs must be approved by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) Board of Trustees.

According to the Academic Guidelines document published by IHL, all new degree programs will:

- be consistent with the role and mission of the institution;
- be considered only when all university degree programs within that discipline have professional accreditation (if available) and have met the minimum standards of productivity;
- be considered only when professional accreditation will be sought for this program (if available);
- require no more than 124 credit hours towards graduation unless it meets the standard for exception;
- be consistent with the curricula of similar programs in this discipline and will meet any licensing or certification needs;
- meet local, state, regional, and national educational, social, or cultural needs;
- not be unnecessarily duplicative of other programs within the IHL System;
- be funded through documented resources; and
- include procedures for assessment of program effectiveness.

The procedure for new program approval includes the following steps.

Department Level

The faculty members in the department or program must create and approve the proposed new degree program and its curriculum. The faculty members must also complete the Authorization to Plan document and the New Academic Degree Program Proposal document for IHL approval purposes. The Authorization to Plan document will be submitted to the Provost office for submission to IHL.

College or School Level

Once the curriculum is approved by the department or program faculty, the new degree program curriculum must be considered for approval by the appropriate committee or faculty in the relevant college or school. After approval, the proposed degree program curriculum is forwarded to the Undergraduate Council, along with the New Academic Degree Program Proposal document.

Undergraduate Council

The Undergraduate Council has broad responsibility for advising on all undergraduate academic policies and activities of the University on its Oxford and satellite campus locations (excluding the University Medical Center), including the approval of new degree programs. After approval by the Undergraduate Council, the proposed degree program curriculum is forwarded to the Council of Academic Administrators, along with the New Academic Degree Program Proposal. Recommendations from the Undergraduate Council and minutes of its meetings are forwarded to

the Provost, who presents these proposals to the Council of Academic Administrators before forwarding all minutes to the Chancellor for approval.

Council of Academic Administrators

The Council of Academic Administrators has broad responsibility for all academic activities of the University on all its campuses other than the Medical Center, including the approval of new degree programs. It receives copies of minutes and recommendations from the Undergraduate Council, Graduate Council, and other ad hoc and standing committees.

The Council of Academic Administrators is notified that an Authorization to Plan document for a new program has been submitted to the IHL. After a proposed new academic program and the New Academic Degree Program Proposal are endorsed by the Council of Academic Administrators, the Provost transmits the New Academic Degree Program Proposal document to the IHL Office of Academic and Student Affairs by the established IHL deadlines.

Chancellor

Once the Chancellor approves the minutes of the Council of Academic Administrators, the new degree program is approved on campus. The minutes are forwarded to the Registrar's Office, Office of Publications, and the Office of Information Technology.

The new program is not activated until the IHL Board of Trustees grants final approval.

Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

One electronic copy of the Authorization to Plan (appendix 7 of IHL Academic Guidelines) document must be submitted by the Provost's office to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs at IHL by the established IHL deadlines. The requests for new programs will be placed on IHL meeting agendas of the Council of Chief Academic Officers and the Council of Institutional Executive Officers. The requests will be placed before the Board of Trustees Educational Policies and Programs Committee, which will render a decision to the chief academic officers. If granted authorization to plan, the department or program faculty must prepare the New Academic Degree Program Proposal (appendix 8 of IHL Academic Guidelines) document for submission by the Provost's office to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs at IHL by the established deadlines. Appendix 8 should be approved by the Council of Academic Administrators before the Provost Office submits it to IHL. The Provost Office will send Appendix 8 to the Council of Academic Officers and the Board of Trustees Educational Policies and Programs Committee. If the Board of Trustees Educational Policies and Programs Committee renders a positive decision to the chief academic officers, the New Academic Degree Program Proposal will be placed on the Board of Trustees' meeting agenda.

Once approved by the IHL Board of Trustees, the academic program may be offered as soon as the spring semester following approval or as late as the printing of the next catalog.

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