

## **Creation, Suspension, Deletion and Review of Graduate Degree Programs**

The following are guidelines for the creation, suspension, deletion, and review of graduate programs.

1. The creation of a new graduate program must follow guidelines stated by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL). This includes consideration of state-wide program duplication, student demand, and the availability of resources.
2. New graduate programs must be approved by a group of core graduate faculty, which will usually be an academic department, and must be endorsed by the Dean of the school or college administering the program. For a program that spans departments, schools, or college, approval by each unit is expected, though a majority vote of an appropriately defined graduate faculty body will be taken as approval.
3. There must be sufficient core faculty to teach the graduate courses and to supervise research and creative activities of the students in the program. For this purpose, the core faculty group for a program should comprise at least four full-time, qualified faculty members. Qualified faculty must be members of the Graduate Faculty, as described in the Graduate Faculty Policy. For a new doctoral program, the core faculty group must include at least one full member of the Graduate Faculty.
4. Emphasis areas of a degree program should adhere to the same standard regarding core faculty and the same procedures for approval, suspension and deletion.
5. The approval process for new graduate programs involves endorsement by the Graduate Council and the Council of Academic Administrators, and approval by the Chancellor. In general, the following type of information should be provided to the Graduate Council: proposed curriculum; names and qualifications of the core faculty; evidence of appropriate approvals by the faculty; evidence of student demand and a projected enrollment; resources (e.g., office/laboratory space, library holdings, stipends, new faculty lines, etc.); impact on other programs; availability of courses (or needed new courses); admissions criteria; a program management plan; and appropriate information about the thesis/dissertation and examination processes. All degree programs must be consistent with the Graduate School's general academic rules governing master's, specialist, and doctoral programs. Any new program should also be consistent with the mission of the University. The process must follow IHL procedures, which involves a pre-approval request and a formal request at particular times of the year.

A separate set of guidelines apply for the approval of graduate certificate programs.

6. It is not necessary to have new courses pre-approved by the Graduate Council, but a convincing case must be made that adequate courses can be delivered. When the proposed program involves existing courses, an explanation should be given regarding the scheduling of such courses, including those that might be taught outside the department proposing the new program. Also, any internal reallocation of resources (e.g., space, stipends, teaching loads, etc.), needed to deliver the new program, should be explained.

The ability to offer graduate courses in a timely manner is an important criterion for approval of a new program.

7. Recommendations to delete a graduate program should be made with the approval of the

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appropriate core faculty members, school/college Dean, Graduate Council, and Academic Council. However, deletion of a program may be an administrative decision based on limitations of resources (including faculty), an IHL dictate, or a review of the program's academic quality or student demand. If a program is deleted, the students who are currently in the program should be given the opportunity to complete the program, if possible, at UM.

Suspension of a program refers to suspension of admission of new students. The Graduate School may suspend a program following a recommendation from the core faculty group and appropriate Dean. A suspension may be an initial step before deletion or it may be a step to manage the flow of applicants.

8. Each department will identify a Graduate Program Coordinator and a list of core faculty for the new program.

9. All departments proposing programs must identify learning outcomes, must be prepared to provide evidence that independent learning is fostered and that the educational requirements are progressively more advanced than those of undergraduate programs, and must participate in the University's assessment processes. Graduate programs that have professional accrediting agency must seek and maintain accreditation. Additionally, a periodic review of graduate programs may be performed under the direction of the Provost, Graduate Dean, or line Dean.

Revised April 16, 2018