



PA State System of Higher Education Board of Governors

Effective: March 19, 1985

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POLICY 1985-01-A: REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIATION OR CHANGE OF CREDIT-BASED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

See Also:

Adopted: March 19, 1985
Amended: October 9, 2003

A. Purpose

To provide the chancellor and the Board of Governors, and the president and council of trustees of each University, the general criteria and policies governing Board of Governors' requirements prior to initiation or change of a credit-based academic program within a University or consortium of Universities.

B. Definitions

Certificate—A credit-based credential designated on the academic record that indicates completion of a prescribed, coherent undergraduate or graduate curriculum of at least 12 credits.

Degree Designation—Specific degree type, including but not limited to bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, master of arts, master of science, and doctor of education.

Major Academic Program—A sequence of courses, activities, and/or experiences constituting a major field of study, culminating in a credit-based degree or certification.

Minor when a Major Exists—A coherent program of study that consists of most of the core major courses, but fewer electives, and includes at least 18 credits.

Minor when no Major Exists—A coherent program of study, consisting of at least 18 credits, in an area in which the university does not offer a major.

Other Academic Program—A sequence of courses, activities, experiences constituting a track, concentration, focus, option, specialization, emphasis, or equivalent not leading to a degree or certification.

Program Change—A change of program title, degree designation, or certification or an addition or deletion of degree designation, track, emphasis, or minor where a major exists.

Program Title—Name of a program, such as biology, mathematics, dance, biotechnology, and school psychology.

C. Procedure

The Office of the Chancellor shall, in consultation with State System Universities, establish and review criteria for the initiation or change of credit-based academic programs. Criteria that direct the implementation of this policy can be found in the document, *Administrative Procedure for Board of Governors Policy 1985-01, Requirements for Initiation or Change of Credit-Based Academic Programs*.

1. Academic program proposals shall be subject to action by, or notice to, the Board of Governors or chancellor, as follows:
 - a. Board of Governors Action

New major program—Full proposal covering criteria in section B. of the administrative procedure required.
 - b. Office of the Chancellor Action

New minor program when no major exists—Full proposal covering criteria in section B. of the administrative procedure required.

New certificate program when no major or minor exists—Full proposal covering criteria in section C. of the administrative procedure required.

New degree designation—Letter containing rationale and supporting materials required.
 - c. Office of the Chancellor Notification

New minor when major exists, certificate when major or minor exists, track, concentration, focus, option, specialization, emphasis, or equivalent—Letter required.

Other program changes in the academic data file, including program name or title changes, termination, or moratorium—Letter required.
2. No program or degree requiring approval shall be advertised or offered until the University president receives written notice from the chancellor verifying approval by the Board of Governors or chancellor.

No program change shall be announced or implemented without the appropriate action.