



Campus Administrative Policy

Policy Title: Creating or Renaming Degree or Certificate Programs

Policy Number: 1038A Functional Area: Academic & Faculty Affairs

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| Approved by: | Donald M. Elliman, Jr., Chancellor |
| Prepared by: | Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs |
| Reviewing Office: | Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs |
| Responsible Officer: | Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs |
| Applies to: | CU Anschutz |

A. Introduction

Article 4 of Regent Law requires the Board of Regents to approve new degree programs. [Regent Policy 4.B.3, Academic Planning and Accountability](#), requires that each campus have processes for the development of proposals for new degree programs, as well as processes for name changes of degree programs. [Administrative Policy Statement \(APS\) 1038: New Degree Program Approval](#) establishes requirements for campus procedures. This campus policy was developed in accordance with the requirements of Regent Policy 4.B.3 and APS 1038. It also provides processes for initiating certificate programs, which are not prescribed by regent or system-level policies.

The discontinuance of a degree program should follow the requirements of [APS 1015: Implementing Academic Unit or Degree Program Discontinuance](#) and [Campus Administrative Policy 1025: Academic Program Discontinuance](#).

B. Policy Statement

1. Degree Programs

- a. New Programs. A new degree program is subject to approval by the Board of Regents. Before the Board of Regents will consider a new degree program, the proposal must receive a positive recommendation from the campus chancellor.

- 1) As stated in Article 4B of Regent Law, a degree program may only be offered by an academic unit or program within an academic unit.¹

- b. Name Changes. Approval of degree program name changes has been delegated to the chancellor but must be communicated to the Board of Regents through the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

2. Certificate Programs

- a. New Programs. Approval of a new certificate program is delegated to the Dean of the school or college offering the certificate.
- b. Name Changes. Approval of certificate program name changes is delegated to the Dean of the school or college offering the certificate.

C. Procedures

An academic unit seeking to offer a new degree or certificate must prepare and submit a proposal consistent with the procedures outlined in this policy.

1. Creating New Degree Programs

¹ Regent Law ([Article 4, Part A](#)), defines academic units as schools, colleges, and departments that roster tenured and/or tenure track faculty and offer at least one degree program.

- a. Faculty and administrators who are developing a proposal should work with the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance in preparing the narrative, budget model, and supporting documentation. A proposal must adequately address the information outlined in APS 1038 (reproduced below in Appendix A). If the degree program will be administered through the Graduate School, the Graduate School Dean should also be consulted as the proposal is developed.
- b. A new degree proposal may be subject to review and approval by a faculty committee, in accordance with school/college policy or faculty bylaws.
- c. A new degree proposal must have support from the department chair and Dean to move forward in the approval process.
- d. If the degree program will not be subject to review by a program accrediting body, the proposal will be reviewed by the Graduate School Dean and Graduate Council. They must support the proposal for it to move forward in the approval process.
- e. Following approval by the Dean (and Graduate Council, if applicable), the proposal is submitted to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs (EVC-ASA) and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance (EVC-AF). The Executive Vice Chancellors issue a joint recommendation to the Chancellor.
- f. New degree proposals with support from the Chancellor are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) for the CU System. Revisions may be requested based on feedback from the VPAA. The proposal will then be submitted to the Board of Regents' University Affairs Committee.
- g. If approved by the University Affairs Committee, the proposal is included in the next meeting of the full board. After approval by the Board of Regents, the VPAA notifies the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE). CDHE confirms new degree

programs are consistent with the campus statutory role and mission.

- h. Following approval of a new degree, the Office of the EVC-ASA notifies those involved in preparing the proposal as well as several administrative offices within the university, including Institutional Research and Effectiveness; Registrar; Bursar, and Financial Aid. If needed, these offices may contact the initiator of the proposal for additional information on courses and other aspects of the degree program.
 - i. In rare cases, degree programs are subject to approval by the university's institutional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, before students can enroll in the program. See appendix C. The Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs will lead efforts to obtain HLC approval.
2. Creating New Degree Programs from Existing Degree Tracks
- a. Existing degree programs (previously approved by the Board of Regents) that have distinct tracks or specializations with sufficient enrollment may request Board of Regents approval to “split” some or all tracks into separate degrees. This can occur through a simplified “track conversion” process (see Appendix B).
 - b. Although less documentation is typically required in a proposal for a track conversion relative to a completely new degree program, the approval process is the same as that outlined in section C.1 above.
 - c. Individuals seeking to split an existing degree should consult with the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs prior to developing a proposal.
3. Renaming Degree Programs
- a. A proposal for renaming a degree program must be submitted by the Dean of the school/college offering the degree and include:
 - 1) justification for the name change;
 - 2) impact on students and faculty;
 - 3) any reorganization of personnel and implications on budget;

- 4) any approvals from school or college committees; and
 - 5) any additional input from faculty, students currently enrolled in the degree program, or other constituents.
 - b. The proposal must be submitted to the Office of the EVC-ASA.
 - c. If the proposal receives a positive recommendation by the EVC-ASA, it is forwarded to the campus chancellor for approval.
 - d. Following approval by the chancellor, the Office of the EVC-ASA sends the documents supporting the name change to the VPAA for the University of Colorado who coordinates notification of the change to the University Affairs Committee of the Board of Regents.
4. Creating New Certificates
- a. For-credit certificate programs
 - 1) For-credit certificate programs must be approved by the Dean of the school or college offering the certificate.
 - a) A graduate certificate can be created within the home school/college or in affiliation with the Graduate School. Programs affiliated with the Graduate School are subject to review and approval by the Graduate School Dean and Graduate Council.
 - b) In rare cases, for-credit certificates are subject to approval by the university's institutional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, before students can enroll. See Appendix C. The Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs will lead efforts to obtain HLC approval.
 - 2) Learning objectives and an assessment plan must be submitted to the Director of Assessment.
 - 3) For-credit certificate programs that are open to non-degree students (those not enrolled in a degree program at CU Anschutz or CU Denver), and are financial aid eligible, may be subject to specific reporting requirements as determined by the U.S. Department of Education.

- b. Non-credit certificate programs (Certificates of Achievement)
 - 1) Non-credit certificate programs may be approved by the Dean of the school or college offering the program.
 - 2) Non-credit certificates are not financial aid eligible and are not entered into CU-SIS or the academic catalog. They are not reflected on an academic transcript. Non-credit certificates are awarded by a school, college, department or other unit, and not by the campus or university.
 - 3) Non-credit certificate programs should be reported to the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
- 5. Renaming Certificate Programs
 - a. Deans may approve the renaming of a certificate program.
 - b. Name changes for for-credit programs must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar for entry in CU-SIS.
 - c. Name changes for non-credit certificate programs should be reported to the Office of the EVC-ASA.

Notes

- 1. Dates of official enactment and amendments:
 - June 12, 2023: Adopted/Approved by the Chancellor
- 2. History:
 - June 12, 2023: This new campus policy was developed in accordance with the requirement that each campus develop processes for creating and naming Academic Programs as outlined in Regent Policy 4.B.3 and APS 1041.
 - Previous guidance on new degree program approval was provided in a supplement to Campus Administrative Policy 1001. Procedures for the approval of degree name changes were previously captured in Campus Administrative Policy 1001.
 - August 26, 2024: Appendix C updated.
- 3. Initial Policy Effective Date: June 12, 2023

4. Cross References/Appendix:
- Regent Law Article 4, Part A: Academic Organizations and Program Planning
 - Regent Policy 4.B.3: Academic Planning and Accountability
 - APS 1038: New Degree Program Approval
 - APS 1015: Implementing Academic Unit or Degree Program Discontinuance
 - Campus Administrative Policy 1025: Academic Program Discontinuance.
 - Appendix A: New Degree Proposal Requirements
 - Appendix B: Proposal Requirements for Converting a Track in an Existing Degree to a New Degree
 - Appendix C: Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Approval Requirements

Appendix A:
New Degree Proposal requirements

1. Overview

- a. Describe the basic design of the proposed degree program, including the degree level (baccalaureate, masters, doctoral, professional), field of study, and whether it is interdisciplinary.
 - i. If the degree program will subsume or supplant an existing degree, the proposal for the new degree program shall address the need for the discontinuance of the existing degree.
- b. Explicitly state the outcomes for students of this degree program, i.e., what can a student expect to learn during the course of the degree program and what skills will a student have after completing it?

2. Workforce and Student Demand

- a. Workforce Demand: Supply evidence of the opportunities available to graduates of this degree program.
- b. Student Demand: Describe the target market and demonstrate evidence of student demand for this degree program.
 - i. Provide realistic enrollment projections for the degree program for the first five years (template provided below).

Explain the methodology and assumptions used to project enrollment and completion data. Relevant information might include national or regional enrollment trends in similar degree programs and projected new demand from industry in the service area.
 - ii. If applicable, explain how the design of the degree program will address the needs of part-time, working students.
 - iii. Discuss plans or the potential for full or hybrid online delivery.

3. Role and Mission Criteria

Describe how it supports the mission and fits with the applicable strategic plan of the campus. Identify particular institutional strengths in the proposed degree.

4. Duplication

Address duplication issues with other institutions in the CU system or elsewhere in the state of Colorado. Describe any unique characteristics or features of this degree program that are not duplicated elsewhere in the state that would justify the degree. Address the impact of duplication on student demand.

5. Statutory Requirements

- a. Describe how the proposed degree program conforms to statutory requirements, such as the Student Bill of Rights, and for undergraduate programs, the 120 credit hour limit and GT Pathways.
- b. Provide the anticipated Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code for the proposed program, which is required by CCHE for entry of program information into the Student Unit Record Data System (SURDS). A description of all available CIP codes is provided at: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=55>

6. Curriculum Description

- a. Describe the requirements, including total credit hours, credit hour distribution, methods of delivering the degree, field experience, and other pertinent aspects of the curriculum. Explain how this curriculum is like or unlike the usual curriculum in this field.
- b. Provide a sample curriculum for the degree and explicitly identify all new courses being created for it.

7. Professional Requirements or Evaluations

- a. Where pertinent, describe any regional or professional accrediting association or licensing requirements that helped shape the curriculum of the proposed degree program. Specify the effect of these requirements on the length of the program, restrictions on

degree program content or mode of delivery, and any budgetary requirements, such as minimal staffing levels, and equipment needs.

- b. Identify timetables, if needed, that have been established to meet the professional requirements.
- c. Describe qualifications of the faculty responsible for delivering the proposed degree program.

8. Institutional Factors

- a. Explain how the implementation of this degree program will affect other instructional, research, or service programs on campus. Describe the impact on existing resources, including libraries, educational spaces, and computer and laboratory resources. Explain how the implementation will affect other CU campuses.
- b. When delivery of the curriculum of the degree involves courses offered or taught by a department in a different school/college, a letter of support from that school/college's Dean shall be included with the proposal.
- c. Describe formal relationships with other parties that are anticipated, such as inter-institutional arrangements, resource sharing, cooperative programs, clinical affiliations, etc. Describe and explain the type and extent of the relationship and the resources that the affiliating institution will provide. A copy of any draft contracts or agreements shall be included as appendices.

9. Physical Capacity and Needs

- a. Provide space estimates for space requirements required to deliver the degree program. Base the projections on existing and five-year space planning assumptions and enrollment data from curriculum and student load projections and projected use of special or dedicated facilities, such as laboratories.
- b. Describe the delivery and space requirements, identifying additional space or equipment needs required to deliver the degree. When significant capital construction or equipment needs are anticipated, provide additional information and explanations.

10. Cost Description and Source of Funds

- a. Report cost estimates and sources of funds for five years. All cost and revenue projections for the five years shall be given in constant dollars, i.e., do not include an inflation factor. Include and clearly identify institutional overhead costs. Specifically, when tuition is shown as a source of revenue, any component of tuition returned to campus must be shown as an expense. Proposal developers should work with the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration to prepare the budget in the prescribed format.
- b. Costs shall include operating, faculty start-up, and capital start-up needs. Estimates of operating costs shall be based on the delivery of the courses and services defined for the degree program. Administrative costs shall be factored in. Budgets shall be calculated in a realistic manner. For example, additional work generated by the operation, management, and oversight of a new degree program shall not be claimed to be absorbed into the workload of existing staff and faculty without an explanation of what other work will be reassigned or discontinued to make room for the new workload.
- c. A proposal shall include a written statement from the Dean(s) verifying adequacy of resources to support the new degree program as outlined in the budget, and confirming that projected resources are reasonable.

11. Other Relevant Information

Campuses may include any other information deemed relevant to support a new degree program proposal. The Board of Regents may request additional information pertinent to specific issues raised during their examination of a new degree proposal.

Table to be Included in Proposal *(See section 2 above.)*

Estimated Enrollment and Degree Completions

| Student Type | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Full Implementation |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------------|
| Resident Headcount | | | | | | |
| Nonresident Headcount | | | | | | |
| Total Headcount | | | | | | |
| Resident FTE | | | | | | |
| Nonresident FTE | | | | | | |
| Total FTE | | | | | | |
| Degrees Awarded | | | | | | |

Appendix B:

Proposal requirements for Converting a Track in an Existing Degree into a New Degree

(Note: This outline and may not apply to all track conversions. Please discuss your plan with the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs prior to preparing the documentation.)

A proposal for converting a track to a standalone degree must be approved by the Dean of the school/college offering the degree. If the degree will be administered by the Graduate School, the Graduate School Dean and Graduate Council must also approve the proposal. The proposal should be submitted in memo form to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs (EVC-ASA) and should be addressed to both the EVC-ASA and Chancellor.

The contents of the memo should include:

1. A history of the degree – when it started and when tracks were added to the existing degree program etc.
2. A description of the degree – a brief description of the curriculum; the delivery mode (face-to-face, online or hybrid); what students learn and what type of employment it prepares students for. What is the job market for graduates with the degree? Does it also attract working professionals looking to enhance their skills and potentially their career? If it is a popular program for working professionals, does the scheduling of the course offerings cater to them?
3. The extent of overlap, including shared courses, with the other tracks currently part of the degree program.
4. Enrollment data for the past 5 years (if the track has existed that long).
5. A brief rationale why the track should be converted to an independent degree: What is the benefit to converting the track to a degree (e.g. enhance visibility, improve marketing etc.)? Will making it an independent degree adversely affect other track(s) in the program?
6. An explanation of any change (increase) in tuition or fees if this track were converted to a new degree. (Any change would trigger an analysis

by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance).

7. An overview of the review and approval process within the department and/or school/college, including administrative and faculty review and approval process and discussions with students. Indicate the level of support or opposition to the proposal.
8. Describe any new resources (e.g. faculty, space, administrative support) that would be required to convert the track to an independent degree. If new resources are required, the memo should indicate that the Dean will provide them. Depending on whether new resources are required, this may trigger an analysis by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance. If no new additional resources are required, include a sentence stating that.
9. A suggested “Classification of Instructional Programs” (CIP) code used for reporting purposes to state and federal agencies. A description of all available CIP codes is provided at: [Descriptions of CIP Codes](#)
10. Concluding paragraph summarizing the request.

Appendix c:

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Approval Requirements

Proposal developers should work with the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs to obtain HLC approval.

The following new programs *require* prior approval by the HLC:

- A new academic program at a degree or credential level not previously included in the institution's accreditation (CU Denver|Anschutz is approved to award Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist, and Doctoral degrees. In specific circumstances, the Denver Campus may also award an Associate's of General Studies);
- The addition of academic program(s), including certificate programs not related to existing degree programs, that represent a significant departure from programs previously included in the institution's accreditation;
- The addition of a direct assessment program or the addition of competency-based programs wherein the academic program is organized around competencies; and
- The addition of academic programs that require allocation of substantial financial investment or resources.

Additionally, a partnership with a third-party entity to offer a program or a plan to offer a new program through a consortial arrangement *may require* HCL approval or notification.