

APPENDIX

CURRICULAR APPROVAL PROCESS

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I. Developmental Stage:

In curricular changes of any significance, early communication is critical to sparing needless effort and later controversy. All faculty within a department should be involved in, or at least be made aware of, any departmental curriculum changes. Even prior to departmental approval, intended changes should be communicated to all those likely to be affected, with a request for their input. Those who should be routinely involved or informed in most cases include the following:

- Deans and department heads
- Registrar
- Vice President for Academic Affairs

Curriculum changes can be classified as either cosmetic or regular, with the difference mainly consisting of the amount of documentation required and the shortened time period required for review by the appropriate committees.

A cosmetic change is one which does not significantly impact another department, or change the intent or focus of the affected course or curriculum. This definition allows for some flexibility, and what appears to be cosmetic to some may not appear so to others. Curricular changes not deemed cosmetic will require completion of the standard curriculum change forms, and will proceed through faculty governance as usual.

The department head and faculty member initiating the curriculum change will need to determine whether the change requested can be considered cosmetic or whether the change will need to be initiated utilizing the standard curriculum change forms.

Forms and Instructions: http://www.atu.edu/registrar/curriculum_forms.shtml (Word and PDF versions)

Cosmetic Change Request Form

This form requires identification of the course being changed, an outline of the actual change requested including a rationale for the change utilizing assessment information, and a justification as to why this change is cosmetic. The form may also be used in the event that the change requested is programmatic in nature, but still considered cosmetic by the requesting faculty member and department. Programmatic cosmetic changes must be accompanied by a curriculum matrix. If the change affects another department, a Departmental Support Form for each department affected must be included.

Request for Course Addition, Request for Course Deletion, and Request for Course Change

These request forms are intended to provide a format for the presentation of a proposal to the appropriate committee for addition, deletion, or change to a single course.

*Updated 8/1/11

Request for Program Addition and Request for Program Change or Deletion

The Request for Program Addition format is intended to be used for submission of proposals to add a new degree/major, option, or minor, while the Request for Program Change or Deletion is designed for modification or deletion of an existing degree/major, option or minor.

Proposals are reviewed by a number of individuals on campus, and the intent of the proposing department may be difficult to determine if all proposals concerning a particular degree/option are submitted at different times. For clarification and ease of understanding, it is strongly encouraged that all changes relating to a new or existing degree/major be submitted as one “packet,” including requests for course additions, etc., as appropriate.

II. Submission Stage:

Curriculum proposals may be submitted at any time during the academic year. Faculty are encouraged to review curricula and submit changes based upon evidence derived from assessment data, using both direct and indirect measures, and upon an analysis of the current state of the discipline.

However, to be included in the catalogs for the upcoming academic year, proposals are due in the Registrar’s Office no later than October 1 of each year. This allows for timely submission of the proposals through both the cosmetic change process and the regular curriculum change process. It also allows for timely submission of any program proposals (whether new, modifications, or deletions) to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, so that those programmatic change may also be included in the upcoming academic year’s catalog. Proposals submitted after October 1 require the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs for action during the current curriculum cycle. If approval is not given, those proposals will be held for action during the next fall semester.

III. Approval Stage:

Although curricular development may occur throughout the year, may be initiated in various ways and for various reasons, and may or may not have a fixed time table, the approval process is considerably more formal and fixed. It is constrained by 1) the need for campus-wide approval; 2) the need for off-campus approval by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board; and 3) the deadline for catalog copy (see above on timeline for submission).

A. Process:

1. After development and departmental approval, the Department Head will submit a proposal to the College Dean who shall review the proposal and then forward to the Registrar all recommended proposals.
 - a. Cosmetic changes should be submitted utilizing the cosmetic change form and should include all required information, including documentation of assessment evidence supporting the change.

- b. Proposals for course additions, deletions or changes shall be submitted according to the appropriate format. Each new course proposal must include a short explanation describing how the new course integrates with the assessment process of the department in which the course will be taught.
- c. Proposals for program additions, changes, or deletions shall be submitted using the appropriate format and shall include specific learning outcomes and assessments.

(After approval at the University level, new program proposals shall be submitted to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board according to the "Criteria and Procedures for Preparing Proposals" as outlined on the Arkansas Department of Higher Education website:

http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/academicaffairs/Pages/aa_academicproposals.aspx

- d. Each proposal should be reviewed for completeness according to the Instructions listed on the Curriculum Committee website before beginning the approval process.
 - e. Proposals should include a requested effective or implementation date.
 - f. A Departmental Support Form should also be completed for every department affected by a course change.
2. The Office of Academic Affairs will ask the Registrar to summarily review each proposal for satisfaction of inclusion of all relevant information. Any proposals found to be incomplete or incorrect will be returned to the originating department for correction. The approval process will start over in that instance.
 3. After review by the Registrar, all cosmetic changes (undergraduate and graduate) will be posted on the Curriculum Committee's website for review by all faculty. In particular faculty serving on the committees listed below should review each proposal carefully.

Undergraduate Proposal

Teacher Education Council
 General Education Committee
 Assessment Committee
 Curriculum Committee
 Faculty Senate

Graduate Proposal

Teacher Education Council
 Graduate Council
 Assessment Committee

Cosmetic changes will be posted for a minimum of two weeks, during which time any faculty member may object to the proposal on the basis that it is not cosmetic, or may object to the completeness of the proposal's justification / rationale. These objections must be emailed to curriculum@atu.edu with a "cc" to the appropriate department head. If the proposal is deemed cosmetic but needs additional information or rationale, this will allow the initiating department to submit a revised cosmetic change with complete justification; conversely, if the proposal is not considered cosmetic, the department will have the opportunity to prepare a standard curriculum proposal as appropriate. Unless objections are received, the changes will then be considered "approved" by the faculty at large, and will then be implemented in the appropriate catalog.

Regular undergraduate curriculum proposals will also be posted on the Curriculum Committee website and should be reviewed by the committees identified above. Regular graduate curriculum proposals will be posted on the Graduate Council's website and should also be reviewed by the appropriate committees listed above.

Proposals affecting the teacher certification and master's programs in Education should be presented first to the Teacher Education Council. Proposals affecting general education should be presented to the General Education Committee.

After approval through faculty governance, all proposals will be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for approval. When appropriate, the Vice President will submit program proposals to the President and Board of Trustees for approval. All new programs, modifications of programs, or program deletions require final approval by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

IV. Catalog Stage:

Once all needed approvals are obtained, the curricular changes must be prepared and submitted for inclusion in the next University online catalog. Minor editorial changes in the catalog may be made by those with responsibility for given sections, but any change in substance must have gone through the approval process described above.

Catalog copy is prepared in accordance with instructions provided by Academic Affairs to ensure timely and efficient preparation of the online copy. The timetable is typically as follows:

- A. Academic Affairs forwards catalog copy (excluding curricula) to Vice Presidents and Deans for editing.....October 15
- Edited catalog copy to Academic Affairs for compilationNovember 15

- B. Academic Affairs forwards link to online developmental catalog to Deans for proofing..... March 1
- Final edited copy due in Academic Affairs March 15
- Catalogs available online..... April 1