

CURRICULAR APPROVAL PROCESS

I. Developmental Stage:

The develop stage of the curriculum change process should begin with analyzing program and course assessment. 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. College and/or department curriculum committees should be involved in review of requested changes prior to the end of the spring term. Those who should be routinely involved or informed in most cases include the following:

- Deans and department heads
- College and/or department curriculum committees
- Assessment
- Registrar
- Vice President for Academic Affairs (particularly in relation to new program proposals)

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. 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.

Below are Examples of Cosmetic Changes:

Catalog Text

1. Updates to college and department introduction sections of catalog
2. Updates to program introduction sections of catalog

Cosmetic Course Change

1. Correct clerical error
2. Change course subject (example: ENGR changing to ELEG and MCEG)
3. Add, change, delete cross listing
4. Change title (includes addition of subtitle)
5. Change course description that does not change the focus or intent of course
6. Change course prerequisite or co-requisite
7. Change grade mode
8. Add, change, delete fee
9. Change course mode of instruction
10. Change course repeatability

Cosmetic Program Change

1. Rearranging course(s) within matrix (example: move MATH 1113 from Freshman Fall term to the Freshman Spring term.)
2. Deletion course(s) from list (example: take 3 hours from GEOG 2013, 3303, or 3703)
3. Add, change, delete footnote(s)

Curricular changes not deemed cosmetic will require completion of the standard curriculum change forms, and will proceed through faculty governance as usual.

All curriculum forms (cosmetic and standard) and instructions are available on the Curriculum Committee website: http://www.atu.edu/registrar/curriculum_forms.php

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.

To be included in the catalogs for the next academic year, however, all proposals whether cosmetic or standard are due in the appropriate Dean's office for submission to the Assessment Office by July 1 of each year. The Registrar's Office and Academic Affairs will review proposals and work with departments for clean and accurate submissions of proposals through the appropriate committee structure. This timeline allows for a 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 July 1 require the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs for action during the current curricular cycle. If approval is not given, those proposals will be held for action during the next year's curricular cycle.

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 Faculty and or Department Head will submit a proposal to the College Dean who shall review the proposal and then forward to the Assessment Office all recommended proposals (timeline above).

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 and Academic Affairs, all potential 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. Review by faculty of cosmetic changes will normally occur during the academic year (not summers) when all full-time faculty are teaching.

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.

Review of regular curriculum proposals will take place primarily during the fall semester of each academic year. Exceptions may be granted by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, particularly for curricular changes resulting from modified accreditation standards or State licensure changes.

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.

(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 Academic Proposals" as outlined on the Arkansas Department of Higher Education website and utilizing the appropriate forms:

<https://www.adhe.edu/institutions/academic-affairs/academic-program-proposal-and-review/>

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 compilation - November 15
- B. Academic Affairs forwards link to online developmental catalog to Deans/department heads for proofing - January 15
Final edited copy due in Academic Affairs - February 10
Catalogs available online - March 1