MERCER UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Title: Curriculum Change Policy
Effective Date: August 1, 2024
Issuing Authority: Provost
Policy Contact: Vice Provost
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Purpose

This policy prescribes the process by which the Mercer University curriculum changes are reviewed and approved.

Scope

This policy applies to changes of the University's credit-bearing curriculum, including course or program additions, revisions, and removals.

Exclusions

When applicable, the program discontinuation and financial exigency policies in Mercer University Faculty Handbook, Section 2.6, supersede this policy.

Definitions

As used in this policy, the following terms have the meaning specified below:

College: a Mercer University college or school

Program: a combination of for-credit coursework that, once successfully completed, results in the awarding of a credential, such as a degree or certificate

Policy Statement

A curriculum change, including addition, revision, or termination of a credit-bearing course or program, requires review and approval by relevant parties, which may include the Board of Trustees and SACSCOC, before implementation. In general:

- Faculty with appropriate discipline expertise propose the curriculum change. The proposing faculty may be from a single academic department or from multiple academic departments, as may be the case for an interdisciplinary course or program. The faculty of the department(s) must approve the change before proceeding.
- The curriculum committee(s) and dean(s) of the applicable college(s) must authorize the change before consideration at the university level.
- Faculty of the University Undergraduate Council and/or University Graduate Council

review the change and communicate a recommendation to the provost.
- The Provost or designee decides to reject or approve the change and, if required, forwards the proposal for further review, as provided below.

At each curriculum review level, any substantive change to a proposal must be approved by the previous approval levels, including the discipline faculty and a negative recommendation may prevent a proposal from being forwarded to the next review level.

For a New Degree, Major, or Stand-Alone Certificate

1. Proposing faculty must consult:
   a. Applicable academic dean(s) to ensure the proposed program aligns with the scope and strategic plan of the unit and college.
   b. The Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, who determines if new program must be reported as a SACSCOC substantive change and advises faculty about the timeline and documentation for that reporting.
   c. The chair of the relevant curriculum council(s), who advises about forms and processes, including if a pro forma will be required as part of the curricular process. (See Pro Forma Policy.)
2. If a new program pro forma is required:
   a. The proposing faculty submit the pro forma to the dean(s) and the appropriate curriculum council chair(s).
   b. The Provost, Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance, and the Executive Vice President receive the pro forma from the dean, review it, and determine if the proposal may proceed through the curriculum review process, requires revision and resubmission, or is rejected. Meeting dates and submission deadlines for pro forma reviews are posted on the Office of the Provost website.
3. If the pro forma is approved or not required:
   a. The proposing faculty complete a New Program Prospectus and New Program Content Comparison, using templates available on the Office of the Provost website, and, if required, begin preparing a SACSCOC New Program Prospectus, using a template provided by the vice provost for Institutional Effectiveness.
   b. The college curriculum committee(s) and dean(s) decide whether to authorize the new program and forward it to the curriculum council(s), or to reject the new program.
   c. If authorized by the college, the proposing faculty submit the new program prospectus, content comparison, and a Program Change Form to the Undergraduate Council and/or the Graduate Council. The council(s) review the materials, discuss the proposed change, and, by vote, make a recommendation to the provost. The chair of the council communicates the recommendation to the provost.
   d. The Provost or designee decides to reject or approve the new program.
   e. For a new degree or major approved by the Provost or designee, the new program is presented to and voted on by the Educational Policy Committee of

the Board of Trustees and the full board, normally at the board's fall or spring meeting.

    f. If necessary, as determined by the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, appropriate documentation, which is prepared with assistance from the college, will be submitted to SACSCOC by the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness. If a SACSCOC New Program Prospectus is required, the prospectus must be submitted to SACSCOC before January 1 for fall semester implementation and before July 1 for spring semester implementation.

For a New Minor, New Embedded Certificate, New Combination of Existing Programs, or a Program Revision or Termination

1. Proposing faculty consult with the academic dean(s) to ensure the proposed change aligns with the scope and strategic plan of the unit and college.
2. Proposing faculty complete a Program Change Form and any required documentation and addenda, as guided by the Program Change Worksheet. A program change that includes a course addition, revision, or removal also must follow the course change process described below.
3. The college curriculum committee(s) and dean(s) review the Program Change Form and all required documentation and addenda. The college curriculum committee(s) and dean(s) decide whether to authorize the change and forward it to the curriculum council(s), or to reject the change.
4. If authorized by the college, the Program Change Form and all required documentation and addenda are submitted to the applicable council(s)—Undergraduate Council for a proposed change to the undergraduate curriculum, Graduate Council for a proposed change to the graduate curriculum, or the Undergraduate General Education Committee, which is advisory to the Undergraduate Council, for a proposed change to the general education curriculum. The council(s) review the materials, discuss the proposed change, and, by vote, make a recommendation to the Provost. The chair of the council communicates the recommendation to the Provost.
5. The Provost or designee decides to reject or approve the curriculum change.
6. For program terminations and when otherwise necessary, as determined by the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, appropriate documentation, which is prepared with assistance from the college, will be submitted to SACSCOC by the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness.

For a Course Addition, Revision, or Removal

1. Proposing faculty consult with the registrar who determines an appropriate course number for a new course and advises about potential implications of the change.
2. Proposing faculty complete a Course Change Form and any required documentation and addenda, as guided by the Course Change Worksheet. A program change that includes a course addition, revision, or removal also must follow the course change process described below.

3. The college curriculum committee(s) and dean(s) review the Course Change Form and all required documentation and addenda. The college curriculum committee(s) and dean(s) decide whether to authorize the change and forward it to the curriculum council(s), or to reject the change.
4. If authorized by the college, the Course Change Form and all required documentation and addenda are submitted to the applicable council(s)—Undergraduate Council for a proposed change to the undergraduate curriculum, Graduate Council for a proposed change to the graduate curriculum, or the Undergraduate General Education Committee, which is advisory to the Undergraduate Council, for a proposed change to the general education curriculum. The council(s) review the materials, discuss the proposed change, and, by vote, make a recommendation to the provost. The chair of the council communicates the recommendation to the provost.
5. The Provost or designee decides to reject or approve the curriculum change.

Additional Resources

Office of the Provost, Curriculum Information Website:
https://provost.mercer.edu/curriculum-information/

History

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