Process for the Approval of New Academic and Professional Degree Programs

The pathway for new academic and professional degree programs (Bachelors, Masters, PhD and equivalent degrees) is stipulated below. These procedures apply to new types of degrees and to new tracks or majors within existing degrees. All steps must be completed unless otherwise indicated.

1. Approval by Department or Program, as applicable.

2. Submit “Planning Notice of Intent Form” to Provost’s office (this form is available on the Provost’s office website).

   The Provost’s office will notify the department or program when it may proceed to Step 3.

3. Approval by appropriate school curriculum committees, faculty councils, and faculty, as needed:

   College of Arts and Science:
   Undergraduate—Approval of the Dean; Discussion with the Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education; approval of the Committee on Educational Programs and Faculty Council, and vote by the full faculty.
   Graduate—Approval of the Dean, the Committee on Graduate Education, the Faculty Council, and vote by the full faculty.

   Blair School of Music: Approval of ad hoc committee, Dean, curriculum committee and vote by full faculty.

   Divinity School: Approval of the Academic Programs Committee, Approval of Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty, Approval of the Dean.

   School of Engineering: Approval of the Curriculum Committee, the Administrative Committee, and vote by the full faculty.

   Law School: Approval of relevant curriculum committees and Faculty Council.

   Owen School of Management: Approval of the Program Committee, Curriculum Committee, Faculty and Dean.

   Peabody College: Approval of relevant curriculum committees and Faculty Council.

   School of Nursing: Approval of the Curriculum Committee, Approval of the Executive Faculty Council, vote by the Faculty Assembly (full faculty).

   School of Medicine: The appropriate Senior Associate Dean will provide oversight and guide approval by:
   a. Designated subcommittees
   b. Academic Enterprise Executive Committee
   c. Executive Faculty

4. Approval by dean of host school. Proposals involving more than one school must be approved by all relevant deans.

   Proposals for new majors or new tracks within existing degrees may proceed to Step 7 (except for any degree within the Graduate School which must continue with Step 5).
5. Program proposals for all M.A., M.F.A., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees are sent to the Dean of the Graduate School for three-part review:
   a. Graduate School solicits external reviews.
   b. Graduate Faculty Council review and approval.
   c. Graduate Faculty Delegate Assembly review and approval.

6. Review by the Faculty Senate (the Senate has consultative not approval authority):
   a. Consultation with the Academic Policies & Services (APS) Committee of the Faculty Senate.
   b. Review by the full Senate.

   Post-review, the appropriate submitting dean (or deans) is informed of the consultative recommendations of the Faculty Senate by the Chair.

7. The submitting dean prepares a letter of endorsement and sends the reviewed proposal, including documentation of approval at all preceding steps, to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for approval.

   Approval by the Provost is the final step for new majors or new tracks within existing degrees.

8. The Provost transmits the reviewed proposal to the Chancellor for approval.

9. The Chancellor submits approved proposal to the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust for approval.

   The Provost’s office will notify the submitting dean of final approval of the program. This dean will then inform the individuals who submitted the proposal and notify the Office of Financial Aid and the University Registrar of the new program.

Programs or Departments may not officially publicize a new degree program until final approval has been communicated to the relevant Program Director.

Because of the many steps involved, the complete review and approval of a new degree or track/major within a degree may require up to one year. Please keep in mind that the BOT meets three times per year (February, April, and November).

All petitions for new academic programs should address the following:

- Purpose of the degree--What will the new academic degree enable a student to do that could not be accomplished via existing programs at Vanderbilt University?
- Benchmarking--Do similar programs exist elsewhere? How does the proposed program compare to other programs?
- Target student population size.
- Description of the size of the potential applicant pool.
- Projected number of students to be admitted per year; total number of students in the program at steady state.
- Qualifications for admission to the new program.
- Mechanisms to be utilized for student recruiting.
- A listing of the faculty members who will be participating in the new program.
- Name of the Director of Program and/or Director of Graduate/Undergraduate studies for the program.
- Curricular requirements, including existing courses to be used, and new courses to be created.
• Evidence that the degree requirements meet minimum accreditation requirements for program length
• Criteria for graduation.
• Student learning outcomes and assessment plan for the degree
• Expected timeline for completion of the program.
• Resources available to develop the new degree program.
• Statements that the following offices have been consulted regarding potential implications for internal or external systems/regulations:
  o Dean of the Libraries
  o University Registrar
  o Office of Financial Aid
• Mechanism of program support.
• External letters of assessment and support of the proposed program (if not solicited and obtained by the Graduate School; see Step 4 page 1, above).
• Host schools may require proposals for new academic programs to include documents and points of information in addition to those noted above, such a catalog-ready copy of the new program, a record of the faculty vote in support of the proposal, a staffing and curriculum plan, and budgetary approval.