

May 21, 2009

TO: Chief Academic Officers  
FROM: Alan Mabe  
SUBJECT: New Policies and Revised Regulations and Guidelines for Academic Program Planning

As you are aware, UNC GA has spent the last few months revising the academic planning documents in response to UNC Tomorrow and directions from the Board of Governors. With President Bowles' issuing the new regulations and guidelines on May 6, 2009, the revision process is complete. The new policies, regulations, and procedures are being placed in the Board of Governors' Manual and on the Academic Planning Website. I thought it might be helpful to distribute a copy of the documents to you with some indications of what has changed. You, in turn, may want to distribute the documents to your colleagues.

Previously the policies, regulations, and guidelines were included in a series of documents without clear differentiation. The Board of Governors has approved an explicit policy on academic program planning and has modified the section of the Code that addresses the Board's responsibilities for considering a new campus to include a section on branch campuses and other off-campus facilities for educational delivery.

400.1, Policy on Academic Planning. This is a new statement of policy for the academic planning process and was considered and discussed extensively by the Board and with the campuses. Of note here are the disciplinary panels that will be used to address program proposals and to explore a range of options in addition to that of starting a new program. While many of the standards for review are similar to those previously in effect, the Board has stressed that the availability of online degree programs is to be integrated into the consideration of duplication of programs.

400.1.1[R], Regulations for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation. This document attempts to provide more detail for the implementation of the policy. It identifies three levels of doctoral programs: first professional, applied, and research. It also characterizes joint degrees, dual degrees, and interdisciplinary degrees and tries to provide guidance for how to differentiate these types of programs. There is also an expedited program review process.

400.1.2[R], Regulations for New Campuses, Branch Campuses, and other Off-site Use of Facilities. For branch campuses, the document utilizes the definition provided by the Commission on Colleges of SACS, our regional accrediting entity. As will be evident in the guidelines for submitting requests, the nature of off-site arrangements will need to be clearly described in any proposal for off-site delivery. [The policy revisions are to be found in the BOG Code, 203B. *Other Powers and Duties.*]

400.1.1.1[G], Guidelines for Academic Program Development. Some of the revisions were to make the document accurate in terms of current practices, such as a complete list of types of degrees offered on UNC campuses. The planning and authorization process for bachelor's and master's degree programs is quite similar to the previous procedure. The use of disciplinary panels prior to a decision to recommend for authorization is an added feature. For doctoral programs, disciplinary panels will be used for the planning stage for doctoral programs, prior to a recommendation to the Educational Planning Committee, which now, as previously, must approve a doctoral program for planning. The Graduate Council will review and make recommendations on requests for establishment of doctoral programs and will have the results of doctoral disciplinary panels communicated to it.

400.1.1.2[G], Guidelines for Alternative, Online, or Distance Education Delivery of Approved Educational Programs. This document reflects the growth in online degree programs and the role the Commission on Colleges' policies on substantive change play in online and offsite programs. Degree programs previously approved by the BOG must be separately approved by General Administration for online or off-site delivery. Much of this is similar to previous guidelines. Authorization for online or off-site degree programs is no longer time limited, and guidelines for campuses' periodic review will be developed for both resident and online and off-site programs. Off-site facilities and the arrangements for their use are an expected part of a proposal for off-site delivery. Based on discussions with the staff at the Commission on Colleges, UNC will no longer submit material to the Commission on Colleges on behalf of the campuses. The Commission on Colleges prefers that we proceed in that manner, since in their view it is the campus's responsibility to provide all documentation in support of a change. Appendix F and G are still designed so that they meet Commission requirements for substantive change but they must be submitted by the campuses in the appropriate circumstances.

400.1.1.3[G], Appendix A: Notification of Intent to Plan a New Baccalaureate or Master's Degree. Reference to the campuses response to UNC Tomorrow is added.

400.1.1.4[G], Appendix B: Request for Authorization to Plan a New Doctoral or First Professional Degree Program. Reference to UNC Tomorrow and the number of students planned for the program when it is fully ramped up are added.

400.1.1.5[G], Appendix C: Request for Authorization to Establish a New Degree Program. This was an extensive document previously and is very similar to the previous document.

400.1.1.6[G], Appendix D: Request to Discontinue a Degree Program. This form is to discontinue a Board approved degree program. Appendix I is for the discontinuation of online or off-site delivery of a degree program without discontinuing the degree program itself. Some questions have been added about savings or reinvestments and what happens to faculty and staff in the program.

400.1.1.7[G], Appendix F: Notification of Intent to Plan a new Distance Education Degree Program. This form is very similar to the previous form.

400.1.1.8[G], Appendix G: Request for Authorization to Establish a New Distance Education Degree Program. Instructions are made clear that it is the campus's responsibility to submit all documents to

the Commission on Colleges in connection with any substantive change. A section is added that requests more information about off-campus sites and the arrangements for the use of those sites. More attention is given to the delivery of programs out of state, and a more extensive justification is requested including the pricing of tuition and fees. Proposals for out-of-state delivery will be reviewed with the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs.

400.1.1.9[G], Appendix I: Distance Education Degree Program Discontinuation Form. This is for discontinuation of the online delivery of a program or an off-site delivery of a program. This form should be provided each time delivery at a site ends so GA can have accurate records of off-site programs. If the BOR approved degree program is to be discontinued use Appendix D.

400.1.1.10[G], Appendix J: Request for Authorization to Participate in an Inter-institutional Arrangement. Similar to previous form.

Two appendices have been eliminated. Previous Appendix D provided the option for a less rigorous process for a proposal if it were in the same CIP and had a condition that the program “will not require any additional state-appropriated resources.” This appears to be an impossible condition since any new enrollments in the program would likely trigger state funding. This was rarely, if ever, used and seemed to run against the requirement that all degree programs be approved by the Board of Governors. Previous Appendix D has been replaced with the new Appendix D, a form for discontinuation of a degree program. Appendix E has been eliminated as well. It addressed a non-degree sequence of courses that would be offered by distance learning. Certificates and licensure have been addressed in the documents and GA should be notified using the electronic forms that will be on the new GA Website about new certificate and licensure areas being established. Appendices F and G were so well known and used so regularly, we thought it better not to re-letter them.

GA will bring up a new Website on June 1. We will follow up just after June 1 with the direct URL for accessing this material. The new main GA Website will have the same URL as currently ([www.northcarolina.edu](http://www.northcarolina.edu)).

Proposals already submitted do not need to be redone using these appendices. If additional information about a proposal is needed we will request it.

CC: Erskine Bowles  
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Enclosures