

Undergraduate Program Proposals : New Instructions Page

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Creating & Changing UW Undergraduate Majors, Options, & Minors

Review Committee and Forms

Campus review committees: While the procedures described here pertain to all three campuses, each campus has its own campus faculty undergraduate program review committee, with authority to approve new programs and changes to existing ones for that campus. For Seattle, that committee is the Faculty Council on Academic Standards (FCAS); for Tacoma, it is the Faculty Council on Academic Policy; for Bothell, it is the Executive Council of the General Faculty Organization. Where this website refers to a "campus review committee," it means these bodies. Note: new courses and changes to existing courses are approved in through a separate process coordinated by the University Curriculum Office.

Policies That Apply to All Types of Action

Documentation Required

On the Seattle campus, submission of UW form 1503 is required for all new majors, options, minors and all changes to existing programs. The form may be downloaded [here](#). All changes to programs on all campuses requiring the university's three campus undergraduate curriculum review must be submitted on form 1503. The original form, including signatures of all that apply including: the chair or program director, college curriculum committee and Dean, and any supporting documents, should be submitted to the University Registrar, Box 355850. An electronic copy, with or without signatures, the form can be sent to Registrar's Curriculum Office by email at uwcr@u.washington.edu.

Approvals Required

New Majors require the following approvals:

1. Department
2. School/College (usually College Curriculum Committee and Dean)
3. University (campus review committee; Provost and President)
4. State (Higher Education Coordinating Board - HECB)

New Options and **New Minors** require the following approvals:

1. Department
2. School/College (usually College Curriculum Committee and Dean)
3. University (campus review committee; Provost and President)

Changes to existing programs

Adding or changing admission and/or program requirements, continuation policies, freshman entry, and all changes that affect DARS all require approvals from the following:

1. Department
2. School/College (usually College Curriculum Committee and Dean)
3. University (campus review committee; Provost and President)

Other Policies

Other departments affected by changes in program requirements for a minor, major, or option must be consulted.

Courses required for the major should be approved or in the process of approval by the University Curriculum Committee before the proposal is to the campus review committee.

For Assistance with Form 1503 and the Approval Process

For department and college approval: Contact your department and college about procedures. For procedures for campus approval on Bothell and Tacoma campuses, contact the appropriate campus review committee.

For assistance with completing form 1503: Contact the Gateway Undergraduate Advising Center for assistance on including applicable university academic policies and proper formatting of catalog copy.

For assistance with state approval: Contact Robert Corbett, Undergraduate Academic Affairs (rcorbett@u.washington.edu; phone: 616-0657), as early as possible for help with the documentation and procedures required.

Policies and Instructions Specific to the Type of Action Required

Creating a New Major

Majors are undergraduate academic programs that, typically, consist of 50 to 90 credits. A major together with general education requirements and elective credits, they constitute a university degree. A major is the focus of an undergraduate degree, thus constituting what a student has specialized in during a university career. In the coursework required for a major, courses from outside a department or program may be required with their permission. Courses may be required for admission to a major that do not count towards credits required for graduation from that major. Majors may also be spread over two or more departments or programs as in the case with interdisciplinary programs, but must have an administrative home with advising support.

Documentation Required in addition to form 1503: Departments should submit supporting

documentation for the new major, such as student learning outcomes, projected enrollments, letters of support, and departmental handouts. This documentation is also required for approval by the HECB. For more information, please contact Robert Corbett (rcorbett@u.washington.edu, phone: 616-0657) in the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs.

Description of the Process

Department : Department(s) discusses proposed new major or degree with Dean's office, including budget and resource implications. Dean notifies and confers with Provost regarding development of the program. If preliminary approval is granted, department develops and submits prepared and signed form 1503 to the appropriate school/college.

School/College : Most schools and colleges require approval from their College Curriculum Committee and Dean before a new program can be forwarded to the University level. In Arts & Sciences, the Curriculum, Standards, and Practices Committee meets two or three times each quarter. Check your own school/college for deadlines and procedures.

University: Once approval has been received from the appropriate school, college, or, in the case of Tacoma and Bothell, academic program, the proposal is forwarded to the campus faculty academic program review committee. After a preliminary review, the proposal is forwarded to the University Registrar for [three campus review]. At the end of the review, the proposal and comments from the review process are returned to the campus faculty academic program review committee for final approval. Upon approval, the proposal is forwarded to the University Registrar for completion of the three-campus review process and the signature of the President.

State : The Higher Education Coordinating Board has been authorized to monitor academic programs at all higher education institutions in Washington. In this capacity, the HECB approves all new undergraduate majors and degrees at the UW, as well as off-site versions (including distance-delivered degrees) of existing programs. The HECB evaluates new academic programs on the basis of state need, student and program assessment, and use of state resources.

Timing: New majors can typically be approved at all levels within six months of the date FCAS receives form 1503. The HECB requires that proposals be submitted at least three months before a program is to start.

HECB Notification : The HECB requires the state public universities to submit planning proposals for new degree programs for preliminary approval. If you are considering creating a new major, please contact Robert Corbett, Undergraduate Education (rcorbett@u.washington.edu, phone: 616-0657), for more information about the process and procedures for preliminary review. The HECB Program and Facility Approval Policies and Procedures are available online at:
<http://www.hecb.wa.gov/autheval/dpr/dprindex.asp>

Creating a New Option

Options are undergraduate academic programs that overlap with at least 50% of the credits of an existing major within a department or program and typically allow students to specialize within a major. Like majors, they are transcripted. All coursework required for the option, including upper and lower division courses, may be counted within the 50%, and the overlap with an existing major may be with groups of courses as well as particular courses. Departments may recognize their own areas of emphasis within degree programs, which are not transcripted. Such an area of emphasis may be referred to as a

"concentration," "pathway," etc., but should not be called an "option." The term "option" is reserved for transcribed programs. Proposals for "concentrations," etc. should still be submitted to FCAS, with an indication that department does not wish to have the program transcribed.

Supporting Documentation: In addition to form 1503, it is advisable to submit a grid demonstrating 50% overlap with the existing program, as well proposed learning outcomes that may differ from the original program. **Timing:** Changes in programs requirements can typically be approved at all levels within two months of submitting form 1503 to FCAS. Normally, approved changes become effective no earlier than one full quarter after submission.

Creating a New Minor

Minors are coherent courses of study at the undergraduate level consisting of 25-35 credits. Students are not allowed to receive a minor and a major within the same field of study. Coursework in minors is not limited to a single department or program. Minors may be interdisciplinary and they may include courses on all three campuses. Such interdisciplinary and tri-campus minors require an administrative home with advising support on each campus that they are offered. Typically, interdisciplinary minors have an advisory group of faculty who determine appropriate courses for inclusion.

Supporting Documentation: In addition form 1503, it is advisable that a program provide information about advising and administration of a minor. If the minor is an interdisciplinary program, it is appropriate to discuss how the program is distinct from other offerings at the university.

Timing: New minors and changes to existing minors typically be fully approved within two months from when FCAS receives form 1503. Normally, approved changes go into effect one full quarter after final University approval, so please plan accordingly.

Revising Program Requirements

Program Requirements include requirements for fulfilling minors, options and majors (sometimes also called graduation requirements. These are not limited to courses, but also include continuation policies and specific grade requirements for courses. For changes to or additions of admission requirements, see [below].

Supporting Documentation: In addition form 1503, it is advisable that a program provide information about advising and administration of a minor. If the minor is an interdisciplinary program, it is appropriate to discuss how the program is distinct from other offerings at the university.

Timing: Changes in programs requirements can typically be approved at all levels within two months of submitting form 1503 to FCAS. Normally, approved changes become effective no earlier than one full quarter after submission.

Community College notification: Under an agreement through the Washington [ICRC|<http://www.washingtoncouncil.org/icrc/>], the university is required to notify community colleges of changes in lower division requirements two years prior to their applying to transfer students from Washington state community colleges.

Adding or Revising Admission Requirements

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Admission requirements include courses, credits, GPA, and related stipulations which must be satisfied before students can be considered for admission to an academic program. Programs may require courses from outside their discipline as well as from within. Programs may also require an essay or a test for admission, as well as relevant extracurricular activities. Programs should include a process for considering appeals for admission when applicants have been denied.

Guidelines for Departmental Admission Course Prerequisites

Academic departments with selective or competitive undergraduate admission programs often require applicants to complete certain courses before applying for admission. The Faculty Council on Academic Standards reviews departmental admission policies before University approval, and it offers the following guidance to departments establishing admission requirements.

1. Courses required for admission should be offered frequently and with enough space to provide adequate access to students interested in the major. Access to prerequisite courses should not be used as a way to limit eligible applicants.
2. Courses should be at the 100 or 200 level, with content appropriate for freshmen or sophomores.
3. Courses should ideally apply to general education requirements if the student is not subsequently admitted to the major.
4. Courses should be available at most community colleges so transfer students can complete departmental admission prerequisites prior to applying to the University.
5. Undergraduate programs in the College of Arts and Sciences should not require more than 20 prerequisite course credits for admission to the major.

Admission policies usually fall into one of three categories:

- *Open Admission*: Matriculated students in good academic standing are admitted at any time.
- *Selective Admission*: Requires students to complete satisfactorily a set of prerequisite courses with a minimum GPA. All students who meet the minimum requirements are admitted.
- *Competitive Admission*: Students must complete all minimum requirements to apply and must then compete with the entire applicant pool for a limited number of spaces. of three categories:

Selective and competitive programs must include an admission application process that tells students how and where to apply for the program, including application deadlines.

Minimum grade requirements for admission are typically no higher than 2.0 for a specific course. However, a specific minimum grade in a course may be required for admission if the course and grade have been approved as a major requirement. Also, a minimum GPA above 2.00 may be specified for a set of courses as an admission requirement.

Admission requirements can be added or changed for

- an existing major
- an existing option within a major

Supporting Documentation: In addition form 1503, it is advisable that a program provide information about advising and administration of a minor. If the minor is an interdisciplinary program, it is

appropriate to discuss how the program is distinct from other offerings at the university.

Timing: Changes in admission requirements can typically be approved at all levels within two months of submitting form 1503 to FCAS. Normally, approved changes become effective no earlier than one full quarter after submission.

Community College Notification: Under an agreement through the Washington [ICRC|<http://www.washingtoncouncil.org/icrc/>], the university is required to notify community colleges of changes in lower division requirements two years prior to their applying to transfer students from Washington state community colleges.