

ACADEMIC POLICIES

To Initiate Academic Policy Changes or Proposals

1. Proposals to change academic policy (by adding to or deleting from current academic practice) and/or proposals for new academic policies may be initiated by any of the following: individual faculty members, faculty committees, department chairs, or the Provost.

If the proposed policy is initiated by an individual department primarily, it must be discussed at the departmental level and receive the approval of the department in question. The chair of the department then recommends the proposed policy to the Provost, who will present it to the appropriate standing committee for consideration.

If the above proposed policy concerns two or more departments, the department heads will recommend the proposed policy to the Provost, who will present it to the appropriate standing committee for consideration.

2. **To Review/Ratify Academic Policy:** The appropriate standing committee(s) of the faculty review proposed academic policy. If the proposed policy is of major significance, preliminary input is sought from the faculty at faculty meetings, department meetings, or through some other organized means. The faculty will review and vote on the matter and provide its recommendation to the Provost. The recommendation of the faculty is forwarded to the Provost, who forwards the recommendation of the faculty, along with his or her recommendation on the matter, to the President. The President's approval of the proposed policy constitutes approval for that policy except in matters that the Board of Directors has reserved to itself, according to the Memorandum of Understanding. In those matters that require Board approval, the President forwards the recommendations of the faculty and the Provost, along with his or her own recommendation on the matter, to the Board of Directors. In these matters, action of the Board of Directors is necessary for approval.
3. **To Implement Approved Academic Policy:** Implementation of approved academic policy, in most cases, requires publication in the Benedictine College Catalog or some other official publication of the College.

New Majors and Programs

1. **Program Proposal** – All new programs or proposals will be introduced to the Curriculum Committee by the relevant department chairperson(s).
2. **Design** – New programs or majors will
 - a. be academically sound and challenging;
 - b. make adequate provision for appropriate testing and evaluation of student progress;
 - c. be carefully tailored to student, program, and College needs;
 - d. be related to a designated department;
 - e. include assessable student learning goals and a program assessment plan.
3. **Development of Resources** – New programs or majors will

- a. not duplicate a program or major already offered, either in the department of origin or in any other department of the College;
- b. consider the current level (F.T.E.) of faculty personnel and/or the impact of possible changes in personnel on the financial condition of the College;
- c. utilize current faculty competence or present a realistic plan for the acquisition of necessary faculty competence.

4. Proposal – The following materials should be presented to the Curriculum Committee as an agenda item for approval of new programs or majors:

- a. A complete description of the proposed program or major;
- b. A statement concerning:
 - i. how the proposed program or major relates to student, department and College needs;
 - ii. how the proposed program or major relates to faculty competency;
- c. A projection of any new resources that would be involved in the implementation of the proposed program or major;
- d. A description of pilot-testing procedures with regard to any of the new courses involved in the new program or major (in the event that pilot-testing procedures were used);
- e. An analysis of the potential market for the proposed program or major;
- f. A plan for the acquisition of professional skills and competencies not already possessed by faculty needed for the program or major;
- g. Utilize appropriate data available from peer institutions through APS.

5. Evaluation/Assessment – New programs and majors will be routinely evaluated and must have assessment plans on file according to measures approved by the Assessment Committee.

The Provost may request an evaluation of a specific program or major at any time.

6. Publication of New Major – Programs or majors approved by the Curriculum Committee, the faculty, the President, the Board of Directors, and the Higher Learning Commission may then be advertised and marketed. They will be included in the next edition of the College Catalog.

New Catalog Courses

1. Design:

New catalog courses should

- a. be academically sound and challenging,
- b. make adequate provision for appropriate testing and evaluation of student progress,
- c. be carefully tailored to student, department, and College needs,
- d. contribute to the efficiency and economy of a major, if appropriate, while maintaining a liberal and enriching character,
- e. be related to designated department(s).

2. Development of Resources:

New catalog courses should

- a. not duplicate a course already offered, either in the department of origin or in any other department of the College,
- b. consider the current level (F.T.E.) of faculty personnel and/or the impact of possible changes in personnel on the financial condition of the College,

c. relate positively to actual faculty competence or to faculty competence that can be readily acquired.

3. Implementation

a. *Pilot-testing:* A new course proposed for the Catalog may undergo pilot testing under a 1770, 2770, 3770, 4770 number, if an undergraduate class or 5770 number for graduate class. A course that is being pilot-tested may be offered no more than three times, after which time it must be approved by the Curriculum Committee to be listed in the Catalog or dropped.

b. *Approval:* The following materials must be presented to the Curriculum Committee for approval of new catalog courses:

- i. course syllabus,
- ii. a statement concerning how the proposed course relates to student, program, and College needs and how the proposed course relates to faculty competence,
- iii. a projection of any new resources that would be involved in the implementation of the proposed course,
- iv. a description of pilot-testing procedures and results in the event that pilot-testing was utilized,
- v. a plan for the acquisition of professional skills and competencies not already possessed by faculty involved in the course,
- vi. credit-hour compliance form to verify that the course meets this requirement.
- vii. a recommended course number. This number may not be one that has ever been used by a previous course.

Forms for introducing new courses must be used. These forms may be found on Canvas under the Curriculum Committee tab on the Faculty Forum. Proposals that are not complete will be returned to the department.

Courses approved by the Curriculum Committee will be sent to the Senior Vice Provost for final approval. Approved courses will be included in the next edition of the College Catalog. A course may not be offered under its new number until it is published in the next College Catalog under its new number.

Approval of Courses to Meet General Education Requirements

If it is desired that a course is to fulfill a general education requirement, then the appropriate form must be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for the desired Foundation or Skill & Perspective. These forms are available at Canvas > Faculty Forum > Curriculum Committee. These completed and signed forms are due to the Curriculum Committee by November 15th.

Note that when submitting a new course to the Curriculum Committee, it is NOT adequate to say in the proposal that this course will also be fulfilling "X" general education requirement. The appropriate general education proposal form must be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for its consideration at the same or later time.

Non-Major Academic Programs

The College approves non-major academic programs in order to provide academic formation through a set of academic offerings beyond the scope of a traditional major. Non-major academic programs are particularly well-suited to offer interdisciplinary courses of study, to

provide rigorous academic enrichment outside the traditional bounds of the disciplines, or to serve cohorts of students that share specific needs.

Definition of a Non-Major Academic Program

A non-major academic program is a planned course of study that is part of the College curriculum, but does not align with a particular academic discipline, and cannot be a student's primary field of study. Non-major academic programs differ from academic departments in that a department represents one or more distinct disciplines of academic inquiry into a field of study (e.g., "Philosophy" or "Sociology & Criminology"). Non-major academic programs differ from the majors supported by academic departments in that a major can be the primary field of study for a baccalaureate degree (e.g., New Evangelization or Elementary Education). A non-major academic program is more than a recommended sequence of courses in that a program has been approved by the faculty, can be included in the College Catalog as constituting part of the curriculum offered by the College, and those who complete the requirements of a program may (or may not) have this completion recognized on their official transcripts. The inclusion of program completion on a transcript is subject to faculty determination; no program will be recognized on the student's transcript without faculty approval.

Method of Approving a Non-Major Academic Program

While non-major academic programs differ from academic departments in that departments represent established disciplines that support academic majors, non-major academic programs are part of the curriculum supported by the College. As a result, non-major academic programs must be approved by a vote of the faculty in the same way that academic majors are approved by the faculty, following the same procedures, except that the approval of the Board of Directors is not required for a non-major academic program.

The Administration of Non-Major Academic Programs

Because non-major academic programs are not grounded in a particular discipline of academic inquiry, they are not domiciled in an academic department. Instead, programs are overseen directly by the Provost, or by individuals appointed by the Provost. For the purposes of administrative support, approved programs receive the same support from College staff as academic majors or departments. Faculty who teach courses that fulfill core or foundation general education requirements will typically be members of an academic department.

Academic Minor

1. **Minor Proposal** – All new minors will be introduced to the Curriculum Committee by the relevant department chairperson(s) or appropriate representative(s) if an interdisciplinary minor from the departments making the proposal.
2. **Design** – The new minor will
 - a. be academically sound and challenging;
 - b. be carefully tailored to student, program, and College needs;
 - c. require at least 15 credit hours; at least 3 of which must be upper division and preferably at least 6 upper division hours.

3. Development of Resources – The new minor will

- a. not duplicate a minor already offered by the College;
- b. utilize current faculty competence or present a realistic plan for the acquisition of necessary faculty competence;

c. consider the current level (F.T.E.) of faculty personnel and/or the impact of possible changes in offerings due to offering of this new minor.

4. Proposal – The following materials must be presented to the Curriculum Committee as an agenda item for approval of a new minor (See the appropriate form in Canvas > Curriculum Committee “course.”):

- a. A complete description of the proposed minor;
- b. A list of all required courses, including prerequisites to these courses, that may increase the actual number of “required” courses;
- c. A statement concerning how the proposed minor relates to student, department, and College needs;
- d. A description of potential student interest in the proposed minor and how this was determined;
- e. The relation of the minor to the liberal arts mission of the College;
- f. Statement concerning how the proposed minor relates to faculty competence;
- g. A plan for acquisition of professional skills and competencies not already possessed by faculty needed for the minor;
- h. Consideration of the current level (F.T.E.) of faculty personnel and/or the impact of possible changes in personnel on the financial condition of the College.
- i. Description of pilot-testing procedures with regard to any of the new courses involved in the minor (as appropriate).
- j. Project of any new resources that would be involved in the implementation of the proposed minor.
- k. Address how this minor is academically sound (including number of upper division hours).
- l. Explain why this is the appropriate department for such a minor or why it is appropriate as an interdisciplinary minor.

New minors are approved by: the Curriculum Committee, the faculty, and the President.

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