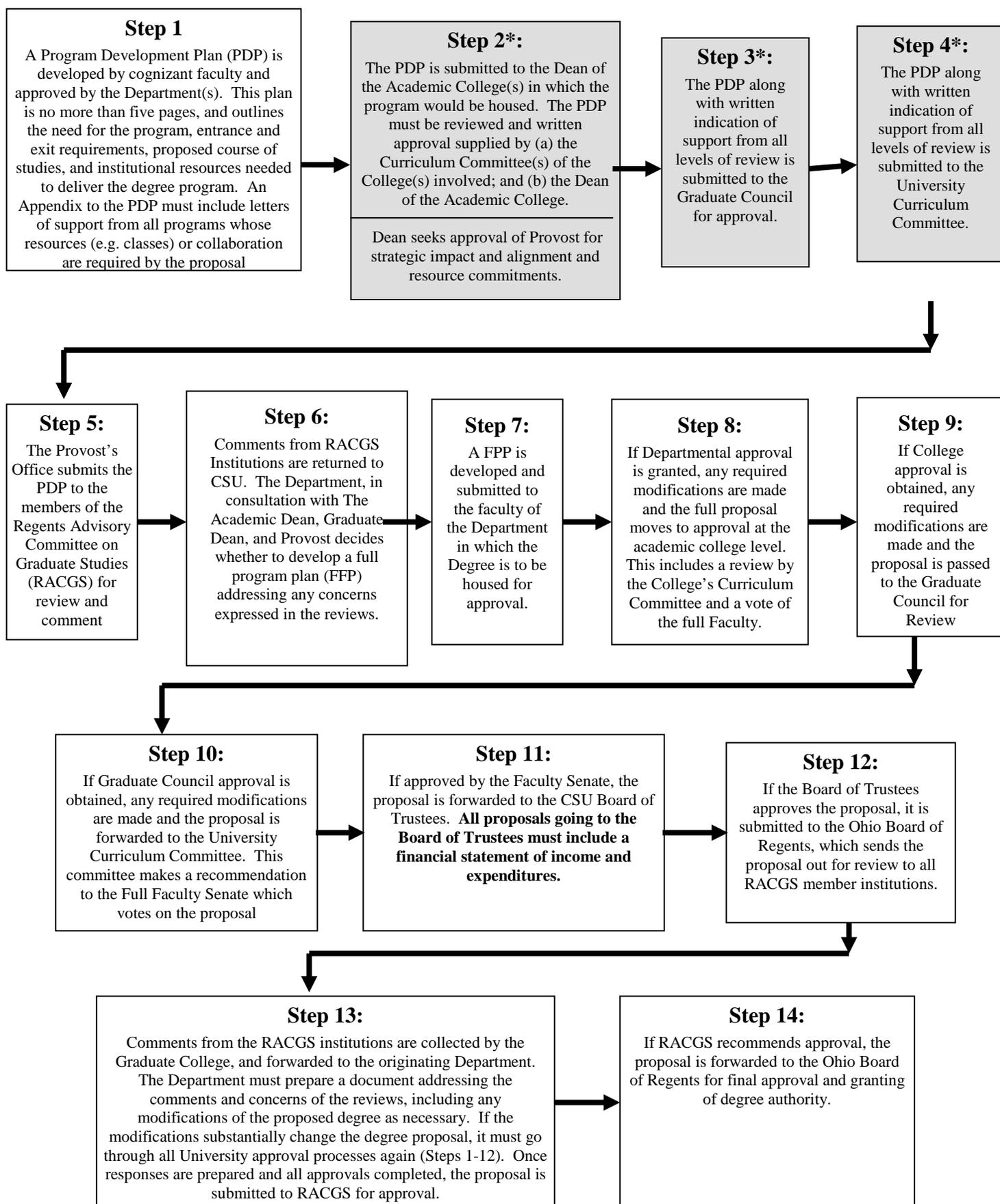


Cleveland State University Approval Process for NEW Graduate Degree Programs

(based on Revised OBOR Guidelines of October 2003 and Faculty Senate Policy of October 2006)



College of Graduate Studies Steps in the Graduate Program Approval Process

OVERVIEW:

Faculty with an interest in developing new graduate programs or developing new delivery methods for current graduate programs should first meet within the College(s) to review the program's goals and its "fit" within overall Department(s) and College(s) priorities. Once reviewed at the College level, a meeting should be arranged with the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies to review the steps involved in the approval process and potential obstacles to program approval. In addition, if current programs are extensively revised, or name changes are planned for degree programs, these need to be evaluated to determine whether submission to the Board of Regents is required.

PROPOSAL PROCESS

The approval of a new graduate program involves oversight by various units, beginning with the program faculty, and including college deans, the university graduate council, the Provost, the Board of Trustees and the Ohio Board of Regents. Beyond initial review at the Department/School and College level, the mechanism for approval is basically a four-phase process for those proposals requiring OBOR approval: (1) A Program Development Plan; (2) a Full Proposal that takes into account PDP review commentary; (3) a "Response Document" that acknowledges the concerns raised in a review of the Full Proposal; and (4) a Formal Presentation at a meeting of the Regent's Advisory Committee on Graduate Study (these phases are detailed further below).

A Program Development Plan of **PDP** is submitted for preliminary feedback from the involved units as it moves from the faculty through the Dean's office, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Graduate Council, the Provost's office and ultimately the Board of Trustees and the Regent's Advisory Committee on Graduate Study (RACGS). If the feedback is supportive of further program development, a Full Proposal is prepared that is again evaluated by the respective units. The steps of program approval are described below. It typically takes from 18 months to two years for a new graduate program to receive formal approval and begin admitting students.

Proposal Sections: based on Regents PDP outline

The PDP should address, in a summary narrative of no more than five pages (exclusive of appendices, which should be kept as brief as possible), the following concerns:

I. Program Designation

- A. Designation of the new degree program, rationale for that designation, definition of the focus of the program and a brief description of its disciplinary purpose and significance.

II. Educational Objectives/Proposed Curriculum

- A. Describe the educational objectives of the proposed program including the career paths that will likely be pursued by program graduates.
- B. Describe the program curriculum including formal course work, program requirements, program milestones and required and optional research and professional experiences. How is the curriculum linked to the educational objectives?
- C. Describe how students are advised and mentored through the program.
- D. Describe the nature of all thesis, dissertation or other capstone experiences.

III. Administrative Structure

- A. Describe the administrative arrangements for the new program – the units responsible for delivery and oversight. If interdisciplinary, list all units involved and indicate that support from respective Deans (if more than one college is involved) has been acquired.

IV. Demonstration of need for new degree program

- A. Provide evidence for program need (e.g., published materials from disciplinary organizations, professional societies or funding agencies that identify a need and/or survey data you have collected that demonstrate a need for the program).
- B. What evidence can be provided that there is student demand for ht program at Cleveland State University (provide information regarding program inquiries, local, state and/or national projections of labor market for program graduates, etc.)?
- C. Describe other programs in the State of Ohio that are similar to the proposed program. Will the proposed program compete with exiting programs in the State? Identify the needs this program will fill in the State of Ohio.
- D. Describe other programs in the region from which potential students might be drawn that are similar to the proposed program. Will the proposed program compete with existing regional programs? Please explain.

V. Program Recruitment & Admissions

- A. How and to whom will the program be marketed?
- B. Estimate the number of applications and both full and part-time enrollments over the first five years of operation. What percentage of program enrollees are likely to be recruited from local, regional, national and international applicant pools?

- C. Describe the application materials that are required (e.g., transcripts, test scores, letters of reference). What are the admission criteria?

VI. Special Recruitment Efforts

- A. Describe special efforts that will be made to recruit applicants from underrepresented groups in the given discipline.

VII. Proposed Program Support by Current Faculty, Staff, Facilities

- A. List all current faculty and staff who will contribute to the proposed program, their current titles and terminal degrees, their roles with respect to the program, and percent effort devoted to program support. Describe how the workload of the faculty will be adjusted to accommodate the proposed program.
- B. Provide a description of current facilities/equipment availability for the new program.

VIII. Need for additional facilities and faculty/staff and plans for meeting this need.

- A. Describe plans to add new faculty and staff that would support development of the proposed program. Include a description of the backgrounds and credential sought.
- B. Describe new facilities and space needs associated with development of the proposed program, and plans for acquiring these.

IV. Financial Plan

- A. Provide a narrative description of the projected cost and subsidy and other income adequate to meet the projected costs. Describe the methods used to estimate program income and expenses as appropriate (including assumptions about annual increases in tuition and stipend costs, adjustments for inflation and credit hour enrollment for part time students).

X. Proposed Community, Foundation, Government & Industry Sources of Support

- A. Describe any additional community, foundation, government or industry sources of support for the proposed program.

XI. External Consultants and Advisors

- A. Describe input from external consultants and/or an advisory committee (if any) in the development of the degree proposal. Include copies of reports from consultants/advisory committees.

XII. Relationship of the Proposed Program to Other Programs in the Unit and College

- A. Describe how the new program will relate to and impact other programs (both graduate and undergraduate) in the proposing unit and (if appropriate) college. How will the resource needs of the new program be balanced against the resource requirements of existing programs? In addition, describe the potential impact of the proposed program on other units or colleges, if any.

**Appendices:
For PDP Proposals**

- A. Abbreviated bio and/or C.V. information on the proposed program faculty.
- B. A list of courses and a summary of how these would be integrated into, or phased in with, existing/new workload demands.
- C. Consultant/Advisory reports (if any)

Note: RACGS Review of PDP

Members of RACGS will review the PDP and seek the advice of campus experts in the program area. The RACGS member institutions shall review the PDP and provide a response on the following issues:

1. Potential conflicts with any existing program at the reviewing RACGS member's own institution and/or unnecessary duplication of programs in the state or region;
2. Opportunities for collaboration with the RACGS member's own institution;
3. Concerns with substantive elements of the proposed degree program; and
4. Suggestions that might help the submitting institution strengthen the proposal or refine its focus.

The purpose of the review of the PDP is to provide the proposing institution with an assessment of the probability that the new degree or program would be approved by RACGS upon submission of a Full Program Plan, and to highlight initial areas of concern that should be addressed in the Full Program Plan should the proposing institution decide to move forward.

For Full Planning Proposals

The following points are expected to be addressed in the proposal:

1. Academic Quality

Competency, experience and number of faculty, and adequacy of students, curriculum, computational resources, library, laboratories, equipment, and other physical facilities, needed to mount the program.

- a) In addition to this analysis, for **entry level graduate degree programs**, academic quality assessment will focus on the adequacy of the answers provided in response to the following questions:
 - i. Is the program distinctly different, both conceptually and qualitatively, from the undergraduate degree programs in the same or related disciplines? If so, is there a detailed listing of the specific differences?
 - ii. Does the program emphasize the theoretical basis of the discipline as expressed in the methods of inquiry and ways of knowing in the discipline?
 - iii. Does the program place emphasis on professional decision making and teach the use of critical analysis in problem solving?
 - iv. Is the program designed to educate students broadly so that they have an understanding of the major issues and concerns in the discipline or professional area?
 - v. Does the design of the program include a capstone experience, such as an exit project (which would not necessarily be a research experience)?
 - vi. Does the proposed program identify faculty resources appropriate for the research component of the program?
 - vii. Does the program curriculum offer what students need to know for competence at the expected level of professional expertise?
 - viii. What plans have been made to address standards and guidelines for professional accreditation, if applicable?
- b) Academic quality assessment will focus on the adequacy of the answers provided in response to the following questions:
 - i. What admission criteria, in addition to the traditionally required transcripts, standardized test scores, letter of recommendation, and personal statements of purpose, will be used to assess the potential for academic and professional success of prospective students? The special consideration of student experience and extant practical skills within the admission process should be specifically noted.
 - ii. If field/clinical experience is subsumed within the academic experience, how does that experience relate to the academic goals of the professional graduate degree program? Provide a description of the involvement of supervisory personnel. Describe the level of communication between the field/clinical experience site and the academic department. Provide an outline of the anticipated student activities as well as student requirements.
 - iii. If the faculty qualifications associated with the professional graduate degree program differ from national norms and the traditional standards of faculty excellence, how do such qualifications differ and why do they differ? Provide the specific qualifications of adjunct, part-time, and special faculty who do not hold traditional academic credentials. Also, give a rationale for such faculty

without academic credentials to participate in the professional degree program as regular program faculty.

- iv. How does accreditation by the appropriate professional organization relate to the academic experience outlined in the program plan? Describe the specific aspects of the program plan, if any, that are necessary to achieve professional accreditation.
- v. What is the relationship between theory and practice as expressed within the proposed curriculum? Identify a set of *core courses* and show how the curriculum enhances the student's professional preparation.
- vi. Does the number of credit hours required for graduation differ significantly from traditional graduate degree programs? How is the number of credit hours required for graduation influenced by mandated professional experiences?
- vii. Can it be demonstrated that the culminating academic experience, such as an exit project, thesis or dissertation, will contribute to the enhancement of the student's professional preparation? In support of the response here, provide a list of possible research projects, theses, or dissertation topics.

2. Need

Examples of potential metrics of program need include:

- a) Student interest and demand
Potential enrollment;
Ability to maintain the critical mass of students.
- b) Institutional need
Plan for overall development of graduate programs at the proposing institutions.
- c) Societal demand
Intellectual development;
Advancement of the discipline;
Employment opportunities.
- d). Scope
Local, regional, and national needs;
International need.

3. Access and Retention of Underrepresented Groups

- a) Plan to ensure recruitment, retention and graduation of underrepresented groups within the discipline.
- b) Provide as background a general assessment of:
 - i. Institution and departmental profiles of total enrollment and graduate student enrollment of underrepresented groups within the discipline; and
 - ii. Compare underrepresented groups degree recipients from the department and university at all levels compared to **national norms**. Supply data by group where available.

4. Statewide Alternatives

- a) Programs available in other institutions;
- b) Appropriateness of specific locale for the program; and
- c) Opportunities for inter-institutional collaboration.

- d) Institutional Priority and Costs
 - i. Support and commitment of the proposing institution's central administration.
 - ii. Adequacy of available resources committed for the initiation of the program.

5. External Support

- a) Community, foundation, governmental, and other resources.

Appendices:

- A. Biographical Sketches or Curriculum Vitae of the proposed program faculty
- B. Detailed Course Descriptions
- C. Demand and Need Assessment Materials
- D. Consultant Reports (if any)
- E. Letters of Support

Response Document

After receipt of the review comments on the FPP, a written response to the reviewers' individual comments is developed.

The Response Document must include an OBOR Fiscal Impact Statement and should be used to demonstrate institutional plans for the judicious use of resources in terms of physical plant, personnel, and student support, and appropriate institutional commitment of resources to the new program. The response document must be received by the RACGS members at least ten (10) days advance of presentation at a RACGS meeting.

Presentation at RACGS Meeting

The chair of RACGS, in concert with OBR and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, will schedule a formal presentation of the proposal at a forthcoming RACGS meeting.

The proposing department may prepare a presentation for the RACGS meeting including Powerpoint slides. Presenters should be familiar with all aspects of the proposed program in order to answer questions that may arise and knowledgeably argue the case for approval.

New Delivery Approaches for Previously Approved Graduate Programs

The following guidelines will be used by the RACGS in overseeing currently approved graduate degree programs that are provided at specific off-campus sites or via various delivery models including the use of microwave, teleconferencing, web-based or other electronic means, as well as a mixture of on-site/off-site delivery. The intent of these conditions is to permit flexibility in adapting degree requirements to alternative audiences, while not permitting institutions to design and deliver essentially new degrees within the format of a previously approved degree.

A. Programs Requiring Notification Only

RACGS will be notified in writing on those occasions when **a previously approved degree program** will be offered at an off-campus site, or extended to a different audience via electronic or blended means. Under these guidelines, a degree program will be considered “*previously approved*” when less than 50% of the content or course requirements in a degree previously given approval has been changed. A program will be considered to have been “*extended to a different audience via electronic or blended means*” when 50% or more of the course delivery is off-site or via alternative delivery models.

1. Universities desiring to provide **a previously approved degree program** under the conditions above must inform the Chancellor’s staff and RACGS members via email at least six weeks prior to the initiation of the degree program. A brief, concise description of the program that addresses the conditions noted above and describes the general nature of the program and its delivery mechanism or site location will suffice in informing Chancellor’s staff and RACGS members.
2. If changes in the program curriculum (in contrast to the method of delivery) exceed 50%, the guidelines governing new degree approval take precedence, and institutions will need to use the new program approval process described in Part A, Sections I and II of this document.
3. The Graduate Dean (or equivalent administrative officer) at each institution is responsible for the determination of whether or not the curriculum has been changed less than 50%. The determination of whether 50% or more of the program delivery is off-site or via distance delivery shall be based on the total number of credit hours in the degree program.
4. If a RACGS member does not respond with an objection within 30 days of notification, it will be assumed that the RACGS member has no objection to the proposal. If there is no substantive objection, the program will be included as an information item on the agenda of the next RACGS meeting and entered into the minutes of the meeting.
5. In the event that a member objects to an informational item, the proposer will be notified and asked to respond to the objection; if no resolution is reached via email, a discussion at the next RACGS meeting will ensue and a formal vote for approval must be taken, with majority approval, at that meeting before the program’s acceptance is entered into the record.

B. Program Standards

To ensure that off-site and alternative delivery models adhere to the same standards as on-campus programs, RACGS member institutions will be responsible for utilizing the following guidelines and shall use the same guidelines in those cases where new degree programs using alternative delivery models are being

brought forward for approval (these may supercede new degree program criteria as outlined earlier in these guidelines).

1. The program is consistent with the institution's role and mission.
2. The institution's accreditation standards are not appreciably affected by offering the program, especially via alternative delivery mechanisms.
3. The institution's budget priorities are sufficient to sustain the program in order for a selected cohort to complete the program in a reasonable amount of time.
4. The institution has in place sufficient technical infrastructure and staff to support offering the program, especially via alternative delivery mechanisms.
5. The institution has in place sufficient protocols for ensuring instructional commitments are met, including instructor/staff training, compliance with copyright law, and quality instruction among other variables.
6. The institution has in place a relevant and tested method of assessing learning outcomes, especially in the case of alternative delivery mechanisms.
7. As new delivery mechanisms are brought into course instruction, students and faculty are presented with sufficient training and support to make appropriate use of new approaches.
8. The institution assures that the off-site/alternatively delivered program meets the same quality standards for coherence, completeness and academic integrity as for its on-campus programs.
9. The faculty offering the program maintains the same standards and qualifications as for on-campus programs.
10. The institutions assures that, for all off-site and alternative programs, students will have access to necessary services for registration, appeals, and other functions associated with on-campus programs.
11. In those instances where program elements are supplied by consortia partners or outsourced to other organizations, the university accepts responsibility for the overall content and academic integrity of the program.
12. In those instances where asynchronous interaction between instructor and student is a necessary part of the course, the design of the course, and the technical support available to both instructor and student are sufficient to enable timely and efficient communication.
13. Faculty are assured that appropriate workload, compensation, and ownership of resource materials have been determined in advance of offering the off-site or alternatively delivered course.
14. Program development resources are sufficient to create, execute, and assess the quality of the program being offered, irrespective of site and delivery mechanism employed.
15. Procedures are in place to accept qualified students for entry in the program—it is imperative that students accepted be qualified for entry into the on-campus program. In addition, program costs, timeline for completion of the cohort program and other associated information is made clear to prospective students in advance of the program's initiation.

16. Assessment mechanisms appropriate to the delivery approach are in place to competently compare learning outcomes to learning objectives.
17. Overall program effectiveness is clearly assessed, via attention to measures of student satisfaction, retention rates, faculty satisfaction, etc.