

ACADEMIC COURSE AND PROGRAM APPROVAL

(Printer-friendly -- [approval.pdf](#))

Before changes in the academic curriculum are instituted or announced, they must be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Affairs, following approval by the program/department and the school. The Master Course Data Forms (MCDFs) and Master Program Data Form (MPDF) are required to maintain an accurate record of the University's offerings and requirements and to list them in the Schedule of Classes, the bulletins, and student transcripts.

MPDFs and MCDFs and all necessary supporting documents must be completed and submitted early enough to allow for sufficient review and approval by the program/department, the school, and Academic Affairs **prior** to the requested effective date. **Retroactive approvals will not be granted, and new programs or revisions cannot be publicized to current or prospective students until approved by Academic Affairs.** Academic Affairs will make every effort to promptly review and provide feedback on complete and accurate submissions.

The MCDF to Propose a New Course

Please answer all questions on the [MCDF to propose a new course](#) and attach a course description, the syllabus including specific learning objectives indicating what students should know or be able to do by the end of the course, reading list, Library Impact Statement, and an explanation of how this course furthers the program's objectives and is different from similar GW courses (if any). If the course will require additional expenses, also attach a separate sheet detailing the source of the funding/resources. To obtain a Library Impact Statement, forward the MCDF, syllabus, and reading list to the librarian of the appropriate library (Gelman, Burns, or Himmelfarb). A reinstated course should be handled the same as a new course.

Special Topics Courses – Two types of special topics courses exist within the University. The first type is used to offer an ever-changing menu of courses that address current developments or special-interest topics in an aspect of the larger subject taught by the department or school; Topics in Value Theory in the Philosophy Department is an example. Another use of the first type is to offer specialty courses taught by visiting faculty. It is not expected that new, permanent additions to the curriculum will result. The second type is used for courses that are offered on an experimental basis with the intent of making them a permanent part of the curriculum if they succeed. Another use of the second type is to offer the initial specialty courses of incoming new regular faculty. In such cases, it is generally expected that the process of establishing an experimental course as a regular course should begin after the special topics course has been taught twice. The topics course may be taught a third time if approval is pending. This policy pertains to courses of three or more credits.

The MCDF to Change or Delete a Current Course

The [MCDF to change or delete a current course](#) should be used to terminate a course or to request changes in the course's name, number, designation, number of credit hours, grading method, classroom requirements, prerequisites, or location. Changes in course descriptions should be made on bulletin manuscript; MCDFs are not required when only the course description changes. If the number of credit hours or course type is being changed, attach a revised syllabus. If the changes will require additional expenses, attach a separate sheet detailing the source of the

funding/resources.

The MPDF for a New or Changed Program

Review the [Guidelines for Academic Program Proposals](#) before developing a new program proposal and completing the [MPDF](#). Submit the MPDF, MCDFs for any new or revised courses to be offered as part of the proposed program, and all supporting documents described in the Guidelines. Also use the [MPDF](#) to request changes to a program. The current name and type of program (degree or certificate) and the specific changes to be made should be noted on the form. If additional resources will be required or if the change will have an impact on another department or school, provide the necessary supporting documents described in the [Guidelines](#).

Routing Submissions

After program/department review, submit the appropriate MCDF and/or MPDF and all attachments to the dean's office for school review, retaining a photocopy for your records. If the proposal is approved, the form and attachments are forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Affairs, with a photocopy retained in the dean's office. If necessary, the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Affairs will contact the program/department initiating the forms with any questions. If approved by Academic Affairs, copies of MCDFs are distributed to:

- Program director/department chair
- Dean
- Registrar
- Academic Editor
- Scheduling Office
- Student Accounts (if course fees are being established or changed)

Copies of MPDFs approved by Academic Affairs are distributed to:

- Program director/department chair
- Dean
- Registrar
- Academic Editor
- Scheduling Office
- Institutional Research (for new programs and changes to the area of study or type of program)
- Student Accounts
- Student Financial Assistance
- Undergraduate Admissions (for undergraduate programs and freshman-admit dual programs)
- Graduate Student Enrollment Management (for dual/joint and graduate programs)

Upon receipt of approved MPDFs and MCDFs, the Registrar's Office creates or changes program and course coding in BANNER and distributes the new or revised coding to the distribution lists noted above. Each office is responsible for producing and distributing copies of MPDFs, MCDFs, and coding information to appropriate staff.

Additional Resources

[Certificate Programs](#)

[Guidelines for Academic Program Proposals](#)