FACULTY HANDBOOK
FOR THE
PREPARATION OF
NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF PROGRAM REVIEW, ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER

REVISED
SEPTEMBER 2016
Need and Justification

- All statements about student demand and interest need to be based on supporting evidence, with an indication of the source. Some proposals offer extensive discussion of an important social issue, but do not connect that issue to the proposed curriculum and possible career outcomes for students. This practice does not strengthen the proposal and is best avoided. The importance of a field does not in itself demonstrate a need for a specific undergraduate degree in the area, particularly at the associate’s level, as many employers prefer that students receive a broad liberal arts education in the first two years of study.

- Proposals for new professional or vocational programs should discuss employment opportunities and should include specific job titles with salary ranges, with data drawn from sources such as the US Department of Labor or appropriate professional organizations, and with sample entry-level job postings. The job postings must be directly relevant to the curriculum and should not require specific additional skills or expertise not developed by the proposed curriculum.

- For liberal arts programs, documented information on student demand should be included along with letters of support from graduate or professional programs for which the proposed curriculum will prepare students. In the case of associate’s programs, discussions with senior colleges on articulation agreement should take place before the proposal is officially submitted and should be mentioned in the document.

- Additional supporting documentation, such as student surveys and letters from potential employers, will strengthen the proposal.

- If a similar program exists elsewhere at CUNY, consider reaching out to the campuses offering it to discuss potential duplication issues and growth perspectives for the existing and prospective programs. The proposal should explain why student demand is not met through the existing CUNY program(s).

Colleges considering a new program are encouraged to reach out to Dr. Ekaterina Sukhanova at the Office of Academic Affairs 646-664-8054/8029, Ekaterina.Sukhanova@cuny.edu) early in the planning process.

Some colleges may prefer to send a brief “concept paper”, 1-2 pages in length, for informal review, before investing the time and effort in the preparation of the proposal and its approval through faculty governance channels.

For detailed information, we invite you to consult our Resource page under http://www.cuny.edu/academics/programs/resources.html
MEMO ON FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE CREATION OF NEW DEGREE PROGRAMS

In the current financial climate, when CUNY enrollments are at an all-time high and its resources are limited, decisions on launching new academic programs need to be approached with particular care. Proliferation of new degree offerings should not be allowed to compromise the quality of our existing programs.

The 2015 Faculty Handbook for the Preparation of New Programs, distributed to all CAOs, provides detailed guidance on the documentation required for new programs. Here we highlight some key aspects of a successful program proposal.

Goal and Purpose

- It is insufficient to simply establish the proposed curriculum as a legitimate field of academic inquiry. Colleges must also demonstrate that they have the necessary resources and faculty expertise to maintain a new degree program and must substantiate reasonable grounds for expecting that the program will become self-sufficient within its first five years. While the detailed revenue and expenditure charts provided in the Handbook are obligatory for the full proposals, the program’s cost assessment should inform campus discussions from the beginning.

Faculty

- Proposals requiring new FT faculty hires necessitate a strong justification in the context of a college’s long-term goals. CUNY campuses are discouraged from finalizing new faculty hires in the anticipation of a new program yet to be approved.

- New proposals that do not require hiring additional full-time members also require scrutiny. A proposal must analyze how existing programs will be affected by the reassignment of full-time faculty. Programs that draw resources away from established programs for a small number of new majors are not viewed favorably. Relying mainly on adjunct faculty for a new program is also not an advisable strategy.
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