

Policy on Proposing New Academic Programs at UNCG

- **Guidelines for Proposal Development & Review**
- **Process for Determining Program Priority**

The University of North Carolina System Office (UNC SO) allows each university to have a maximum of five academic program proposals under consideration for approval at any one time. These may be a mix of undergraduate and graduate program proposals, but does not include certificates. It is up to each university to determine which proposals will be submitted to UNC SO. When a new program proposal has been acted upon by the Board of Governors (BOG), it is removed from the priority list, and another proposal may be submitted.

This document provides guidance on the proposal development and review process, and the procedures followed to determine the priority of proposals to be submitted to the UNC SO for BOG approval. Questions about this document may be addressed to the Senior Vice Provost or the Associate Vice Provost for Assessment, Accreditation, and Academic Program Planning (AAAPP).

A. **Guidelines on Proposal Development and Review**

1. Although new academic program ideas may originate from any individual or university office, new program proposals must be developed by a group that includes faculty. Programs are commonly proposed by an academic department or school; however, in the case of a new interdisciplinary program, the proposal is typically authored by a collaborative group of individuals representing multiple disciplines.
2. While proposals may be submitted at any time, proposal developers are expected to consult with their Dean (or Deans, in the case of interdisciplinary proposals that include multiple units) before devoting time to the development of a formal proposal. This consultation provides the Dean(s) an opportunity to consider the alignment of the proposal within the unit's mission(s) and priorities. It also provides the Dean(s) an opportunity to consult with the Provost, to determine whether the proposal would be likely to gain institutional support. Proposed programs that are not supported at the Dean or Provost level may be reconsidered at a subsequent date.
3. Following consultation described above and with endorsement by the Dean(s), proposal developers will prepare a Program Concept Paper (generally no more than 10-12 pages), which addresses the following issues. Additional information may be provided, as deemed appropriate by the proposal developers.
 - **Program Description and Primary Point of Contact:** What is the program name and degree level (undergraduate, Master's, or doctoral)? What will the purpose of this

program be? What will it train its graduates to do? Which departments or schools are involved? Provide the name and phone/email of the primary point of contact for the proposal.

- **Mission Alignment:** How will this program support the missions of UNCG and the UNC System?
- **Student Demand:** What is the evidence of student demand? (Where possible, proposals should include an estimate of demand developed by a credible external source.)
- **Access, Affordability, and Student Success:** With reference to any relevant metrics in the UNCG and UNC System strategic plans, what will the impact of the program be on student access and success? (Where possible, proposals should include an analysis of student debt levels for similar programs.) Proposal developers may contact the Senior Vice Provost for assistance in projecting program revenue based upon estimated enrollment.
- **Societal and Labor Market Demand:** What are the labor market projections and job analyses that demonstrate societal and market demand?
- **Cost, Funding, and Budget:** What will the anticipated expenses and revenues in the start-up period be (if any), in year one, and over time? Can the University cover the proposed program costs and related demands? What will the impact be on faculty workload? Will the program be sustainable?

When creating the Program Concept Paper, proposal developers may wish to review the “Rubric for Evaluation of Proposed New UNCG Academic Program Proposals” (see [LINK](#)), which is made available to Academic Council reviewers and closely mirrors the guidance in the bulleted list above.

4. The completed Program Concept Paper is forwarded to the Dean(s) for review. If endorsed by the Dean(s), it is submitted to the Provost for consideration. Proposals that are not supported by the Provost will be returned to the Dean(s) with feedback, including prospects for resubmission.
5. If the Program Concept Paper is endorsed by the Provost, it will be forwarded to the Academic Council and scheduled for discussion during an Academic Council meeting. If the Academic Council discussion results in the endorsement of the proposal, the process for determining its priority for submission to UNC SO will be undertaken (see section B., below).
6. The Provost’s Office will maintain and regularly share with Deans the roster of existing program proposals on the UNC SO priority list so that UNCG will be positioned to act quickly to add a program when a spot becomes available. Slots become available when one of the existing proposals has been acted upon by the BOG and removed from the list or when the University reconsiders its support for a program and removes it from the priority list.
7. When the Academic Council endorses a proposed program as high priority, AAAPP will reach out to the individual identified in the Program Concept Paper as the primary point of contact to

secure additional information required for completion of the UNC SO document “New Academic Degree Program Request for Preliminary Authorization” (see [LINK](#)). If a slot in UNCG’s queue at UNC SO is available, AAAPP will submit the proposal through the UNC SO electronic portal and notify the proposal developers, Dean(s), and Provost that this action has been completed.

8. AAAPP will facilitate the proposal developers’ completion of the Substantive Change Checklist (see [LINK](#)) to identify any issues that might need to be reported to UNCG’s accrediting body, SACSCOC.
9. New program proposals endorsed by Academic Council will be submitted for review through UNCG’s internal curriculum review bodies by the primary point of contact identified in the Program Concept Paper, with support provided by AAAPP.
10. AAAPP will monitor the status of BOG program reviews and will notify the proposal developers, Dean(s), and Provost when action has been taken.

B. Process for Determining Program Priority for Submission to UNC SO/BOG

1. When the Provost endorses a Program Concept Paper submitted by a Dean (or multiple Deans in the case of interdisciplinary programs that include more than one unit), the Provost will share the concept paper in advance of a Council meeting where the proposed program will be discussed and evaluated. This review may be undertaken regardless of whether a slot is available in UNCG’s new program queue at UNC SO. This practice permits the Provost and Council to reconsider the priority of existing proposals and to establish a campus-level queue in the event that more than five proposals are confirmed to be high priority.
2. Academic Council members will carefully review the Program Concept Paper prior to the Council meeting, evaluating it with reference to the “Rubric for Evaluation of Proposed New UNCG Academic Program Proposals,” cited and linked in section A.3. above.
3. At the Council meeting, the Dean(s) who proposed the program to the Provost will make opening remarks in support of the program and answer questions from Council members. The Provost will facilitate a discussion of the proposal, leading to a Council vote on whether to add the program to UNCG’s priority list. The vote may be delayed to a subsequent meeting in the event it is determined that additional information is needed before the vote can occur.
4. When the Academic Council fails to endorse a proposal as a high priority, the Dean(s) will provide feedback to the proposal developers, including an assessment of prospects for a successful resubmission at a later date.
5. When the Academic Council votes to endorse a new program proposal as a high priority, the process identified in section A.7.-10. will be undertaken. The program proposal will be added to UNCG’s queue at the UNC SO when a slot becomes available unless the priority of the proposed program is changed prior to its submission.