



Category:  
Academic Affairs

Responsible Office:  
[Academic Affairs](#)

**Procedure Title:**

Graduate Academic Program Proposals, Procedures for Submission

Document Number:  
1004

Effective Date:  
October 05, 1994

This procedure item applies to:  
State-Operated Campuses

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**Summary**

It is the policy of the State University of New York (University) to offer graduate programs to serve the needs of both individual students and society. The guidelines given here are designed to insure that the University can respond to the changing needs and dimensions of post-graduate education with programs of high academic quality.

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**Process**

These guidelines have been written in an attempt to make both clear and explicit the requirements, responsibilities and processes involved for State University of new york (University) campuses that wish to initiate new graduate programs. Taking into account the complex regulatory environment of New York State, they set out the information and steps necessary for program preparation, and they describe the stages through which the program proposal will move on its way to registration. Please see Appendix A for a table illustrating the variations in process for graduate programs, with special attention to the Master Plan Amendment process.

**I. Procedure for Submission and Evaluation of a Letter of Intent**

The letter of intent should be addressed by the campus president to the provost at system administration, with copies shared concurrently with the presidents of all graduate degree granting campuses. Announcement of the submission of the letter of intent will appear in the monthly report of program developments issued by the office of academic affairs.

Responses from system campus presidents regarding the proposed program must be sent to the proposing campus and to the University provost. Comments will be incorporated into the response to the letter of intent by system administration.

The letter of intent should contain the best projections possible at this preliminary stage, according to the following outline:

A. Program Identity

- 1. Proposed title;
  2. Proposed award: certificate or degree (authorized degree title and abbreviation from [Rules of the Board of Regents, §3.50](#));

3. Proposed beginning date; and
4. Brief description of the proposed program (250 words maximum), describing academic content, structure/duration and number of credits.

B. Planning Factors

- 1. Explain the relationship of the proposed program to the approved mission of the institution. Please document how the development of this program is related to the campus' on-going planning process, including its Middle States reaccreditation reviews, overall campus enrollment planning and SUNY 2000/Phase I.;
  2. Identify existing or projected programs of the campus in the same or related disciplines and the expected impact of the proposed program on them;
  3. Identify similar programs at other institutions, public and private and, where appropriate, the potential impact on them; and
  4. Describe briefly proposed arrangements for required external clinical instruction, agency placement, practice teaching, internships, etc., if any, and how these arrangements would impact on other institutions using the same facilities, if any.

C. Need and Demand

- 1. Identify the need for the proposed program within the University system in terms of the availability and capacity of similar programs on other University campuses. If there could be a perception of apparent duplication or redundancy, please provide the rationale for adding this program:
    - a. Does the proposed program specifically meet a New York State need identified in SUNY 2000: A Vision for the New Century? If so, please elaborate.
    - b. What effect will the proposed program, both during initiation and in future plans, have on other University institutions?
  2. Identify the potential need for this program in terms of the economy and/or educational needs of the area in which it is to be located, New York State at large and, particularly for doctoral programs, the nation;
  3. Estimate student demand expected for this program and how it will be measured; and
  4. If the program is designed to prepare its graduates for immediate employment, indicate potential employers of such graduates who have requested establishment of the program and their specific employment needs. Assess employment possibilities in general for graduates of the program.

D. Enrollment and Fiscal Factors

Please note that all enrollment and fiscal amounts which follow should reflect prior year enrollments or allocation, i.e., these entries should be incremental. Additionally, internal reallocation must be considered the primary expected source of funding.

- 1. Estimate headcount enrollments concentrating in the proposed program for the first five years of

operation:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Full-Time					
Part-Time					

Since this expected enrollment may affect the future campus enrollment composition and totals, estimate the impact this program may have on campus total enrollments and the relative percentage distribution by broad discipline categories.

- 2. In considering funding requirements for this program, indicate the total cost requirements for this program proposal in its first five years of operation.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Operating	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Capital	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

What is the expected source of funding to cover the operating costs of this program?

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Internal Reallocation					
Incremental Funding					

**II. Formal Response to the Letter of Intent by the System Administration**

A. The formal response to a letter of intent will authorize proceeding with proposal development or not, as deemed appropriate, and will provide information on the following matters from the perspective of the University:

- 1. Incidence of like programs and pending letters of intent, University-wide;
- 2. Enrollment trends, University-wide, in the program area;
- 3. Names of other campuses which have discontinued a program of this kind, if any;
- 4. Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) number;

5. Master plan amendment considerations, if any;
6. When the program would lead to professional licensure or certification, known attitudes of licensing agencies towards development of more such programs;
7. General advice as to whether system administration is encouraging development of such programs or not;
8. Advice concerning whether an exceptional proposal format is to be followed; and
9. Curricular or resource concerns, as appropriate.

B. If the response authorizes proposal development, the campus president will be asked to notify the provost as soon as possible as to whether or not the campus intends to proceed with proposal development. *If the answer is affirmative, the formal proposal should be submitted within two (2) years from the date of response to the letter of intent.*

C. The approval letter from system administration will reiterate that all graduate programs require an external evaluation as part of the full program proposal, and will indicate that campuses are to contact the office of academic affairs at system administration to coordinate the selection of site reviewers.

### **III. Preparation and Submission of a Formal Proposal for a Graduate Program**

Five copies of the complete program proposal should be submitted to the University provost. The complete proposal consists of the following components, described in greater detail in sections immediately following this listing.

- Cover page - with brief program summary of 250 words;
- Detailed program description;
- Faculty vitae, research and external support;
- Students: admissions criteria, support;
- Facilities;
- Costs and resources, e.g.:
  - Library
  - Student Services
  - Research
  - Student Aid
  - Sources of Funding
  - Enrollment Projections
- Ongoing assurance of program quality;
- Site visit evaluation report on the proposed program prepared by a team of reviewers selected by the campus, system administration and the New York State Education Department (for non-doctoral programs, only the campus and system administration are involved in selection of the external evaluators.);
- Campus response to the site visit report; and
- Draft background statement/brief abstract of the program for an amendment to the University's master plan, in those cases where what is being proposed is either a doctoral program or the first use of a degree or general HEGIS category on a campus.

### **IV. Content of the Program Proposal**

A. Cover page. For the format and information to be given on the cover page, see sample cover page in Appendix B.

B. Document describing the proposed program. This is by far the most important part of the program proposal. Care should be given to insure proper and detailed information for each topic.

1. A full description of the program, including program purpose, structure and content and

prospective catalog course descriptions:

Give, in detail, requirements for program admission through degree completion.

2. A description of the impact of the proposed new graduate program on other degree and certificate programs, especially any undergraduate programs, presently offered by the proposing department:
  - a. Will access to or time-to-graduate from existing undergraduate programs be reduced?
  - b. What is the present student/faculty ratio for the department? How will it change as a result of the introduction of the proposed new graduate program?
3. A list, by semester, of all graduate courses to be taught in the first three years;
4. Procedures for academic advising, and for supervision and evaluation of students' progress through degree completion;
5. A description of significant resources and support programs, inside and outside the University, to be used by the members of the program.

C. Faculty

1. Append vitae of present faculty members who will implement the program and an outline of qualifications deemed necessary for additional faculty to be recruited, if any. Indicate each faculty member's rank and full-time or part-time status and for which courses each faculty member will be responsible. Also indicate who will be the program director or coordinator. Faculty vitae should include:
  - a. Rank and status;
  - b. Educational and employment background;
  - c. Professional affiliations and activities;
  - d. Important awards and recognition;
  - e. Publications; and
  - f. Brief description of research projects.
2. Indicate changes in the faculty for the next three years:
  - a. What new positions or replacement positions has the administration authorized?
  - b. What reductions, if any, are foreseen?
  - c. Name the new appointments, retirements, resignations, terminations, promotions, and tenure decisions. Indicate any increase or decrease in the number of appointments.
3. Doctoral programs have special information requirements from both the University and the New York State Education Department. By utilizing the New York State Education Department tables which are included with these guidelines, SUNY campuses will satisfy these requirements at once for the New York State Education Department and the State University.

For Doctoral Programs only: complete Table 1, Faculty Members Directly Associated with the Proposed Doctoral Program, which provides data on members of the department in which the program is to be offered and/or to faculty in the department who could serve as major professors and Table 2\*, Other Faculty Associated with the Proposed Doctoral Program (e.g., collaborative programs, master's programs), which refers to faculty in other departments who provide a significant amount of instruction and/or serve as members of supervisory committees for students in the program.

4. Submit information on faculty grant support. Provide complete data on current and pending support. Specify:

- a. Title and purpose of grant, e.g., research, training, or facilities/equipment;
- b. Names of principal investigator(s);
- c. Name of funding agency or source; total amount of award; and
- d. Dates of grant period.

D. Students

1. Describe the criteria and procedures for admission to the proposed program.
2. Describe the type of student body to be served. Of particular interest are the following: geographic and academic origins of students; proportions of women and minority group members; foreign students and students for whom English is a second language. If special provisions or requirements are made for the latter, and for special admissions in any categories, describe them.
3. Describe the types and amounts of financial support anticipated. Indicate the proportion of the student body in each category of support, including those receiving no support.
4. Complete Tables 4 and 5, Student Characteristics (Table 4)\*; Projected Enrollment in the Proposed Program (Table 5)\* (these tables meet requirements for enrollment planning from system administration and the New York State Education Department).

E. Facilities

- 1. Provide a brief description of both currently available and anticipated increased needs for:
    - a. General and departmental library holdings and acquisitions;
    - b. Access to off-campus research materials;
    - c. Research and laboratory facilities and equipment;
    - d. Computer facilities and services;
    - e. Technical and secretarial services for students and faculty; and
    - f. Office, classroom and study space.
  2. Describe special support facilities and unique resources.
  3. Complete Table 6, Projected Capital Expenditures for the Proposed Program\*.

F. Costs and Resources

1. Complete Table 3, Projected Staff for the Proposed Program\*.
2. Complete Table 7, Projected Expenditures for the Proposed Program\*.
3. Complete Table 8, Projected Expenditures for the Proposed Program in Other Departments\*.
4. Complete Table 9, Projected Revenue Related to the Proposed Program\*.

\*Tables required by the New York State Education Department

G. Source of Program Funding (operating budget)

1. Reallocation within Institution #

Faculty and staff FTE Lines \$ \_\_\_\_\_

2. Incremental Funding ##

Faculty and staff FTE Lines \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Total (Sum of G1 and G2) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# Correlate the information on reallocation with that supplied in answer to B.2 regarding potential impact on undergraduate programs.

## Indicate specifically the expected sources of any incremental funding.

H. Program Enrollment

1. Total Headcount \_\_\_\_\_
2. Total Annual Average FTE \_\_\_\_\_

This information should be consistent with the data on the cover page. Since this expected enrollment may affect the future campus enrollment composition and totals, estimate the impact this program may have on campus total enrollments and the relative percentage distribution by broad discipline categories.

I. Academic Quality Assurance

1. How will program quality be maintained and monitored?

a. Describe provisions for regular program review.

b. If this is a professional program for which special accreditation is to be sought, provide the name(s) of the accrediting agency(ies) and a timetable for completing the accrediting process. If special accreditation will not be sought, explain why.

2. For doctoral programs: What is the potential for this program to achieve national prominence and distinction?

J. Site Visit Evaluation Report

1. Instructions for the campus

a. Once the full preliminary program proposal is prepared, the graduate officer on the campus, working with the relevant department, compiles a list of names and background information on possible out-of-state reviewers for the program. This system of peer review is designed to encourage academic excellence and to ensure quality in graduate education within the University and in New York State.

b. The campus initiates the external review procedure by contacting the office of academic affairs, system administration, which will coordinate the selection of reviewers. In the case of non-doctoral graduate programs, the campus and system administration agree on reviewers. In the case of doctoral programs, it is the campus, system administration and the doctoral evaluation project at the New York State Education Department which cooperate in the selection of reviewers. In considering new graduate programs for approval and registration, the University, as well as the New York State Regents, are primarily concerned with the criteria of high quality and need. Only proposed programs with clear potential for achieving high quality and meeting the needs of the discipline and society will be granted registration.

• 2. Instructions for the Proposal Evaluator

The proposal evaluation report (Appendix C) is one of the most important components of a review. Your task as a proposal evaluator is to examine the program proposal and related materials, respond to the questions in the evaluation report form and submit a report which speaks to the quality of and need for the program. Your evaluation report should be forwarded to the institution for review and comment. It will then become part of the full program proposal. After approval by the Board of Trustees of the University, the report and the institution's response to it will be transmitted to the New York State Education Department with the institution's request for program registration. The report must aim for completeness, accuracy and objectivity.

K. Campus Response to the Site Visit Report

The evaluation report is followed in the final program proposal by the campus response to the report, which contains comments on any recommendations made by the external evaluators. The campus should address all of the evaluators' concerns, indicating those which have been adopted, will be adopted, or reasons why they cannot be adopted within the context of the University or the particular campus.

L. Local Resolutions and Support Documents

Local resolutions and support documents may also be included in the full program proposal.

M. Background statement/brief abstract of the Program for Amendment to the University's Master Plan

Amendment of the University's master plan in the form of a Trustees' Resolution is required for all doctoral programs, for certain licensure-qualifying programs, and for those master's programs which represent a first use of the master's degree on a campus, or the first campus entry into a HEGIS discipline. Appended to the resolution to be passed by the University Board of Trustees is a brief summary (1-2 pages) of program information concerning the proposed amendment, under the heading "Background." It begins with a statement regarding the effect of the Board's approval of the resolution. The expanded University



Background Statement, as described below, will now also serve as the draft abstract which will be circulated at a later date by the New York State Education Department.

After the program has been approved by the University Board of Trustees and forwarded for review and registration to the New York State Education Department, the abstract is sent by the department's bureau of planning to other New York public, independent, and proprietary degree-granting institutions as the basis for their comments and advice on the need and demand for the proposed program and its potential effect on other institutions.

Elements which should be incorporated in the new, composite University Background/New York State Education Department Abstract include:

- 1. Brief description of the nature of the program
    - general description of the curriculum
    - title, HEGIS code, degree/diploma/certificate
  2. Requirements for admission to the program;
  3. Nature of the prospective student body (geographic origins, age, racial/ethnic characteristics, other pertinent information);
  4. What its graduates are expected to do;
  5. The demand for such graduates;
  6. The projected enrollment for the first five years (full- and part-time);
  7. The resources required, and how those resources will be provided; and
  8. Concluding statement describing the relationship of the proposed program to the mission of the campus.

#### **V. Combined Degrees Programs**

Since the combined bachelor's/master's programs require separate registration, specific proposals must be submitted for each combined degree program. Even if the proposed combined degree program is composed of one or more previously registered programs, the materials listed below must be submitted:

- 1. Program title and suggested HEGIS code number for the combined degree program;
  2. Titles and program code numbers of the currently registered programs which are to be combined;
  3. Existing program juxtaposed with the combined program displayed clearly in tabular format the;
  4. General requirements for program completion (total credit hours in major, in a second field, in liberal arts, etc.); and
  5. Specific program requirements:
    - a. Limitations imposed on admission to combined degree program in order to restrict to those students with exceptional academic records. Include description of admission requirements and administrative approval;

- b. List all required courses showing number of credits whether graduate or undergraduate, when and how often they are offered;
- c. Indicate the number of undergraduate and graduate elective credits required;
- d. Indicate the number of semesters of full-time study required for program completion at the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- e. State all other program requirements such as thesis, comprehensive examination, field experience, project and residence; and
- f. Describe the means by which program quality at both degree levels is assured in spite of time-shortened aspect of the program.

## **VI. Advanced Certificate (Graduate Certificate)**

The advanced certificate, known informally as the graduate certificate, may be proposed for any post-baccalaureate curriculum which does not lead to a degree. Such programs are ultimately forwarded to the New York State Education Department for registration purposes only. The advanced certificate shows great variation in the number of credits required, but its salient feature is that all courses involved must be applicable to a registered graduate degree program.

Students may be enrolled directly into the program or may be drawn from those enrolled in other programs.

Because the courses are part of approved graduate programs and the faculty is affiliated with such programs, graduate certificates may follow an abbreviated proposal review and approval process. An external review is not mandatory for graduate certificates but may be advisable in some cases. This will be indicated in the response to the letter of intent. Generally included in the graduate certificate process are the following components:

- Standard letter of intent;
- Abbreviated proposal including descriptions of:
  - Rationale for the certificate, which also identifies the registered graduate programs to which the courses apply;
  - Curriculum, with course descriptions drawn from the campus graduate catalog (for each new course proposed, a syllabus is required);
  - Faculty – credentials, course responsibilities and vitae;
  - Students; and
  - Resources and support programs.

However, there is some flexibility in this process and variations on this model are possible. If the campus is considering an advanced certificate, the graduate officer should contact the assistant provost for graduate programs at the office of academic programs and research to discuss the optimal way to proceed.

In view of the complex and frequently changing licensure requirements for programs in the health sciences, graduate certificate program proposals in these fields may be treated differently; these should also be discussed with system administration well in advance of submission.

## **VII. Overview of the Full Process for Doctoral Program Review and Approval**

Steps in the new doctoral program review and approval process for the campus, system administration and the New York State Education Department

(Steps 1-8 at the University)

1. Letter of intent from campus president to system administration (provost);

2. Response to letter of intent from system administration;
3. Preparation by campus of preliminary program proposal for review by site visitors;
4. Coordinated selection of external reviewers by:
  - Campus (department to work through graduate dean);
  - System administration (assistant provost for academic programs), and
  - New York State Education Department (Doctoral Review Project Coordinator).
5. Submission to system administration (provost) of full program proposal, which includes reviewers' report and campus' response to that report;
6. Review at system administration of full proposal;
7. Preparation by system administration and campus of master plan amendment for Board of Trustees approval;
8. Forwarding of proposal, with master plan approval, to the New York State Education Department by system administration provost;

(Steps 9-13 at New York State Education Department and Governor)

9. Review by the New York State Education Department of proposal and its statewide impact; preparation for review by the New York State Board of Regents;
10. Approval of program by board of regents and forwarding it to the Governor (New York State Division of the Budget);
11. Review of program by division of the budget for fiscal implications;
12. Governor's notification of program approval to the New York State Department of Education and system administration;
13. Registration of the program by the New York State Education Department.

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## Forms

[Table 1](#) - Data on Faculty Members Directly Associated with the Proposed Doctoral Program

[Table 3](#) - Projected Staff for the Proposed Program

[Table 2](#) - Data on Other Faculty Associated with the Proposed Doctoral Program

[Table 4](#) - Student Characteristics

[Table 5](#) - Projected Enrollment for the Proposed Program

[Table 6](#) - Projected Capital Expenditures for the Proposed Program

[Table 7](#) - Projected Expenditures for the Proposed Program

[Table 8](#) - Projected Expenditures for the Proposed Program in Other Departments

[Table 9](#) - Projected Revenue Related to the Proposed Program

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### **Related Procedures**

There are no related procedures relevant to this procedure.

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### **Other Related Information**

There is no other information relevant to this procedure.

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### **Authority**

[8 NYCRR §3.50](#) (Authorized degree title and abbreviation)

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### **History**

Memorandum to presidents from the office of the vice chancellor for academic programs, policy and planning, dated November 19, 1984.

Memorandum to presidents from the office of the vice chancellor for academic programs, dated October 21, 1974.

Memorandum to presidents, from the office of the vice chancellor for academic programs, dated October 1, 1973.

Guidelines for Evaluations of Graduate Programs dated November 30, 1972.

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### **Appendices**

[Appendix A](#) - Steps for Graduate Program Approval

[Appendix B](#) - University Cover Page and Summary Sheet.

[Appendix C](#) - Evaluation Report Form for Graduate Program Proposals

[Appendix D](#) - Samples of Model Master Plan Amendment Background Statements & Program Abstracts

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