

TITLE: The Undergraduate Curriculum Council

AUTHOR: Chief Academic Officer

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EFFECTIVE DATE: December 9, 2022

PURPOSE: To establish a University Council to review and recommend curriculum decisions at the undergraduate level to ensure that implementation of each decision contributes to the overall goals of Mississippi University for Women.

REVIEWER AND Chief Academic Officer, Academic Council, and Undergraduate Curriculum Council

REVIEW DATE: Fall 2027 and every five years thereafter

OPERATING DETAILS:

Introduction: Policies of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) and the Principles of Accreditation of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC) underscore the importance of joint responsibility of faculty and administration for the approval of academic programs and curriculum. Faculty have primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum, ensuring that programs remain current and are appropriate for the students served by the institution. Review and approval by the administration ensures that programs are consistent with the mission and institutional priorities and that the university has the resources to support quality programs. Hereinafter the term “College” refers to the Colleges, School, and the University library, unless otherwise noted.

Curriculum Approval Process

Curriculum and program additions, changes, and deletions should be initiated by the discipline faculty under the leadership of the program coordinator and approved through the College’s curriculum process. If approved by the Dean, proposals will be sent to the Undergraduate Curriculum Council (UCC) for consideration according to the terms of this policy.

Courses: Course additions, deletions, or changes will be reviewed by UCC and sent forward to the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) with the UCC’s recommendation, noting any special concerns, such as the course’s impact on programs outside the discipline or special budgetary considerations. The CAO will make a recommendation to the President, who will approve, disapprove, or return the proposal to the faculty for revisions.

General Education Curriculum: Proposals to add or delete specific courses in the General Education Curriculum, or other minor changes to the General Education Curriculum, will be reviewed by the UCC, and the recommendation of UCC will go to Academic Council for consideration. Academic Council will make a recommendation to the CAO, who in turn will recommend action to the President. Major revisions to the General Education curriculum will also require a vote of the full faculty to recommend action to the President.

Academic Programs: Proposals to add, rename, consolidate, suspend, or delete academic programs, or certain changes to the mode of delivery of academic programs, require approval by the IHL Board and may require a Substantive Change application for approval by SACSCOC before a program can be implemented. The path for approval of all academic program proposals (addition, modification, deletion, change of mode of delivery) includes the discipline faculty and College, Dean, UCC, Academic Council, CAO, and President. Once a program proposal is approved by the President, it must be submitted to IHL for action according to IHL policy. If approved by IHL, SACSCOC must be notified of the program prior to implementation, and if required, a Substantive Change Application must be submitted and approved prior to implementation. The President and CAO are responsible for submitting proposals to IHL for action. The President and university SACSCOC liaison are responsible for submitting notifications to SACSCOC.

Prior to initiating program proposals, faculty should familiarize themselves with current IHL and SACSCOC application requirements and deadlines. The CAO and SACSCOC liaison can advise faculty on application procedures.

Other Program Changes: The addition, modification, and deletion of academic minors or concentrations should follow the internal process for academic program approval but do not require IHL or SACSCOC approval. Certificate programs should also follow the internal process. Certificate programs should be reported to IHL but do not require IHL approval.

The UCC may return any item to its originator if the Council members determine they need additional information or clarification before making a final recommendation.

OPERATING DETAILS:

1. Voting members of the Undergraduate Curriculum Council shall include three faculty members from each College, one from each School and one faculty member from the Library, nominated by the Dean and appointed by the President of the University based on the recommendation of the Chief Academic Officer. Representatives from a College must be from different departments within the College.

Colleges are encouraged to rotate membership every three (3) to five (5) years.

2. Ex officio members shall include: the Chief Academic Officer, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Registrar, the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison, and one student representative. The student shall be appointed by the UCC chair's Dean from that College.
3. Any voting member unable to attend a meeting is expected to send a substitute representative from their College who shall have voting rights. Any other proxy vote will not be allowed. A quorum consists of a simple majority of voting members.
4. The UCC chair's term begins with the fall semester each year and extends through the summer terms of that academic year. The chair shall have served as a member of the Council during the previous academic year. The vice chair of the Council will rotate annually among the Colleges in alphabetical order, with the vice chair automatically becoming chair after having served one year on the Council. The secretary shall be the Administrative Assistant for the Chief Academic Officer. The Council may name such other officers as it deems necessary.
5. Concurrence of a two-thirds majority of voting members present is required for a motion to pass.
6. The functions of this Council are:
 - a. To recommend to the Chief Academic Officer the approval or disapproval of proposals to add, change, or delete courses. The Council shall recommend deactivation and reactivation of courses.
 - b. To recommend to Academic Council the approval or disapproval of proposals that would require reporting to or approval by the IHL Board and/or SACSCOC to add, change, or delete degrees, majors, minors, or concentrations, including changes in modes of delivery or location.
 - c. To recommend to Academic Council proposals to add or delete courses in the General Education Curriculum. (Major revisions to the General Education Curriculum require a vote of the full faculty and approval by the IHL Board.)
 - d. To examine proposals sent to the Council for meeting standards as formulated by the appropriate College. These shall be assessed in accordance with the overall goals of Mississippi University for Women.

- e. To examine new course proposals and changes to existing courses to avoid duplication of course content across Colleges.
 - f. To examine changes in courses that affect students in a College other than the one where the course is taught. All modifications to existing courses shall be presented to the Council for review to determine their effect on students in other Colleges and to maintain consistency with existing course offerings. If the Council determines that modification to an existing course affects students in any other College, the Council shall recommend approval or disapproval of the proposal to the Chief Academic Officer. If the Council determines that a modification to an existing course affects only students within the College in which it is taught, the proposal shall be returned to the College and no further action will be required for the modification to go into effect other than publication of this determination in the Council's minutes.
7. Regular meeting times shall be established by the Council at the beginning of each semester. The schedule of meetings shall be distributed to all voting and non-voting members of the Undergraduate Curriculum Council and Deans. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the chair with appropriate advance notification.
8. Proposals for new courses or other curriculum changes must conform to the approved format established by the Undergraduate Curriculum Council and be accompanied by a signed cover letter on official letterhead from the Chief Academic Officer, if appropriate, or the Dean of the College that holds responsibility for the course or program, indicating approval by the College. All portions of the appropriate proposal must be completed prior to submission. All proposals must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant to the Chief Academic Officer at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the scheduled meeting. The Administrative Assistant will distribute the proposals to Council members at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting. Presentations of proposals must be made by a faculty member in the discipline submitting the proposal.
9. Action that could be taken by the Council on a proposal would be:
- a. to recommend approval
 - b. to recommend approval with editorial changes
 - c. to recommend disapproval with written rationale

- d. to table and return to the originator with a list of related questions and/or suggestions.

Until courses are approved by the President, proposals and meeting minutes are not to be publicized.

10. Within seven (7) calendar days of the meeting date, recommendations from the Chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Council will be sent to the Chief Academic Officer for approval.
11. Within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the Undergraduate Curriculum Council's recommendations, the Chief Academic Officer shall recommend to the President either approval or disapproval of the original proposals, with modifications if necessary.
12. The Chief Academic Officer shall communicate to the Chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Council and the Academic Deans the decision of the President within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of the Chief Academic Officer's recommendations. If additional information is requested by the President, a decision shall be made within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of that information. If no decision has been made within this timeframe, a written rationale for the delay may be requested by the chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Council.