



THE CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROCESS

Office of the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning

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Table of Contents

THE CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROCESS.....	2
CAVEATS.....	3
CURRICULUM DOSSIER TYPES & PERMITTED CHANGES.....	4
Minor Editorial Change (Graduate and Undergraduate).....	4
Dossier Workflow-CCMS Minor Editorial Change.....	4
Dossier Workflow-CCMS Regular Curriculum Change.....	4
A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR MINOR EDITORIAL CHANGES.....	5
REGULAR CURRICULUM CHANGE PROCESS FOR EXISTING PROGRAMS	7
Undergraduate Program Changes.....	7
Program Changes (Graduate and/or Undergraduate).....	7
Non-program Changes (Undergraduate).....	8
Non-program Changes (Graduate and/or Undergraduate).....	8
Deletion (Closing) of Existing Programs (Graduate and/or Undergraduate).....	8
A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR REGULAR CURRICULUM CHANGES.....	9
NEW PROGRAM CREATION.....	12
NEW PROGRAMS: LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)	12
FOLLOW UP.....	13
SOME FINAL TIPS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF DOSSIERS.....	14

THE CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROCESS

This document provides a view of the curriculum approval process steps and some recommendations to think about as departments are preparing to make changes to or create new programs.

Things to think about before beginning to make changes or create new programs

Departments should first consider the type of changes that they are proposing. If the proposal involves making changes to an existing program that are small or significant but do not require external approval, or more significant changes that do require external approval, or the creation of a new program, it will have an impact on the type of dossier that would need to be presented through the curriculum process.

Regular updating or housekeeping changes are submitted through the internal process. If there are significant changes that affect a large portion of an existing program, it may require submission to the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire (BCI) through its Commission d'évaluation des projets de programmes (CEP) for a modulated process of approval, while all new programs leading to a bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctorate, for example, are subject to a full evaluation of the CEP. Those proposals requiring external approval must be created following the requirements of the CEP. All Teacher Education programs require submission for approval following the process of the Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement (CAPFE).

Additionally, any department considering making changes to its graduate programs should contact the School of Graduate Studies prior to beginning the process in order to discuss the best action plan for the various graduate programs. This preliminary consideration will significantly help departments in creating solid proposals that will be able to move quickly through the process. This is especially important in the case of new program proposals.

Resources for Curriculum Innovation and New Programs

Departments and faculties may be interested in exploring the following topics as they make updates to current programs, and as they plan for the development of new programs:

- integration of applied skills and experiential learning opportunities such as capstone projects, work-integrated learning projects, internship and practicum courses, professional development, community engagement opportunities, and teaching assistantships.
- use of blended learning (blended learning combines in-class instruction with a variety of eLearning components) or online instruction, online delivery, etc.).
- use of flexible models, such as stackable degree structures. Stackable degree structures allow for students to start by taking a shorter credential, such as a certificate or diploma, as the first step work towards the completion of a full degree. This model allows the credits earned from the shorter credential, such as a certificate, to count towards the completion of a degree program.
- growing or strengthening links with community collaborators, external organizations, and other universities.

- collaboration with another department or faculty, team teaching, interdisciplinary exchanges, international components.
- integration of undergraduate and graduate research initiatives.

Additional resources can be found on the Office of the Provost and the Office of Experiential Learning websites:

- <https://www.concordia.ca/provost/resources/curriculum.html>
- <https://www.concordia.ca/academics/experiential-learning/faculty-staff.html>

The various tracks to follow:

- The curriculum approval process comprises three different tracks:
- Minor Editorial Changes (for Existing Programs)
- Regular Curriculum Changes for (Existing Programs)
- New Program (Regular Process)
- New Program (Fast-Track Process)

Note: Please see the [Office of the Provost](#) website for details regarding the LOI Process and templates for new program proposals.

CAVEATS

- 1) In view of the coordinating function of the Academic Programs Committee, it is the responsibility of Faculties to bring to the attention of APC all those changes which can reasonably be seen as overlapping the curriculum or programs of another Faculty, and in those cases to indicate the nature of consultations undertaken.
- 2) All submissions from the Faculties and the School of Graduate Studies must identify the resource implications for all curriculum changes.
- 3) All curriculum changes which are not considered as minor editorial changes are to be presented by way of the regular curriculum approval process.

CURRICULUM DOSSIER TYPES & PERMITTED CHANGES

Minor Editorial Change (Graduate and Undergraduate)

- Correction of spelling and grammatical errors.
- Changing the text layout (no content changes).
- Correcting an error in the calendar text that resulted from a clearly identified error made during the curriculum change and approval process.
- Corrections to components.
- Minor corrections to text to align with changes made by another unit (if a department changes its name, the name change will be made throughout the calendar, in every section where it is mentioned)

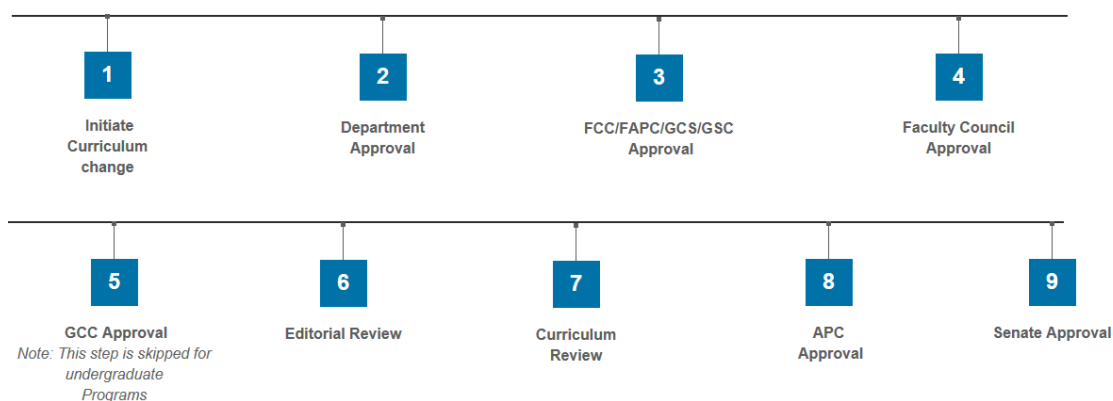
Dossier Workflow-CCMS Minor Editorial Change



Regular Curriculum Change (Undergraduate and Graduate) Dossier:

- Course Changes (new course, changes to existing courses, course deletions)
- Program Changes (changes to program requirements, program deletions, changes to defined groups, defined group deletions)
- Regulation Changes (changes or deletion of admission requirements or university regulations)

Dossier Workflow-CCMS Regular Curriculum Change



New Programs:

For details regarding the approval steps for new programs, please see the LOI Process documents and templates available on the [Office of the Provost](#) website.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR MINOR EDITORIAL CHANGES

Step 1: The department prepares a CCMS dossier identifying the editorial changes and a rationale addressed to the Associate Dean, Curriculum of the appropriate Faculty.

Step 2: The Associate Dean, Curriculum of the Faculty, or delegate, reviews the proposed changes:

- If he/she deems the changes not to be editorial, the dossier is returned to the department to be submitted following the Regular Curriculum Change process.
- If he/she is in agreement that the changes are editorial, he/she approves the changes, and completes the Summary of Discussion field in the CCMS:
 - In the case of undergraduate proposals, the Summary of Discussion field is addressed to the Vice- Provost, Teaching and Learning, or delegate.
 - In the case, of graduate proposals, the memo is addressed to both the Associate Dean, Curriculum, School of Graduate Studies, and to the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, or the appropriate delegates for each unit.

The proposal is committed through the CCMS, to the University Curriculum Coordinator and the School of Graduate Studies, as appropriate.

Step 3: In the case of graduate proposals, the Associate Dean, Curriculum in the School of Graduate Studies, or delegate, reviews the proposed changes and decides whether he/she agrees that they are editorial:

- If not in agreement with the changes as proposed, the proposal is returned to the Associate Dean, Curriculum in the Faculty, or delegate, either for revision or in order to follow the Regular Curriculum Change process, with a copy to the University Curriculum Coordinator through the CCMS.
- If in agreement with the changes proposed, the proposal is addressed and submitted to the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, or delegate, through the CCMS to the University Curriculum Coordinator, with a copy to the Associate Dean, Curriculum in the Faculty, or appropriate delegate.

Step 4: The Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, or delegate, reviews the proposed changes and decides whether he/she agrees that they are editorial:

- If not in agreement with the changes as proposed:
 - in the case of undergraduate proposals, the proposal is returned to the Associate Dean, Curriculum, or delegate, in the Faculty either for revision or in order to follow the Regular Curriculum Change process.
 - In the case of graduate proposals, the proposal is returned to the Associate Dean, Curriculum, School of Graduate Studies, or delegate, who returns the dossier to the Associate Dean, Curriculum, or delegate, in the Faculty either for revision of in order to follow the Regular Curriculum Change process.

- If in agreement with the changes proposed, the University Curriculum Coordinator submits the changes to the appropriate calendar editor via the CCMS for inclusion in the calendar according to the identified calendar year.

REGULAR CURRICULUM CHANGE PROCESS FOR EXISTING PROGRAMS

Program changes constitute degree program and non-degree program changes involving a broad spectrum of changes. These may include anything from changes to entry requirements, course numbers, or deletion of courses. The full list of potential changes is detailed below.

Curriculum changes constitute, but are not limited to the following:

Graduate Program Changes

The following types of changes are tracked through the School of Graduate Studies only.

- Degree program entry requirements
 - Graduate programs, diplomas, and qualifying year programs
 - Previous degree and equivalencies required
 - Performance standards
 - Other (e.g., Concordia University courses as entry prerequisites)
 - Changes in university-wide or Faculty-wide, graduate degree requirements, entry or graduation requirements

Undergraduate Program Changes

- Undergraduate degree programs and certificates (entry requirements)
 - CEGEP DEC profiles
 - Performance requirements
 - Other (e.g., Concordia University courses as entry prerequisites)
- Undergraduate degree (concentrations, plus certificates, diplomas) requirements
 - total number of credits
 - structure and content of program requirements
 - performance requirements
 - residence requirements
 - graduation requirements
- Minors and lesser (non-degree programs or clusters)

Program Changes (Graduate and/or Undergraduate)

- Degree program requirements
 - splitting credits in a course; e.g., changing a 6-credit course into two 3-credit courses
 - addition, deletion, substitution of a course in a series of course options; e.g., “6 credits chosen from...”
- Addition or deletion of required courses

Non-program Changes (Undergraduate)

- Changes in university-wide or Faculty-wide, degree requirements, entry or graduation requirements

Non-program Changes (Graduate and/or Undergraduate)

- Changes in academic regulations (University-wide and Faculty-specific)
- Changes in “blanket” prerequisites which control access to whole categories of courses
- Addition of new elective or “service” courses
- Deletion of elective courses
 - (Deletion of courses with a designated “service” function vis-à-vis students in other programs or Faculties requires consultation with affected units.)
- Changes to existing courses
 - numbers
 - titles
 - prerequisites
 - credit values (only where no net change is involved; e.g., splitting a 6-credit course into 3-credit courses)
 - descriptions
 - notes

Deletion (Closing) of Existing Programs (Graduate and/or Undergraduate)

This refers to the deletion from the Calendar (i.e., a permanent closure) as opposed to the suspension of admission to a program (which might be foreseen as temporary).

REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Provide an executive summary indicating whether the recommendations identified in the previous appraisal process were implemented, where available.
- 2) Define (or address any changes to) the foundational abilities that the program expects of entering and graduating students, which must be clearly communicated to students and included on the departmental website.
- 3) Include revised curriculum maps¹.
- 4) Include a current Library Resource Implications Report, if substantive changes to the curriculum affect the library holdings.

¹ Curriculum mapping involves articulating the targeted learning outcomes that students achieve by virtue of completing an academic program, and tracing the curricular mechanisms that are put in place to achieve these outcomes. Curriculum mapping guidelines may be found at <http://www.concordia.ca/about/administration-governance/office-provost-vp-academic-affairs/teaching-learning/curriculum.html>

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR REGULAR CURRICULUM CHANGES

Note: For major revisions to graduate programs, it is recommended that departments or programs consult with the Faculty and School of Graduate Studies' Associate Deans, Curriculum, prior to the finalization of the proposal.

Step 1: In accordance with the approved Faculty's Strategic Academic Plans, the department prepares a proposal. The department's covering letter should address the following, specifically:

- The changes that are being proposed.
- The reason for each change.
- Resource implications, if any, positive or negative.

In the case of **a major reorganization of a program**, the proposal should also provide an executive summary of **the most recent department appraisal report** (with the implementation schedule and a plan to address the program's current strengths and weaknesses). Along with the proposal, the department should submit:

1. The program's new or revised learning objectives (if applicable).
2. The program's new curriculum mapping (if applicable). (See *Curriculum Mapping* document.)
3. Evidence of at least one of the following components: Experiential learning opportunities (internship), capstone project, eLearning module, community engagement, interdisciplinarity, French language competency, as applicable.
4. For joint and/or interdisciplinary programs: Evidence of consultation and collaboration between and among external universities, or internal units (if the proposal is an interdisciplinary program with another unit).
5. For all programs: Evidence of consultation, as required (if the change will have an impact on a program in another unit).

NOTE: The implementation dates of all curriculum proposals are effective on the dates that have been approved by Senate, for practical purposes, for undergraduate curriculum, May 1, September 1 or January 1; for graduate curriculum, Summer [20XX], Fall 20XX or Winter [20XX].

Step 2: The proposal is submitted to the Department General Assembly (if applicable), or Department Curriculum Committee (DCC) for review and approval. If the proposal is not approved, it is sent back to the department for further consideration/revision. If approved, the proposal is forwarded to the Faculty Curriculum Committee (FCC), as well as the University Curriculum Coordinator.

Step 3: The FCC studies the proposal. If the proposal is not approved, it is sent back to the department for revision before being resubmitted to the FCC. If approved, the submission is sent to Faculty Council (FC) for discussion and approval, as well as to the University Curriculum Coordinator.

Step 4: The FC studies and discusses the proposal. If the proposal is not approved, it is sent back to the department for revision.

- In the case of undergraduate curriculum, if approved, the proposal is sent to the University Curriculum Coordinator, addressed to the Chair of the Academic Programs Committee (APC), with a **letter of support** from the Dean included as a supporting document in the CCMS. Additionally, the Summary of Rationale for the dossier should include an executive summary. The date the program was approved by FC should be indicated in the Summary of Committee Discussion field when the dossier is at the Faculty Council approval step.
- In the case of graduate curriculum, if approved, the submission is sent to the Chair of Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC), as well as to the University Curriculum Coordinator, with a **letter of support** from the Dean included as a supporting document in the CCMS. Additionally, the Summary of Rationale for the dossier should include an executive summary. The date the program was approved by FC should be indicated in the Summary of Committee Discussion field when the dossier is at the Faculty Council approval step.

Step 5: The University Curriculum Coordinator reviews the proposal and submits recommended modifications to be made to the relevant Associate Dean, Curriculum (graduate and/or undergraduate), or delegate.

Step 6: In the case of graduate curriculum:

- a) The GCC holds a meeting to review the proposal and recommends any revisions to the Faculty's Associate Dean, Curriculum (who attends the meeting)
- b) The Faculty requests the department to make changes and provide the Faculty with a revised proposal. The Faculty submits a revised proposal to the Chair of the GCC, as well as to the University Curriculum Coordinator. The GCC Chair reviews the proposal and prepares a written report/memo which may outline any additional changes and/or recommendations. The GCC Chair submits the report to the University Curriculum Coordinator as well as to the Secretary of the Council of the School of Graduate Studies (CSGS).

Step 7: APC studies the proposal and makes recommendations it deems necessary for the ultimate consideration of Senate. If the proposal is not approved, it is sent back to the Faculty for revision. The Faculty Associate Dean, Curriculum, or delegate, follows up with the department if any changes are required, and a revised proposal is submitted to the University Curriculum Coordinator. If the changes required are major, the dossier may be reconsidered by APC. The APC Chair and the University Curriculum Coordinator review the final version of the document and request modifications if necessary. A copy is submitted to the Senate Steering Committee for Senate's consideration.

Step 8: The Senate Steering Committee reviews documentation recommended by APC and decides whether to place it on the Senate agenda, or on the consent agenda.

Step 9: Senate reviews the proposal.

- If the proposal is removed from the consent agenda, Senate discusses the proposal. If the proposal is approved with changes being required, the Secretary of Senate informs the University Curriculum Coordinator. The Faculty provides the required changes to the University Curriculum Coordinator, who in turn, provides a final proposal to the Secretary of Senate and to the appropriate Calendar Editor, and in the case of graduate curriculum, to the Secretary of the GCC.
- If the proposal is approved by Senate outright, the Secretary of Senate sends a resolution to the appropriate bodies (i.e. various people in the Faculty concerned; in the case of graduate curriculum, to the Dean of SGS; the Provost; the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning (Chair of APC); the University Curriculum Coordinator; the appropriate Calendar Editor; and the University Registrar).

***All Teacher Education program curriculum changes** must be submitted to the Concordia Teacher Education Council (CTEC) and CAPFE (Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement).

Universities are asked to advise CAPFE whenever they wish to introduce a new program leading to teacher certification. CAPFE can provide advice from the outset and inform the university of any specific guidelines that should be followed.

BCI has the authority to approve new university programs. Should a new program lead to teacher certification, the recognition by CAPFE that it meets its criteria is also necessary. While a university may offer any new program it wishes, it cannot state that it leads to teacher certification unless it has also been accredited by CAPFE.

NEW PROGRAM CREATION

All new programs requiring submission to the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire (BCI) and the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche (MEESR) for approval, must follow Track C. Minors, certificates and diplomas do not require BCI or MEESR approval.

“Every new program should respond to a ‘cultural, socioeconomic, systemic and institutional relevance.’”

--MELS Criteria: Procedures for the assessment of proposed degree program (2005).

NEW PROGRAMS: LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)

Note: For the creation of new graduate programs, it is recommended that departments or programs consult with the Faculty and School of Graduate Studies' Associate Deans, Curriculum, prior to the finalization of the proposal.

In accordance with the approved Faculty's Strategic Academic Plans and the University's Strategic Research Plan, the department prepares a **Letter of Intent (see resources available on the [Office of the Provost website](#))**. The purpose of the Letter of Intent is to ensure that the new program supports the priorities of the Faculty and the University, to flag any potential barriers and to gain preliminary approval from the Dean of the Faculty and the Provost.

***All Teacher Education program curriculum changes** must be submitted to the Concordia Teacher Education Council (CTEC) and CAPFE (Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement). For Teacher Training Programs, see **Flowchart for internal process**.

Universities are asked to advise CAPFE whenever they wish to introduce a new program leading to teacher certification. CAPFE can provide advice from the outset and inform the university of any specific guidelines that should be followed.

BCI has the authority to approve new university programs. Should a new program lead to teacher certification, the recognition by CAPFE that it meets its criteria is also necessary. While a university may offer any new program it wishes, it cannot state that it leads to teacher certification unless it has also been accredited by CAPFE.

FOLLOW UP

Every new program should provide a short follow-up report to the Faculty Dean and the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs a minimum of three years following the entry of the initial cohort, depending upon the individual program length. The follow up addresses the following points: quality of training, skills acquired by students, student satisfaction, faculty satisfaction, program growth, and financial status of the program (please refer to original letter of intent budget chart).

SOME FINAL TIPS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF DOSSIERS

Before submitting dossiers, they should be reviewed for the following:

- Are the Summary of Discussion fields in the CCMS addressed from the appropriate authorities (Faculty Associate Dean/Department Chair/Unit Director, Dean of the Faculty/of School of Graduate Studies as appropriate?
- Is the dossier self-explanatory as to the curriculum change(s) being proposed? Do they indicate:
 - a) from which specific department/unit the changes originate?
 - b) the full program names being addressed?
 - c) for which academic calendar and implementation date the changes pertain?
 - d) how any resource implications will be addressed?
 - e) the approval dates of the legislative meeting?
- Does the dossier contain an accurate Summary of Rationale describing the changes being made?
- Does the RATIONALE on each PROGRAM and COURSE CHANGE FORM identify the reason for the specific changes being made?
- Do all the PROGRAM and COURSE CHANGE FORMS indicate the correct ACADEMIC CALENDAR YEAR in which the changes will appear?
- Are there any RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS as a result of the changes being presented? If so, they should be identified in this box. If there are none, indicate "None."
- Are the courses being modified included in any other programs in another department and/or Faculty identified in the IMPACT REPORT? If so, those individual programs should be indicated in the RATIONALE field on the COURSE CHANGE FORMS. As well, consultation **must** take place prior to making a change that affects another area.
- TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS AND MISSPELLED WORDS: Has the proposal been checked thoroughly. Always use the **Canadian spelling** of the word. The **CANADIAN OXFORD DICTIONARY** is the reference used by the University Communications Services. As well, the **Undergraduate Calendar Style Guide** provides guidelines for calendar text.

- In the case of NEW PROGRAMS, MAJOR CURRICULUM CHANGES and/or SPECIALIZED COURSES, has the LIBRARY been consulted relative to its holdings in support of this new initiative?

- Have all the changes requested by APC, the Faculty/School Council (and Council of the School of Graduate Studies in the case of graduate programs) been incorporated into the documents?