

Factors to Consider in Determining Whether a Proposed Change to an Existing Degree Program Should Instead Be Presented as a New Degree Program Request

DRAFT These guidelines are intended to assist an institution in determining whether a pending change to an existing degree program would necessitate a new degree program request. That decision is generally made after a holistic review of a number of factors that may be weighted differently for different situations. It is not a formula to dictate a decision, but rather a set of pointers to the most important factors that may, taken together, indicate a reasonable direction. Any one factor indicated below might signal the need to request the change as a new degree program instead of a change to the existing program. But in general, the more extensive the change/s, the more likely the need for a new degree program request. (This document should serve as a guide for institutional decision-making and does not need to be returned to the Coordinating Board.)

FACTOR	POINTS TO CONSIDER	MORE LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	COMMENTS
COST	More than \$2M during the first five years	✓		New degree program requests with new costs exceeding \$2 million during the first five years of the program are considered for approval by the Coordinating Board during a regular quarterly board meeting. If changes to an existing degree program would cost more than \$2 million during the first five years after the change/s, there is a reasonable likelihood that a request for a new degree program would be required, depending on the nature of the new costs.
	Less than \$2M during the first five years		✓	
PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION	Name change only No changes to the type of degree designator (e.g., EdD to PhD, MS to MBA, BA to BS, etc.); No changes to existing courses or completion requirements; No additional new courses; and No additional areas of employment opportunities for graduates.		✓	Some changes could lead to the need for a new degree program request, but others would more likely be an administrative change to the existing program. Factors should be considered together to determine the actual extent of the proposed change/s.
	Name change with other changes The name change would be associated with one or more other changes to the program. (See below for some important factors to consider.)	✓		

FACTOR	POINTS TO CONSIDER	MORE LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	COMMENTS
PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION, CONT.	CIP Code change			
	The CIP Code would change, but there would be no change in the degree designator.		✓	A change in CIP Code alone might require a new degree program request, but is less likely if the degree type (e.g., EdD to PhD, MS to MBA, BA to BS, etc.) and degree name/title (e.g., Chemistry, Applied Economics, Music, etc.) do not change.
	The CIP Code would change along with a change in the degree designator.	✓		
	The CIP Code would change, but there would be no change in the degree name.		✓	
	The CIP Code would change along with a change in the degree name/title.	✓		
	Change in degree designator (e.g., EdD to PhD, MS to MBA, BA to BS)			
	The focus/purpose of the degree would change.	✓		A change in degree designator can signal more pervasive changes in a program, especially at the doctoral level.
	The focus/purpose of the degree would not change.		✓	
	The completion requirements would change.	✓		
	The completion requirements would not change.		✓	
	Employment opportunities for graduates of the program would change.	✓		
	Employment opportunities for graduates of the program would not change.		✓	
	Change in administrative unit			
	The focus/purpose of the degree would change.	✓		A change in administrative unit need not trigger a new program request unless there are other changes to the program, including a change in the objectives/mission of the program. (See the FACULTY Factor for an additional consideration related to changes in administrative units).
	The focus/purpose of the degree would not change.		✓	
	The completion requirements would change.	✓		
	The completion requirements would not change.		✓	
	Employment opportunities for graduates of the program would change.	✓		
	Employment opportunities for graduates of the program would not change.		✓	
	Change in objectives/mission of existing program		✓	
	Change in method of delivery (e.g., adding on-line, hybrid, electronic-to-group, or off-campus delivery to an existing degree program)			✓

FACTOR	POINTS TO CONSIDER	MORE LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	COMMENTS
CURRICULUM	Courses common to all students in the degree program/plan			
	Courses required of all students currently total fewer than 30% of the total SCH required for the specific degree program/plan.	✓		An existing program whose curriculum would change as part of the request might require a new degree program request. The more extensive the changes in course requirements, the more likely the need for a new program request. Existing programs with little common course work may indicate a need for separate programs.
	The set of courses required for all students in the degree program (exclusive of undergraduate core curriculum courses) would change.	✓		
	The program would retain the same set of courses required for all students in the degree program, regardless of any designated electives or specialization tracks.		✓	Adding a set of designated or preferred electives that enhances or allows for specialization closely related to a common field of study/academic discipline is generally not sufficient reason to request a new program.
	Specializations (tracks, concentrations, focus areas, emphases, etc.)			
	More than three new courses would be needed.	✓		Specializations within a degree program are often identified by various configurations of designated or prescribed electives. Specializations should be closely connected to the degree program itself and the set of courses required of all students in the program, regardless of specialization.
	The number of SCH needed to complete the specific degree program requirements (exclusive of undergraduate core curriculum) would increase.	✓		
	A new specialization would be created that would require less than 50% of the specific degree program SCH requirements (exclusive of undergraduate core curriculum) .		✓	
More than three new courses would be added to an existing specialization.	✓			
ACCREDITATION, LICENSURE, & CERTIFICATION	A new or additional professional program accreditation would become available as a result of the proposed change/s.	✓		New or expanded accreditation, or additional oppprtunities for licensure or certification of graduates, could be a contributing factor to a decision to request a new degree program rather than to amend an existing one.
	A new or additional professional licensure or certification would become available to program graduates as a result of the proposed change/s.	✓		

FACTOR	POINTS TO CONSIDER	MORE LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	COMMENTS
FACULTY	New faculty would be needed to implement the proposed change.	✓		Number and areas of focus for any new faculty are important to consider when determining whether a change would warrant a new program request. This is especially sensitive when coupled with a change in administrative unit.
	New areas of expertise sought in additional faculty lines during the past three years have led to the change request.	✓		
	New areas of expertise sought in additional faculty lines during the upcoming three years could lead to an additional change request.	✓		
	Existing faculty would be reassigned to a different program or terminated. Other faculty would become responsible for the delivery of the program.	✓		
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATES	Additional/new employment opportunities would become available to graduates of the program as a result of the proposed change/s.	✓		Consider these factors in relation to the previous ones to determine how much difference the proposed change/s would make. While some additional employment opportunities in a closely-related or emerging field would not alone determine the need
	Additional certification/licensure opportunities would become available to graduates of the program as a result of the proposed change/s.	✓		