

**THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER INTERNAL POLICIES**

03.02.02.Z1.01 Establishing a New Academic Program

Approved (February 7, 2007)

Supplements System Regulation 03.02.02

1. OVERVIEW

This internal policy covers the review and approval process for the creation of a new academic program (i.e., academic degree or certificate¹) within the Texas A&M Health Science Center.

2. ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL

Before establishing a new academic program, a proposal must be developed to include the following elements²:

2.1 Needs Assessment: Information must address each of the following:

- 2.1.1 A demonstrated need for the proposed program in terms of present and future needs of the region and state;
- 2.1.2 Description of how the proposed program would complement and strengthen existing programs within the component and across the HSC;
- 2.1.3 *If* the proposed program represents a duplication of a similar program within the region and state, a rationale for its need;
- 2.1.4 Demonstrated student demand for the program and likelihood of a sufficient critical mass of qualified applicants; and,
- 2.1.5 Critical mass of qualified faculty and staff to be available to support high quality program.

If the request is for a doctoral program, the following must be addressed as well:

- 2.1.6 A demonstrated regional, state or national unmet need for doctoral graduates in the field;
- 2.1.7 Evidence that existing doctoral programs in Texas cannot accommodate additional students, access to existing programs is limited, or that expanding existing programs is not feasible; and

¹ Academic certificate programs (as opposed to Continuing Education Units) comprised of 15 semester credit hours or less will follow the process outlined below, but will not require approval by either the A&M System Board of Regents or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Should the requirements from the A&M System Board of Regents or the THECB change, the revised requirements will be followed.

² Based primarily on THECB requirements for Preliminary Authority to develop a new degree program.

2.1.8 Evidence of self-sustaining and excellence in master's level program in the field and/or programs in related and supporting areas.

2.2 Resources: Information must address each of the following:

- 2.2.1 Resources needed for start-up (e.g., administrative infrastructure, faculty and staff, facilities, equipment, library and related information technology);
- 2.2.2 Future expectations of financial support;
- 2.2.3 Plan for self-sufficiency.

A table summarizing the projected five-year costs and potential sources of funds must be included.

2.3 Program Description: Information must address each of the following:

- 2.3.1 Educational objectives;
- 2.3.2 Admission standards;
- 2.3.3 Certificate or degree requirements;
- 2.3.4 Effect on existing programs in the component; and
- 2.3.5 Program administration.

2.4 Governance: Information must address how the proposed academic program will fit within the organizational structure of the Health Science Center and the point of contact and responsibility for oversight and management of the proposed program.

2.5 Evaluation: Information to include but not limited to: proposed mechanisms and timeline for periodic review; strategies for monitoring start-up expenses; sources of funds; and steps in formal accreditation process, if required.

3. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

All proposals must be reviewed and approved in accordance with existing component guidelines regarding new program review. Once completed, the following steps should be followed:

- 3.1 Proposals will be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs for administrative review. Additional information or edits may be required at this juncture prior to progressing through the review process.
- 3.2 Following administrative review, the proposal will be presented to the members of the HSC Executive Committee and to the Faculty Senate for review and comment. Recommendations will be submitted to the President of the Health Science Center for final action.

3.3 Following Presidential approval, preliminary planning authority as well as final approval for the proposed academic program shall be sought from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board through the A&M System Board of Regents according to published system and state guidelines.

3.4 There may be occasions when opportunities present themselves which necessitate an expedited review. In such cases, it is at the President's discretion to modify or eliminate steps of the previously outlined review process as needed.

OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs