Approval Process for New Interdisciplinary Degrees and Tracks within Degrees

The Curriculum approval process for new interdisciplinary degrees and tracks within degrees follows the process for all new degrees, as described on pages 48-56 of the Senate policy file, and, for new degrees, is detailed [here](#).

However, because interdisciplinary programs across colleges have additional considerations, the general guidance linked above is recreated below but with added elements that apply only to interdisciplinary programs. Special considerations for adding tracks within existing degrees are noted in Section B.

A. General for all new programs: New degree proposals must undergo a full curriculum review through campus and external stakeholders as noted in the Senate policy file. Apart from campus review, new degrees must also be approved by the CSU Board of Trustees, by the Chancellor's Office, and by WSCUC. The checklist of items that will be reviewed by curriculum committees on campus, and thus should be correct in any degree proposal, is attached. Originators should be aware the following approvals are necessary:

1. BOARD OF TRUSTEES (BOT): A "Intent to Propose" form in Modern Campus Curriculum for the Board of Trustees must be completed. Proposals cannot advance to the Chancellor's Office for approval without prior approval from the Board of Trustees.

2. Campus approval: Complete the proposal form and upload all supporting documents into Modern Campus Curriculum.

   a. Interdisciplinary degrees (defined as a program where more than 25% of upper division classes are housed in other departments/colleges) will need approval from the curriculum committees of all involved departments/colleges and their deans. To ensure that proposals are given fair and timely consideration, CAA recommends that the departments/colleges create a joint committee to review and evaluate the proposal simultaneously and then jointly approve the proposal through an email uploaded to MCC. CAA will not move forward with any proposal that does not indicate approval by all involved departments/colleges (and the process by which that was secured) in the form of a joint email.

   b. Following college curriculum approval, college deans should also jointly approve a proposal through an email uploaded to MCC.

   c. The proposal should include a detailed MOU between departments/colleges that explains to university committees the distribution of roles, resources and responsibilities related to operating the program. The MOU should detail items like:

      -Resource allocation

      - FTES split

- Advising responsibilities

- Administrative functions

- Assessment leads

- Program housing and space

- Program director

- Use of assigned time to manage program

- Detailing which college would host a graduation ceremony for cross-college programs

- Detailing which unit is responsible for program reviews

    d. Any new classes *necessary* to operate the program should be submitted at the time of the proposal for a new degree. New courses that are electives or will eventually be needed but are not necessary for the program to function can be proposed later.

    e. Consistent with any new degree, college deans should ensure university support through conversations with the provost prior to submission.

3. WSCUC Substantive change review - necessary for all new and joint programs.

4. WSCUC LOCATION REVIEW: If a program instruction is face-to-face and provided at SDSU Mesa or SDSU IV, no other approvals are needed. However, any program not located on campus should either be approved for online instruction OR must undergo a preliminary location review by the AVP for CAA (Curriculum, Assessment, and Accreditation). If the AVP determines that the program fits within current authorizations, no more is needed. If the AVP determines that a WSCUC substantive change process is necessary because instruction is not provided at an approved location, the process for approval will be delayed until that authorization is received. The AVP-CAA will help with these approvals. Location approval is a lengthy process and can take WSCUC up to 9 months to approve new locations.

5. WSCUC and CO MODALITY: Program modality is central to the approval process. Program modality must be approved by campus curriculum committees, the CO, and WSCUC. Changes or additional modalities for existing programs must also undergo a curriculum approval process and be authorized by the CO and WSCUC. Programs can be:
    a. **Face to face**: Although some classes within the program may be offered online or through hybrid instruction, most of the program is delivered through face-to-face instruction, and students are expected to be on campus. Up to 20% of a program can be delivered online and still be considered a face-to-face program.
    b. **Hybrid**: This is a program that is designed to be offered in a hybrid manner. Certain classes within the program are proposed as online with no option for face-

to-face instruction. The students are aware that they must be on site for certain instructional periods. A proposal that includes ANY required on-campus activities is, by definition, a hybrid program.

    c. **Online**: This is a program that is delivered FULLY online with no on-campus expectations.

6. Once approved by campus, WSCUC, and BOT, the CSU Chancellor's Office must approve the proposal. That can take several months.

7. If/when the program is approved by the CSU, CAA and the Registrar's Office (RO) will work to build the programs in the appropriate data bases, include the program in Cal State Apply, work with community colleges to create transfer agreements, and other campus stakeholders to create processes that allow the program to be offered. This is also a time-intensive process. Once a program is established on campus, CAA and the RO will work with Student Affairs and Campus Diversity to ensure authorization for veterans has been obtained.

B. Adding Tracks within existing degrees to indicate interdisciplinarity: An easier method for adding interdisciplinary content to majors is by creating tracks within majors that reference specific content. For instance, Anthropology could connect with the biology department and add a track within Anthropology that shares most courses with the general Anthro degree but allows students to specialize through electives with content from the biology department. The name of the "track" would indicate interdisciplinary.

While tracks are still new programs that require Chancellor's office notification, they do not require a Board of Trustees or WSCUC process and thus are much quicker to implement. Further, because most of the coursework comes from existing offerings, costs and administrative burdens are reduced as well. The process for adding new tracks follows the standard process for new programs absent BOT and WSCUC.

Special considerations for new, interdisciplinary tracks within existing degree programs include:

    a. Interdisciplinary tracks will need approval from the curriculum committees of all involved departments/colleges and their deans. To ensure that proposals are given fair and timely consideration, CAA recommends that the departments/colleges create a joint committee to review and evaluate the proposal simultaneously and then jointly approve the proposal through an email uploaded to MCC. CAA will not move forward any proposal that does not indicate approval by all involved departments/colleges (and the processes by which that was secured) in the form of a joint email.

    b. Following college curriculum approval, college deans should also jointly approve a proposal through an email uploaded to MCC.

c. Programs should jointly agree which main degree is housing the new track, what the name of the track is, and which classes are to be included within the new track.

d. Tracks within degrees must be consistent with Executive Order 1071 and share 51% core with the parent offering.

e. Any new classes *necessary* to operate the new track, including cross-listing or existing classes, should be submitted at the time of the proposal for a new track. New courses that are electives or will eventually be needed but are not necessary for the track to function can be proposed later.