



## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** October 28, 2022

**From:** David T Cantaffa, Interim Senior Associate Provost, Academic Affairs

**Subject:** Academic Program Review – Procedural Changes

This memorandum is to announce the implementation of procedural changes to specific aspects of the academic program review process for the proposal of new programs and revision of existing programs. These changes are part of broader efforts to streamline processes while maintaining program quality and public accountability.

Included herein are changes for **Program Announcements and Letters of Intent**, which for approximately 90% of programs will decrease from 30 to 10 the number of days from point of announcement to point of approval to proceed to the full proposal. Also included are changes to **External Evaluation** that will reduce SUNY System Administration oversight by adjusting preapproval requirements for most programs and the requirements for what is submitted to SUNY System Administration for most baccalaureate degree programs. Lastly, changes are introduced for **Certificate and Advanced Certificate** programs, significantly reducing which components of such proposals will be reviewed by SUNY System Administration.

These changes are effective immediately. For campuses with impacted programs already under review at SUNY System Administration, our team will work with those campuses during this transition.

The following provides the details for each of the areas of change noted above.

### **1. Program Announcements (PA) and Letters of Intent (LI)**

- a. A PA is required for a new undergraduate degree program and an LI is required for a new graduate degree program (note: a PA/LI is not required for a program created through the 'new from existing' process, such as creating a new multi-award program from existing standalone programs or disaggregating a track from an existing program to create a standalone program that mirrors the curriculum of the track)
- b. Upon announcement (which is included in the weekly Academic Programs Update typically distributed each Friday to campus Presidents, Provosts, and others who have requested to receive this update), campuses will have 10 calendar days to submit an intent to comment on the PA/LI of another campus; this intent to comment is to be sent from the commenting campus President or Provost to the proposing campus President or Provost with a cc to [program.review@suny.edu](mailto:program.review@suny.edu)
- c. If no intent to comment is received within 10 calendar days, the PA/LI is automatically approved and the campus may immediately proceed to the full proposal; in these instances, a formal approval memo will not be issued for the PA/LI

- d. If a campus submits an intent to comment, they must submit the full comment within an additional 20 calendar days; this comment is to be sent from the commenting campus President or Provost to the proposing campus President or Provost with a cc to [program.review@suny.edu](mailto:program.review@suny.edu)
- e. The proposing campus President or Provost must reply within 30 days of receiving the comment, by sending a response to the commenting campus President or Provost with a cc to [program.review@suny.edu](mailto:program.review@suny.edu)
- f. It is highly encouraged for campuses to communicate directly with each other prior to sending comments that include an objection and/or as part of the process after an objection has been issued; the goal is for campuses to arrive at a mutual understanding rather than exercise objections; if the campuses are able to arrive at a mutual understanding, the proposing campus may withdraw the PA/LI or the commenting campus may withdraw the objection
- g. If the campuses are unable to arrive at a mutual understanding, SUNY System Administration will adjudicate the situation and render a decision as to whether the proposing campus may proceed; in these instances, SUNY System Administration will issue a formal decision memo
- h. Campuses are reminded of the following:
  - i. Comments that include an objection and responses to such comments should be accompanied by data related to the argument presented
  - ii. Insufficient grounds for objection include, but are not limited to, the following: unsupported claims, future intent to develop a similar program, historical prominence in the proposed program area, or a singular focus on competition for enrollment

## 2. External Evaluation

- a. External evaluation is required for the proposal of new degree programs at the baccalaureate level or higher (note: external evaluation is not required for a program created through the 'new from existing' process, such as creating a new multi-award program from existing standalone programs or disaggregating a track from an existing program to create a standalone program that mirrors the curriculum of the track)
- b. Campuses may continue with remote external evaluation, except in instances when in-person is necessary due to program-specific expectations related to facilities
- c. Campuses will select external evaluators without the need for preapproval from SUNY System Administration, except in instances that require NYSED preapproval (licensure-qualifying and doctoral programs); in these instances, campuses must submit to [program.review@suny.edu](mailto:program.review@suny.edu) a rank-ordered list and the CVs of three to five potential reviewers, which we will then transmit to NYSED for review and preapproval
- d. Baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree programs will require two external evaluators; however, for baccalaureate programs, campuses will submit to SUNY System Administration an attestation that external evaluation was conducted, but will not submit the external evaluation reports or campus response as part of the full proposal
- e. Campuses are reminded to ensure the following:
  - i. For remote evaluations, 1. materials and remote connections with relevant stakeholders must be made readily available to external evaluators and 2. for programs that involve laboratories or other facilities, the campus must be able to provide a way for evaluators to virtually interact with these facilities in a manner that would substantially approximate an in-person visit

- ii. Given SUNY’s commitments to diversity and inclusiveness, which includes the guiding principle that diversity and inclusiveness are integral components of the highest quality academic programs, campuses are expected to engage a diverse set of external evaluators
- iii. All external evaluators are expected to: 1. possess significant expertise in the discipline of the proposed program, 2. have appropriate academic credentials, professional experience, and academic teaching and/or administrative experience in similar programs at peer institutions (typically, outside of the SUNY system), and 3. not have a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest with the institution or program (e.g., current or prior relationship with the institution as a student, employee, or substantially involved party such as a research collaborator)
- iv. For licensure-qualifying programs, at least one of the evaluators should be licensed in New York State in the proposed licensure area
- v. For educator preparation programs, at least one of the evaluators should be from an institution in New York State that offers a registered program in the proposed certification area
- vi. For doctoral programs, both evaluators should be from outside of New York State

Summary of External Evaluation Requirements:

	<b>External Evaluation Required?</b>	<b>How Many External Evaluators per Program?</b>	<b>Send Potential External Evaluators to SUNY for Preapproval?</b>	<b>Include External Evaluation Reports and Institutional Response in Full Proposal?</b>
<b>Associate*</b>	No**	NA	NA	NA
<b>Baccalaureate*</b>	Yes	2	Only if Licensure-Qualifying	No
<b>Master’s*</b>	Yes	2	Only if Licensure-Qualifying	Yes
<b>Doctorate*</b>	Yes	2	Yes	Yes
<b>Degree Authorization or Master Plan Amendment</b>	Yes	2	Only if Licensure-Qualifying or Doctorate	Yes

\*If the proposal requires a Degree Authorization or Master Plan Amendment, please follow the requirements for these program actions noted in the bottom row of the table

\*\*SUNY System Administration and NYSED reserve the right to require external evaluation of associate-level programs for new and emerging fields

**3. Certificates and Advanced Certificates**

- a. Campuses must submit to SUNY System Administration full proposals for new Certificate and Advanced Certificate programs and revision of existing Certificate and Advanced Certificate programs

- b. SUNY System Administration will only review the proposal for program title and classification codes (HEGIS and CIP) and, if approvable, the full proposal will subsequently be transmitted to NYSED for registration review
  - c. Campuses are reminded to ensure the following:
    - i. The proposed program title does not raise scope-of-practice concerns related to the licensed professions (e.g., medicine, engineering) or P-12 educator certification (e.g., childhood education grades 1-6, school building leader), unless the program is proposed as a licensure-qualifying or certification-qualifying program
    - ii. The proposed [HEGIS](#) is within a disciplinary area for which the campus has authorization to offer programs
    - iii. The proposed [CIP](#) is the best fit when comparing the program curriculum to the CIP definitions
    - iv. All credits in the certificate or advanced certificate are applicable to a registered degree program offered by the proposing institution
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For any questions about any of the procedural changes provided herein, please contact the assigned SUNY reviewer for your campus (assignments are available [here](#)).