

Frequently Asked Questions About PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS

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What is the difference between a program modification and a course modification?

A program modification is a change to a degree program that affects the requirements for students to graduate from that program. These changes must be reflected by changes to the degree checksheet for the program.

A course modification is a change that affects an individual course, including changes in the name, number, content, prerequisites, general education designation, cross listing, etc. of the course. Course change requests are submitted through CourseLeaf (<https://nextcatalog.ou.edu/courseadmin/>). Changes to the course title, course number (including a change in credit hours), or course prefix require a program modification to change the curriculum on the checksheet.

How many different categories of program changes are there?

There are three basic categories of program changes, and they differ in the level of approval required for the change to be put into effect. The following are general guidelines for determining the category into which a change falls. Final authority for determining the category resides with the Provost, consistent with State Regents' policies:

Substantive changes.

Substantive changes include anything that will change what the student must do in order to graduate from what was approved by the State Regents when the program was developed or was last modified. These changes include but may not be limited to:

- Deletion of program
- Suspension of program
- Change of degree designation (Level II)
- Change of degree program name (Level III)
- Addition of option (Level IV)
- Deletion of option
- Option Name Change
- Change in total number of credit hours required for a degree
- Addition or deletion of required courses regardless of whether it changes number of credit hours
- Changes in the number credit hours of electives allowed
- Changes in the total number of credit hours in a particular section (i.e. General Education, Major Requirements, etc.)

- Change in credit hours for course
- Changes to concentrations
- Changes in admission or graduation criteria for a particular program (i.e. removal of an entrance or exit exam or GPA requirement)

Nonsubstantive changes.

Non-substantive changes which are still reported to OSRHE:

- Changes in course prefixes, course number, course title, or course description
- Addition or deletion of courses within a list of electives if the number of elective courses required remains the same
- Addition or deletion of area of concentration (Level V)

Non-substantive changes that do not need to be reported to OSRHE:

- Changes when courses should be taken, in semester by semester course sequencing
- Moving a program from one department to another with no curriculum changes

Internal administrative changes.

Changes at this level require approval of the Provost. Notification of the OU and State Regents is not required. There are many types of changes that fall into this category, including:

- addition, modification or deletion of a Minor
- addition or deletion of a concentration
- addition, modification or deletion of Accelerated Dual Degree programs
- any other change that does not require approval or notification of the State Regents

What is the meaning of the different levels of programs, as reflected in the University's Degree Program Inventory?

There are five program levels, four of which are referenced in State Regents' policies:

- **Level I** – Degree as referenced in state Regents' policy. Examples include such titles as Certificate, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of (Specialty), Master of Science, Master of (Specialty) and Doctor of Philosophy.
- **Level II** – Degree designation as it appears on a diploma - Examples include Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Interior Design, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Master of Education, and Doctor of Philosophy
- **Level III** – Title of degree program as recognized by State Regents and assigned OSRHE program code. This level defines the discipline in which the degree is awarded. Examples include Chemistry and Biochemistry, French, Economics.
- **Level IV** – Course of study under an umbrella degree program (referred to as an option in OSRHE policy and a major in the OU catalog). In most cases there is a one-to-one relationship between the OU major (Level IV) and the Level III program. However, there are a few OU majors that are grouped under a common level III program. Examples include majors in Ballet Performance, Ballet Pedagogy and Modern Dance Performance, all of which are under the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance.
- **Level V** – Subgroupings of courses within a major often referred to as tracks or concentrations. These are permitted, and require approval at the campus-level only. They are not regulated by State Regents' policies and they do not appear on the diploma or transcript.

Where can I find a list of the University's degree programs by level?

All of the degree programs for the Norman campus are listed in the [Degree Program Inventory](#).

Who do I contact if I am not sure into which category the request we plan to make falls?

Contact the Academic Publications and Curriculum office (lcannon@ou.edu).

What forms must be submitted to request a new program?

For more information on completing the new program request forms, read the [Guidelines for New Program Request form](#).

- Requests for new degree programs must be submitted using a State Regents' [New Program Request Form for Traditional and Online Programs](#).
- If the program is a new or existing program but will be offered in Tulsa, use the [New Program Request Form for Tulsa](#).
- Requests for new undergraduate and Graduate Certificates must be submitted using the [New Program Request Form for Traditional and Online Programs](#) unless all the courses are already part of an existing bachelor's or master's degree, in which case the [Embedded Certificate](#) paperwork may be used instead (see "[What is the difference between a freestanding certificate and an embedded certificate?](#)")

The best process is to download and save a copy of the form before completing it. Once the form is complete and approved by the department, e-mail a copy to lcannon@ou.edu and send the hard copy to your dean's office for signature and approval. The dean should then send graduate programs to the Graduate College or undergraduate programs to the Academic Publications office for APC review.

The order of assembly should be:

- Cover/title page (page 1)
- Evaluation criteria, which contains an outline of information to be provided (pages 2-8).
 - Answer every question in each section (except for Institutional Request for Electronic Delivery).
 - Pay particular attention to the budget section, and include notice to the Provost for alternate funding proposals.
 - Be sure the enrollment and graduation projections are reasonable. These figures will be used as the benchmarks in program reviews.
 - Include a proposed degree checksheet (with semester plan for bachelor degrees). Be sure the calculation of credit hours is correct.
 - If the proposed program includes courses from other college(s), include statement(s) of support from those departments
- Signature page (page 9)

New programs require a Letter of Intent to be sent from the President to the Chancellor. Upon receipt of a new program request, the Coordinator of Academic Publications notifies the Provost and Vice Provost for Instruction for a letter of Intent to be drafted. For more information on the approximate timeline after the letter of intent, see the [Timeline for New Program Proposal from the Letter of Intent to Agenda](#).

What is the deadline for submitting a new program?

New programs, except for Ph.D. programs, will take approximately 6-8 months for final approval. For programs to be effective by the following fall, new programs should be submitted as early as possible in the previous fall. New Ph.D. programs will take approximately 12 months for final approval after the program is sent to the State Regents.

New program requests from the previous academic year must be approved by the September State Regents' meeting in order to be effective for fall. If the programs are not approved until the October State Regents' meeting, then the effective date for new programs must be pushed to the following academic year.

What forms must be submitted to request a new or existing program be delivered electronically?

Requests for new programs to be delivered electronically should be submitted using the State Regents' Proposal for [New Program Request Form for Traditional and Online Programs](#) as described above.

The process for requesting existing programs through online delivery or other computer-mediated format is for the President to send the following information to the Chancellor: 1) letter of intent 2) the name of the program, 3) delivery method/s, 4) information related to population served and student demand, 5) cost and financing. The letter of intent must have been submitted to the Chancellor prior to filling out the [Existing Program Online Delivery](#) request form. Since the University of Oklahoma has gone through the electronic delivery approval process and has been approved to offer subsequent electronic delivered programs, subsequent programs may be requested through the abbreviated process which is listed on page five of this form.

What is the difference between a freestanding certificate and an embedded certificate?

All of the courses in an [Embedded Certificate](#) must be part of a single bachelor's or master's degree. Up to 50% of the courses in the certificate may come from guided electives or general education coursework. If the coursework in the certificate does not come from a single degree (multidisciplinary) or new courses are added for the certificate or the requirements of the certificate are more than 50% from the electives or general education in the degree, then it must be submitted as a new certificate using the [New Program Request Form for Traditional and Online Programs](#).

What forms must be submitted to request a modification to an existing degree program?

Requests for both *substantive and nonsubstantive changes* in degree programs that require approval or notification of the State Regents must be submitted using a State Regents' **Request for Program Modification** form, available through the links in the Academic Program/Course Approval and Deadlines section of the Provost's [Memos and Forms](#) web page. Read the [Request for Program Modification Instructions](#) for more information on how to fill out the forms.

The best process is to download the form and save a copy of the form before completing. Once the form is complete, e-mail a copy to lcannon@ou.edu and send the hard copy to your dean's office for signature and approval.

When submitting a request for a program modification, the order of the pages is important:

- Cover Page
- Type of Request Page (appropriate page selected from #1 - #8).
- for changes involving courses from other college(s), include statement(s) of support from those departments
- for changes involving offering new courses or online courses, be sure to address costs involved
- Graduate programs must include a [Summary of Program Changes](#) for program requirement changes and concentration additions.
- include the current degree checksheet and a proposed checksheet that clearly shows the proposed changes in color
- Signature page

Type of Request Pages

(1) [Program Deletion](#) – The reason needs to state more than just the fact that the change is being requested, it needs to provide the motivation behind the request. Departments must also address the effect deletion of the program and/or associated courses may have on other departments' programs, and document that these other areas have been consulted concerning the proposed deletion.

(2) [Program Suspension](#) – The reason needs to state more than just the fact that the change is being requested, it needs to provide the motivation behind the request. Departments must also address the effect suspension of the program and/or associated courses may have on other departments' programs, and document that these other areas have been consulted concerning the proposed deletion.

(3) [Change of Program Name and/or Degree Designation](#) – The reason needs to state more than just the fact that the change is being requested, it needs to provide the motivation behind the request.

Departments also need to specify whether the change applies to Level I, II or III per the Degree Program Inventory. **NOTE:** Department/school name changes are not proposed through the program modification process. Those types of name changes are submitted directly to the Provost.

(4) **Option Addition** – The reason needs to state more than just the fact that the option is being added, it needs to provide the motivation behind the request. Departments must also address how the additional option may depend on other departments' programs and/or courses, and document that these other areas have been consulted concerning the proposed option. Please note that all options within a degree program must share an approximate 50% common core exclusive of General Education as required by policy.

(5) **Option Deletion** – The reason needs to state more than just the fact that the option is being deleted, it needs to provide the motivation behind the request. Departments must also address the effect deletion of the option and/or associated courses may have on other departments' programs, and document that these other areas have been consulted concerning the proposed deletion.

(6) **Option Name Change** – The reason needs to state more than just the fact that the change is being requested, it needs to provide the motivation behind the request.

(7) **Program Requirement Change** – The reason needs to state more than just the fact that the change is being requested, it needs to provide the motivation behind the request. If the change involves other colleges' courses, the department must document that these other areas have been consulted concerning the proposed change.

(8) **Other Degree Program Modification** – Any other request types.

What forms must be submitted to request an Administrative/Internal Change?

Requests for *internal administrative changes* (i.e., changes not requiring approval or notification of the State Regents) must be submitted using the **Request for Administrative/Internal Changes** form available in the Academic Program/Course Approval and Deadlines section of the Provost's [Memos and Forms](#) website. Read the [Administrative/Internal Changes Instructions](#) for more information on how to fill out the forms.

The best process is to download the form and save a copy of the form before completing. Once the form is complete, e-mail a copy to lcannon@ou.edu and send the hard copy to your dean's office for approval and signature.

- Cover page
- Appropriate page corresponding to the type of change and supporting documents
- Include a current checksheet and a proposed degree checksheet that clearly shows the proposed changes in color
- Signature page

Type of Request:

- (1) [Addition of Area of Concentration/Track \(Level V\)](#) (Add State Regents [#8 Other](#) cover page) (Graduate programs must include a [Summary of Program Changes](#) for concentration additions.)
- (2) [Deletion of Area of Concentration/Track \(Level V\)](#) (Add State Regents [#8 Other](#) cover page)
- (3) [Addition of a Minor](#)
- (4) [Deletion of a Minor](#)
- (5) [Requirement Changes for area of accelerated program or minor](#)
- (6) [Addition of an Accelerated Dual Degree Program](#)
- (7) [Deletion of an Accelerated Dual Degree Program](#)
- (8) [Other](#)

What is the routing for program modification requests?

Most programs will follow the [substantive flow chart](#) (unless they are [nonsubstantive](#) or admin/internal). An electronic copy of the program should be sent to Academic Publications (lcannon@ou.edu). The

program should be routed from the department's director/chair to the college dean, to the Graduate College (if applicable), and then to the Academic Programs Council (Academic Publications office) for signatures. The program will then go on to the Provost, OU Regents, and State Regents for approval.

What is the deadline for submitting a Program Modification or Course Request?

Such requests may be submitted at any time. However, since it can take a minimum of six months for a substantive request to be approved and a minimum of five months for a nonsubstantive request to be approved, units should initiate the process well in advance of the beginning of the semester in which the changes are intended to go into effect.

New program requests and program modification requests to be effective for summer/fall must be submitted to the Academic Programs Council no later than the preceding December. The program modification from the previous academic year must be approved by the September State Regents' meeting in order to be effective for fall. If the program modification is not approved until the October State Regents' meeting, then the effective date for the changes must be pushed to the following academic year.

Administrative/Internal program requests and Course Requests are approved through the Provost and go to the OU Regents for information only. Therefore, they may be submitted to the Academic Programs Council until mid-April (in time for the May APC agenda).

Can we submit more than one Program Modification per year?

Technically there is nothing to prevent this. However, the Academic Publications and Curriculum office has requested that only one Program Modification be submitted each year, as it becomes very confusing if more than one proposal is submitted. It is a much cleaner process to handle all proposed changes in one program modification request and one proposed check sheet each year. However, exceptions may be granted by the Provost.

When do new programs and program modification go into effect?

A new program may be implemented as early as the beginning of the semester after it is approved by the State Regents or as indicated on the program paperwork.

Changes to existing programs go into effect the summer term following their approval. **NOTE:** The changes apply *only* to new students entering the program *and* continuing students who elect to change to the new program requirements.

How will I know when the program is approved?

You may follow the progress of the program proposal by checking the [program approval tracking sheet](#) on the Provost's website. Once the program has received final approval by the State Regents, an approval letter is sent approximately 3-4 weeks after the meeting to Academic Publications. Academic Publications will then notify the departments by email that the program has been approved, along with any new major codes that have been assigned.