



The University of North Carolina

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

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Constituent Universities
Appalachian State
University

East Carolina
University

Elizabeth City
State University

Fayetteville State
University

North Carolina
Agricultural and
Technical State
University

North Carolina
Central University

North Carolina
State University
at Raleigh

University of
North Carolina
at Asheville

University of
North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

University of
North Carolina
at Charlotte

University of
North Carolina
at Greensboro

University of
North Carolina
at Pembroke

University of
North Carolina
at Wilmington

University of
North Carolina
School of the Arts

Western Carolina
University

Winston-Salem
State University

Constituent High School
North Carolina
School of Science
and Mathematics

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

FROM: Alan Mabe

DATE: March 10, 2009

SUBJECT: Revised Academic Program Planning and Establishment Process

This set of documents provides opportunity to discuss how the revised Academic Planning and Establishment process will work. Included here is more than you are likely to want to review, but we thought it would be a good idea to bring all the documents together in one place for review and discussion. The first two documents are the policy changes the Board has already approved. The two sets of regulations parallel the two policies. This is another opportunity to consult with the Education Planning Committee on draft regulations for implementing the revised policies. The two sets of guidelines provide guidance for the campuses as they consider planning or seeking to establish new academic degree programs. While revised to reflect changes in policy, the Guidelines for Academic Program Development are not all that different from current guidelines. The Guidelines for Distance Education Delivery of already approved degree programs have been more extensively revised to reflect the arrangements made with an off-site location when used.

The Appendices are used by the campuses to prepare their requests for various steps in the process from planning, to establishment, to discontinuation. Appendix G, for distance and online education, has been revised to reflect the need for more information about proposed programs including, arrangements for any off-campus delivery sites.



POLICIES

Board of Governors Policy on Academic Program Planning

North Carolina citizens and institutions must be prepared to compete in a rapidly changing global environment. Consistent with this mandate the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, the University's General Administration, and the constituent universities shall be guided by the needs of the people of North Carolina in their academic degree program development, approval, and discontinuation actions. Academic program planning and procedures must be nimble, efficient, and responsive to those needs at all levels.

Campuses shall continue to have a lead role in identifying academic program needs and in formulating proposals to meet those needs. The University's General Administration shall also engage in the identification of academic program needs. General Administration shall develop procedures to regularly review workforce and societal needs and, on at least a biennial basis, identify degrees and programs beneficial to the State. General Administration shall also periodically draw on the expertise of the faculty to identify longer-term emerging trends that may have implications for new degree programs. In its analysis, General Administration shall always consider whether all regions of the State are adequately served by the University. As referenced in this policy, needs of the State and its citizens are inclusive of requirements growing out of local, regional, national, and global challenges.

Once academic program needs are identified by the campuses or by General Administration, General Administration, in consultation with the campuses, shall forward, after appropriate review, recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding how best to meet those needs. All campuses shall have an opportunity to participate in a process for recommending the best way to address those needs. Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary processes that utilize campus faculty and administrators shall be established to recommend whether expansion of a current degree program, collaboration in a joint degree program, an online degree program, or a stand-alone degree program is the best option. Campuses are urged to give high priority to collaborative or joint program development.

In these processes, faculty expertise is essential for sound academic decision making at the campus and system levels. At the campus, disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, University, and Board levels, analysis and recommendation of the need for a new academic program, the place for its establishment, and the method of its delivery shall be based on:

- (1) number, location, and mode of delivery of existing programs,
- (2) the relation of the program to the distinctiveness of the campus and the mission of the campus,
- (3) the demand for the program in the locality, region, or State as a whole,
- (4) whether the program would create unnecessary duplication,
- (5) employment opportunities for program graduates,
- (6) faculty quality and number for offering the program,
- (7) the availability of campus resources (library, space, labs, equipment, external funding, and the like) to support the program,
- (8) the number and quality of lower-level and cognate programs for supporting the new program,
- (9) impact of program decision on access and affordability,
- (10) the expected quality of the proposed degree program,
- (11) feasibility of a joint or collaborative program by two or more campuses, and
- (12) any other consideration relevant to the need for the program.

General Administration shall, in collaboration with the campuses, promote the expansion and availability of online degrees and other programs which facilitate access to higher education for all citizens. As the availability of online degree offerings increases, General Administration, in collaboration with the campuses, shall incorporate consideration of online offerings into the assessments of proposals for new academic degree programs. Online program development is part of the academic planning and assessment processes, and campuses will continue to take the lead in proposing the establishment of online degree programs.

While the responsibility for quality, efficiency, and productivity of academic degree programs rests at the campus level, General Administration shall be responsible for periodic reviews to

determine whether productivity and quality review processes are followed. Campuses shall regularly review the priorities of their offerings and are to be prepared to discontinue programs that no longer meet any significant need. In collaboration with the campuses, General Administration shall review and revise standards for offering degree programs at various levels and by various methodologies. The University shall balance responsiveness with due diligence and a state-wide perspective. In achieving this balance, General Administration shall develop expedited program review processes for rapid response where warranted. The campuses' faculty and administration and General Administration shall assure a continuing commitment to academic excellence.

The President, after consultation with the campuses and the Board of Governors, shall promulgate regulations to implement this Board of Governors policy and is authorized to provide guidance to the campuses in their academic program development and discontinuation.

Proposed Policy Revision

203 B. Other Powers and Duties.

(1) Whenever the Board of Governors finds that there may be a need for the creation of a new campus of the University, the board shall direct that a study be made of the relevant educational needs of the state, such study to take particular account of the relevant educational needs of the area or areas of the state designated by the Board of Governors. The board shall give careful consideration to the report of the aforementioned study of educational needs, and if the board finds

(a) that sufficient educational needs exist to justify the establishment of an additional campus of the University, and

(b) that it appears probable that sufficient additional funds can be made available to establish and maintain such additional campus without impairing the quality and extent of the instructional and research programs at the existing campuses of the University, the Board of Governors may recommend to the General Assembly that appropriate legislation creating or adding such campus be enacted.

(2) Whenever the Board of Governors finds that there may be a need for the creation of a branch campus by a constituent institution, the board shall direct that a study be made of the relevant educational needs of the state, such study to take particular account of the relevant educational needs of the area or areas of the state designated by the Board of Governors. The board shall give careful consideration to the report of the aforementioned study of educational needs, and if the board finds

(a) that sufficient educational needs exist to justify the establishment of a branch campus by a constituent institution, and

(b) that it appears probable that sufficient additional funds can be made available to establish and maintain such branch campus without impairing the quality and extent of the instructional and research programs at the constituent institution or at other constituent institutions, the Board of Governors may approve the creation of a branch campus.

(3)The University will use as its definition of a branch campus the one adopted by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: A branch campus is defined as a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

(4) Apart from new or branch campuses, the President is authorized to initiate other facilities arrangements for delivery of off-site programs such as use of community college space, multiple-use facilities among campuses, joint use facilities with community colleges, and rental space, following general university academic and budgetary procedures for relevant Board approval or reporting to the Board.

(5) The North Carolina Community College System shall be consulted in the process of assessing the need for a new campus, a branch campus or other facilities for off-site educational delivery.

(6) The Board of Governors shall have such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by law or as may be set forth elsewhere in this Code.

203 C. Reservation of Powers.

The Board of Governors shall possess all powers not specifically given to institutional boards of trustees. [See G.S. 116-11(14)]

REGULATIONS

DRAFT -- Regulations for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation -- DRAFT

General

In response to a new degree (or degrees) proposed or significant needs identified by UNC, General Administration will establish panels in the appropriate academic discipline to review the need for changes in program offerings in the discipline. Each campus will be provided an opportunity to participate in the review and may choose to participate directly, indirectly, or not at all. Different mechanisms of review may be chosen including face-to-face meetings, conference calls, video conferences, or commentary on proposals by campuses.

For new degree program proposals an information and data template will be used by General Administration to provide a common framework against which each proposed new degree program can be displayed. This will provide information that may be used to assess priorities when such assessments are needed.

UNC utilizes the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), 2000 Edition for the classification of all degree programs. Campuses will propose an appropriate classification for each degree program proposed.

New Degree Program Proposals

General Administration will be responsible for managing the review process for new degree proposals and, after consultation with disciplinary experts and campuses at various stages, for making a recommendation to the BOG. The review process will involve disciplinary experts both from within and from outside the state. Outside reviews will be required for all doctoral-level program proposals and may be used for programs at other levels.

Baccalaureate Degree Programs

Disciplinary reviews will address the overall need for the production of graduates in the discipline and how the proposed new degree program or programs will fit with pertinent existing programs to serve state needs. In the course of the review, the proposed program or programs will be assessed for need and quality. Consideration should be given to all options including the new program as proposed, a modified version of the program, joint programs, expansion of one or more existing programs, initiating or expanding an online program, a combination of these, or no change. Based on this process, expert reviews where relevant, and an overall assessment, General Administration will make recommendations for the next steps. Recommendations for establishment will be taken to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies and Programs for consideration, then, upon favorable recommendation, to the Board of Governors.

Master's Degree Programs

Disciplinary reviews will address the overall need for the production of graduates in the discipline and how the proposed new degree program or programs will fit with pertinent existing programs to serve state needs. In the course of the review, the proposed program or programs should be assessed for need and quality. Consideration should be given to all options including the new program as proposed, a modified version of the program, joint programs, expansion of one or more existing programs, initiating or expanding an online program, a combination of these, or no change. Based on this process, expert reviews where relevant, and an overall assessment, General Administration will make recommendations for the next steps. Recommendations for establishment will be taken to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies and Programs for consideration, then, upon favorable recommendation, to the Board of Governors.

Doctoral Degree Programs

The first stage of review will vary for different types of doctoral programs. Currently doctoral programs are classified by the Department of Education for IPEDS reporting as First Professional programs and Doctoral programs. The Department of Education is evolving to two new classifications of doctoral programs: Applied Doctoral programs and Research Doctoral programs. In this transitional period the three following classifications will be used.

First Professional programs-- medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and law are offered in UNC. (This classification is to be phased out for IPEDS).

Applied Doctoral programs—typically prepare graduates to be practitioners in the field.

Research Doctoral programs—typically prepare graduates to do research in the field or become faculty members at colleges or universities.

Applied and Research Doctoral program proposals will be reviewed by disciplinary panels and the results will be a recommendation by General Administration to plan, to revise, or not to plan the program. These recommendations will be reported to the University-wide Graduate Policy Council. Those recommended for planning by General Administration and approved for planning by the Educational Planning Committee may proceed to prepare a proposal to establish the program. Proposals for establishment will be reviewed and a recommendation will be provided by the University-wide Graduate Council. Based on outside reviews, the review by the University-wide Graduate Council, and an overall assessment of the program in relation to priority factors, General Administration will decide whether to recommend the program to the Educational Planning Committee for recommendation to establish the program, then, upon, favorable recommendation, to the Board of Governors.

First Professional program proposals normally involve outside reviewers in the early stages of development and in most cases an on-site review team. Some health related applied programs may also be addressed in the same manner.

Joint Degree Programs

Joint Degree programs resulting in the awarding of a joint degree by two or more UNC constituent institutions or by UNC constituent institutions and non-UNC educational institutions must be approved through the regular institutional processes and have the approval of the chancellor of each participating UNC institution before submission to General Administration for review and presentation to the BOG for approval.

Proposals for Joint Degree programs must include the following:

Indication of appropriate approvals by all participating UNC institutions including approval by their chancellors.

Certification that the following institutional processes have been agreed to:

- Admission process
- Registration and enrollment process for students
- Committee process for graduate students
- Plan for charging and distributing tuition and fees
- Management of transcripts and permanent records
- Participation in graduation
- Design of diploma

Each student who will receive a Joint Degree must be approved by the institutional process for certifying a student to receive a degree by each UNC institution whose name will appear on the diploma.

Dual Degree Programs

A Dual Degree program involves two academic units, either on the same campus or on different campuses, including non-UNC campuses, in a formal agreement to offer two degrees as part of a program of study that will result in a student being awarded both degrees. While such programs offer the advantage that some course work may count for each degree, the requirements for each of the two degrees in a Dual Degree program must be substantially equivalent to the requirements for a student taking only one of the degrees. For example, a Juris Doctorate and an MBA could be linked in a Dual Degree program. If more than one campus is involved this would be a Coordinated Dual Degree program. Another option is to offer part of each program in a single interdisciplinary degree program that would be substantially different from each of the original programs. Such a single degree program would be a new degree program requiring Board approval. Constituent institutions considering such arrangements are to consult with General Administration regarding which option their proposal fits under.

Interdisciplinary Degree Program

An Interdisciplinary Degree program involves two or more academic units, either on the same or different campuses, including non-UNC campuses, in a formal agreement to offer a program of study drawing on two or more disciplines that will result in a student being awarded an interdisciplinary degree. If more than one campus is involved in offering the program it would also be a joint degree.

Degree Consortia

A Degree Consortium is a formal agreement between two or more UNC or non-UNC institutions to share courses in the same discipline that will count as degree credit for a degree offered separately by one or more of the participating institution. Constituent institutions considering such arrangements are to consult with General Administration before establishing them. Each separate degree would be reviewed through the normal process.

Alternative, Online, or Distance Education Delivery of Approved Degree Programs

Alternative, online, and distance delivery of BOG-approved degree programs require approval by General Administration and an assurance to General Administration that all reporting to and necessary approvals from regional or specialized accreditation agencies have occurred prior to the program beginning. Approval by GA is required if fifty percent or more of the degree program will be offered in an alternative, online, or distance delivery mode, or a combinations of these modes.

Accreditation agencies require notice and approval in many cases of alternative, online, or distance delivery. Any program proposal should include information about accreditation requirements for alternative delivery. UNC institutions are individually accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and are responsible for ensuring that they follow COC criteria and procedures with respect to any alternative, online, or distance delivery that may constitute a substantive change as defined by the Commission on Colleges.

If a degree program has not been approved by the Board of Governors, its approval for alternative, online, or distance delivery must wait until BOG program approval is received.

The constituent institutions and the academic units offering the instruction are responsible for the development, delivery, regular assessment, and accreditation of certificate and degree-related alternative, online, or distance education courses and programs.

Each institution must have a clearly defined process for the review and approval of proposals to plan or establish alternative, online, or distance delivery of degree programs. All campus processes must be followed and campus approval must be received before a proposal may be submitted to General Administration.

The academic standards and quality of certificate and degree-related alternative, online, or distance delivery of courses or programs must be consistent with and comparable to the academic standards and

quality of regular on-campus instructional activity. The application and maintenance of academic standards are the responsibility of the academic unit and the campus offering the instruction.

Off-site Degree Programs

Degree programs offered at a site away from the institution's campus may be entirely face-to-face or have a mix of face-to-face and alternative or online delivery. Proposals for offsite delivery of degree programs must document the comparable quality of the proposed programs to programs offered on the campus in terms of both academic standards and standards for student support. Proposals for offsite programs are to include a description of the space arrangements for offering the program. Priority should be given to partnering with constituent institutions of UNC, including Graduate Centers, and of the North Carolina Community College System where appropriate.

Online Degree Programs

Degree programs delivered online enable students to access them without residing on the campus or being required to come to the campus except for brief periods for orientation. Proposals for online delivery of degree programs must document the comparable quality of the proposed programs to programs offered on the campus in terms of both academic standards and standards for student support. Due care should be given to the provision of local student support, such as arrangements for proctored examinations.

Other Delivery Methods

Other methods, such as NCREN, two-way television, and CD-ROM-based work may still be used from time to time. Rapidly changing technology may lead to new modes of delivery of courses and degrees. Proposals for other methods for delivery of degree programs must document the comparable quality of the proposed programs to programs offered on the campus in terms of both academic standards and standards for student support.

Expedited Program Review

While the academic program planning and evaluation process is required by BOG Policy to "balance responsiveness with due diligence and a state-wide perspective," it is also necessary to develop "expedited program review processes for rapid response where warranted." A request for an expedited review will be warranted where there is an extraordinary need to have a program start up immediately to meet a clear State need, or to announce immediately that the program will be available at a certain future time. An example might be the need for a degree program as part of a state effort for recruiting or expanding business, industry, or a governmental function.

Discontinuation of Academic Degree Programs

The Board of Governors has the authority to establish and discontinue degree programs. The productivity study which will be initiated biannually by General Administration will generate a campus

review that may result in recommendations for discontinuation. A campus may recommend the discontinuation of a degree program at any time. A proposal for discontinuation should provide a reasonable time for students to complete their work in the program or provide an alternative way for students to complete their program.

Forms and Procedures for Conveying Proposals

Revised Forms and procedural guidelines will be provided for use by the constituent institutions.

DRAFT-- Regulations for New Campuses, Branch Campuses and other Off-site Educational Use of Facilities--DRAFT

1. In the matter of a proposed new campus, the President will make a preliminary determination of whether to recommend to the Board that a study be done.
2. If the Board directs that a study be done of a proposal for a new campus, the President shall initiate and oversee the study and upon its conclusion make recommendations to the Board.
3. In the matter of a proposed branch campus, the President will make a preliminary determination of whether to recommend to the Board that a study be done.
4. The University will use as its definition of a branch campus the one adopted by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: *A branch campus is defined as a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority.*
5. If the Board directs that a study be done of a proposal for a branch campus, the President shall initiate and oversee the study and upon its conclusion make recommendations to the Board.
6. Proposals for constructing, acquiring, leasing, or otherwise using off-site facilities shall provide assurance that all University requirements are to be met.
7. The President will consult with the North Carolina Community College System in the process of assessing the need for a new campus, a branch campus, or other new facilities for off-site educational delivery.
8. Templates will be developed which contain the components that must be included in agreements for constructing, leasing, or otherwise using off-site facilities for academic program delivery.
9. In proposing or reviewing proposals for off-site facilities, all options for delivery of instruction shall be considered including online options.

GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

A. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

1. Degree Levels Offered

Post-secondary academic degree programs in the 16 constituent universities of the University of North Carolina are offered at the following levels:

Associate of Applied Science degrees, normally requiring two years of full-time study beyond high school; offered only at North Carolina State University in the field of Agriculture;

Bachelor's degrees, normally requiring four years of full-time study beyond high school;

Master's degrees, usually requiring one or two years of study beyond the bachelor's degree;

Intermediate or specialist degrees, an advanced degree falling between a master's degree and a doctoral degree;

First Professional degrees in law, education, dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine (J.D., Ed.D., D.D.S., M.D., Pharm.D., and D.V.M.), for which the bachelor's degree and sometimes the master's degree are prerequisites and usually requiring three or four years of study beyond the bachelor's degree;

Doctoral degrees (Ph.D., D.M.A., and Dr.P.H.), for which the bachelor's degree and sometimes the master's degree are prerequisites and usually requiring three or four years of study beyond the bachelor's or master's degree.

2. Degree Program Classification

The University of North Carolina uses the Classification of Instructional Programs 2000 (CIP)¹ to classify its programs in the UNC Academic Program Inventory (API). The CIP classifies all post-secondary degree programs into 52 major discipline divisions. Currently UNC constituent institutions offer programs in 31 of these discipline divisions. These are:

01 Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences	25 Library Science
03 Natural Resources and Conservation	26 Biological and Biomedical Sciences
04 Architecture and Related Services	27 Mathematics and Statistics
05 Area, Ethnic, Cultural and Gender Studies	30 Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies
09 Communication, Journalism and Related Programs	31 Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies
11 Computer and Information Sciences and Support	38 Philosophy and Religious Studies
13 Education	40 Physical Sciences
14 Engineering	41 Science Technologies/Technicians
15 Engineering Technologies/Technicians	42 Psychology
16 Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	43 Security and Protective Services
19 Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	44 Public Administration and Social Service
22 Legal Professions and Studies	45 Social Sciences
23 English Language and Literature/Letters	49 Transportation and Materials Moving
24 Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	50 Visual and Performing Arts
	51 Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences
	52 Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services
	54 History

Discipline divisions are divided further into discipline specialties, which for the most part are represented by six-digit CIP codes. For example, the discipline division Engineering (14) consists of such discipline specialties as General Engineering (14.0101), Aerospace, Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering (14.0201), Architectural Engineering (14.0401), Chemical Engineering (14.0701), and Civil Engineering (14.0801), etc. UNC actually uses a twelve-digit classification code, so degree level, and specialized information can be represented in the CIP.

3. Programs

Degree Programs

A degree program is a program of study in a discipline specialty that leads to a degree in that distinct specialty area at a particular level of instruction. All degree programs are categorized individually in the University's academic program inventory at the six-digit CIP code level. As a general rule, in order to be considered for degree program status, a course of study should require at least 27 semester hours in the proposed program area at the undergraduate level; at least half the number of hours required for the degree at the master's level; and at least 21 hours in the proposed program area at the doctoral level. Anything less than this within an existing degree program should be designated a concentration, a decision that can be made at the campus level. For teacher education programs, the President may issue regulations and/or guidelines setting parameters for required second academic concentrations.

Certificate Programs

A certificate program provides an organized program of study that leads to the awarding of a certificate rather than a degree. IPEDS has established the following standards for reporting certificates:

A post-baccalaureate certificate is awarded for an organized program of study equivalent to 18 semester credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. It is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree, but does not meet the requirements for a master's degree.

A post-master's certificate is awarded for an organized program of study equivalent to 24 semester credit hours beyond the master's degree, but does not meet the requirement of academic degrees at the doctoral level.

Campuses may offer other certificate programs that do not meet these reporting requirements.

Teacher Licensure Programs

Constituent institutions with teacher education programs approved by the State Board of Education may offer specific course clusters in approved teacher licensure areas which meet licensure requirements of the State Board of Education but do not lead to the conferral of a particular degree or certificate. These may be at the entry level or advanced level of teacher licensure. When an institution receives authorization to offer teacher licensure in a specific area from the State Board of Education, General Administration should be notified. A current inventory of teacher licensure programs approved by the State Board of Education is available from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

B. ACADEMIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT REQUIRING AUTHORIZATION OR ACTION BEYOND THE CAMPUS LEVEL

The chancellors of the constituent institutions shall communicate to General Administration of the University their intentions or requests with respect to instructional program development for the following:

1. Notification of intent to plan a new undergraduate or master's program.
2. Request for authorization to plan a new degree program at the doctoral or first professional level.
3. Request for authorization to establish a new degree program.
4. Request for authorization to change the name or title of an existing degree program.
5. Request for authorization to discontinue a degree or certificates program.

6. Notification of intent to establish or discontinue a certificate or teacher licensure program.

Table 1 summarizes the academic program development review and authorization requirements for actions 1 through 6 above.

TABLE 1

**Academic Program Notification and Authorization Requirements
Notice of Intent to Plan or Authorization to Plan**

Authority	Undergraduate, and Master’s Programs	Doctoral and First Professional Programs
General Administration	Receives <i>Notification of Intent to Plan</i>	Receives <i>Request for Authorization to Plan</i> and makes recommendation to the BOG Planning Committee
BOG Planning Committee	Receives semi-annual reports on programs being planned	Grants <i>Authorization to Plan</i>

Authorization to Establish

Authority	Degree Programs	Teacher Certification Area	Certificates	Change Program or Degree Title
General Administration	Receives Request for Authorization to Establish and makes recommendation to BOG Planning Committee	Receives notification from chancellor of approval by State Board of Education	Receives notification from chancellor	Approves program or degree title change
Planning Committee	Recommends Authorization to Establish to BOG	---	---	---
Board of Governors	Grants Authorization to Establish	---	---	---

Authorization to Discontinue/Notification of Discontinuation

Authority	Program	Certificates	Teacher Certification Areas
General Administration	Receives request and makes recommendation	Receives notice of discontinuation	Receives notice of discontinuation
BOG Planning Comm.	Recommends discontinuation	---	---
Board of Governors	Authorizes discontinuation	---	---

C. PROCEDURES FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT OR MODIFICATION

1. Campus Program Development Procedures

Each institution must have a clearly defined process for campus review and approval of proposals to plan and, once planning is completed, a process for approving requests to establish new academic degree programs. The appropriate campus committees and authorities must approve any notification or request to plan or establish a new degree program before submitting it to General Administration.

Institutions wishing to plan new degree programs at the undergraduate or master's level must send a notification of intent to plan to General Administration. Such notification may be sent at any time, but at least six months prior to the proposed date of establishment, using the form developed for this purpose (Appendix A).

To assist institutions preparing to plan new programs, Academic Planning/Academic Affairs staff will make available a link to the CIP taxonomy, an up-to-date Academic Program Inventory for UNC institutions, and a 5-year history of enrollment of majors and degrees awarded by program and institution within the UNC system. Institutions planning a new degree program will be expected to contact other institutions awarding the proposed degree during the planning process regarding their experience with program productivity (applicants, majors, job market, placement, etc.).

Upon receipt of the notification of intent to plan, Academic Planning will 1) acknowledge receipt of the notification; 2) provide any additional information not yet posted regarding location of similar programs; and 3) add this program-planning activity to a list that will be maintained by Academic Planning and made accessible to all UNC institutions. All UNC institutions will be expected to consult this list periodically to remain informed about programs being planned by other UNC institutions.

Following notification of intent to plan, the institution will have one year to complete planning and submit a request to establish the proposed program. If planning is not completed within the year, the campus may, under special circumstances, request a one-year extension. If the institution fails to complete the program plan within its allotted time, it must wait one year before resubmitting notification of intent to plan that program.

The program planning activity is intended as an opportunity for an institution to make the case for need and demand and for its ability to offer a quality program. This activity, by itself, does not guarantee that program authorization will be granted.

2. Planning New Doctoral and First Professional Degree Programs

Institutions wishing to plan new degree programs at the doctoral or first professional level must seek authorization to plan the program, using the appropriate form (Appendix B). Campus requests must be the result of comprehensive strategic planning. The formal request to plan must indicate how the proposed program fits into the institution's comprehensive strategic plan and address issues such as need, demand, potential duplication, readiness of the institution to offer the program, and potential costs. Requests

for authorization to plan may be submitted periodically by fixed dates established by General Administration.

UNC chief academic officers and graduate deans will be invited to discuss issues such as need and demand, opportunities for collaboration, etc. with respect to graduate education at their periodic meetings. After appropriate notification to the Graduate Council, General Administration will present recommendations regarding authorization to plan doctoral and first professional programs to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs for their consideration.

Authorization to plan a new degree program does not in any way constitute a commitment on the part of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs or the Board of Governors to approve a subsequent request to establish the program. Planning authorization signifies that the committee finds merit in the general proposition, that there may be sufficient need for the program, and that the suggested program is consistent with the assigned mission of the institution. Such authorization constitutes clearance for the institution to document and further justify the need and demand for the proposed program.

Following authorization to plan, an institution will have two years to complete its planning and submit a request to establish the proposed program. If the request to establish is not completed within this period, the campus may request a one-year extension. If the institution fails to submit a proposal within its allotted time, it must wait a year before resubmitting a request to plan that program. Similarly, if the request to plan is denied, the institution may not resubmit this request for three years.

3. Planning New Degree Programs-Notification of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

The Board of Governors' Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs will receive semi-annual reports, prepared by Academic Affairs, on the status of undergraduate and graduate programs being planned.

The General Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) requires that the Commission receive prior notification one year in advance if an institution is planning to introduce a degree program at a more advanced level than previously authorized (e.g., a master's level institution planning its first degree program at the doctoral level). An institution may not initiate a degree program at a more advanced level without prior approval from SACS. When an institution receives authorization for the Educational Planning Committee to plan a new degree program at a more advanced level than those previously authorized, a copy of General Administration's letter of authorization is sent to SACS and the chancellor of the institution is reminded to notify SACS. SACS may request additional information. The Commission on Colleges also requires prior notification and prior approval if an institution is adding a degree at the same level for which the institution is already accredited and the new program will result

in a “significant modification in the nature and scope of the institution.” The following procedures have been adopted to facilitate compliance with these policies and procedures.

The UNC Academic Program Inventory (API) classifies all university degree programs into 31 major discipline divisions. Each campus also has an inventory of authorized programs listed by discipline division and degree program title. Planning a program in a different discipline division than those currently authorized is interpreted as a potential substantive change. When an institution begins to plan a program in a new discipline division, a copy of the letter of authorization (if the program is at the doctoral or first professional level) is sent to SACS, and the chancellor of the institution must also notify SACS of the potential substantive change. If SACS interprets this as a significant modification, it may request additional information. The institution should inform General Administration of any communications from SACS regarding the substantive change policy as it relates to the planning of new programs, especially if it is determined that a program in a new discipline division constitutes a significant modification in the nature and scope of the institution.

4. Establishing New Degree Programs

Requests for authorization to establish a new degree program (Appendix C) may be submitted at any time after “notification of intent to plan” has been submitted for undergraduate and master’s programs and after planning authorization has been granted for doctoral and first professional programs.

In general it is expected that funding to support new degree programs will be provided through a combination of internal reallocations, enrollment increase funds, and external grants.

Following review and (where appropriate) consideration by the Graduate Council, General Administration will make a decision whether to recommend approval of the program to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and (through it) to the Board of Governors. In general, reviews will be completed within three to six months. Actual time will depend upon the quality of the proposal and the extent to which the proposal may need to be revised and resubmitted.

If the new program is at a more advanced level than those previously authorized for the institution, a copy of General Administration’s letter of authorization will be sent to SACS, and the chancellor of the institution will also be reminded to notify SACS and to take the necessary measures to comply with its policies. If the new program is in a new discipline division and SACS has previously determined (upon being notified of authorization to plan) that this constitutes a significant modification in the nature and scope of the institution, a copy of the Office of the President’s letter of authorization will be sent to SACS, and the chancellor of the institution will also be reminded to notify SACS and to take the necessary measures to comply with SACS policies.

After an institution receives authorization to establish a new degree program, it must submit two progress reports to General Administration. The first such report will cover

the first one to two years of implementation, and the second report will cover the first three to four years of operation of the program. Both reports will include information on the extent to which an institution has met projected enrollments and degrees conferred or any other issues relevant to the program's development. These reports will be submitted as a part of the institution's biennial long-range planning submission.

5. Changing the Name or Degree Title of an Existing Degree Program

Requests to change the name or title of an existing degree program, accompanied by an explanation of the reason for the proposed change, may be submitted to General Administration at any time.

6. Changing the Classification of Instructional Program Code (CIP)

Any change in the CIP Code for an authorized degree programs requires General Administration approval. A joint committee from Finance and Academic Planning/Academic Affairs will review any proposals to change the CIP that would result in a change of funding category for the program.

7. Discontinuing Academic Degree Programs

Requests for authorization to discontinue a degree program may be made by letter from the chancellor to General Administration at any time, giving the effective date of discontinuation and explaining the reason for the request. General Administration will request the concurrence of the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs and (through it) the approval of the Board of Governors. Students enrolled in discontinued degree programs must be allowed to complete their courses of study within a reasonable period of time. Notice of discontinuation of certificates may be submitted to General Administration at any time.

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1. Robert L. Morgan, E. Stephen Hunt, and Brenda Ashford (2002). Classification of Instructional Programs: 2000 Edition Washington: National Center for Education Statistics.
 2. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of Teacher Education (Raleigh, NC, September 1993). Standards for the Approval of Teacher Education Institutions and Programs in North Carolina.

GUIDELINES FOR ALTERNATIVE, ONLINE, OR DISTANCE EDUCATION DELIVERY OF APPROVED DEGREE PROGRAMS

The principal mode of offering degree-related courses and programs in the University of North Carolina traditionally has been through regular on-campus, in-residence instructional activities. However, the demand for education beyond the confines of the campus and through alternative delivery systems, such as distance and online technologies, has steadily increased, both from practicing professionals in fields such as education, health professions, business, engineering, and public affairs, and from place-bound nontraditional students. Consequently, off-site and online delivery of degree-related instruction is growing as the University continues to respond to rising demands for educational access. These means allow the University to bring educational opportunity to many students who may find it difficult to relocate to a University campus.

The University launched the University of North Carolina Online on July 1, 2007 and that site lists more than 170 degree, certificate, and licensure programs that are offered by the constituent universities.

This policy statement and associated procedures are intended to ensure (1) that the academic standards of alternative, online, and off-site delivery of academic program are consistent with the standards for programs delivered on-campus, and (2) that unnecessary duplication of effort and resources does not occur among the distance education activities of the constituent institutions of the University, nor among distance and programs delivered to resident students.

A. DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SITE-SITE BASED FACILITIES

1. Distance Education

There are several terms used to describe instruction that is offered away from a campus, such as off-campus or off-site instruction, extension, distance education, e-learning, online, etc. Distance education will be understood to include off-campus instruction for credit (whether face-to-face, electronically mediated, or a combination of methodologies) whether a single course, a certificate program, or a degree program.

2. Proposed Site

For those programs that are site based, the proposed site will be the North Carolina county or counties in which the proposed site-based degree-related distance education course or program will be delivered. If the delivery site is outside North Carolina then the city and state or country of delivery should be identified.

3. Proposed Site-based Facilities for Distance Delivery

Any site-based facilities that will be used in distance delivery will need to be identified and described. The description should explain ownership of the facilities and the terms of use including the cost for use for educational delivery.

4. Online Delivery of Programs

Online delivery normally does not require sites or facilities away from the campus, but if they do identification and description should be included.

5. Identification of Students in Distance Learning Programs

Programs offering distance education must have processes in place to establish that that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit.

B. PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles for developing, conducting, and assessing degree-related distance education activities in the University are as follows:

1. The General Administration is responsible for the authorization, coordination and monitoring of degree-related distance education activities in accordance with the governing policies, regulations, and guidelines, and procedures set forth in this statement. General Administration must authorize degree programs and degree completion programs that are offered away from UNC campuses, regardless of the mode of instruction.
2. The constituent institutions and the academic units offering the instruction are responsible for the development, delivery, regular assessment, and accreditation (general and specialized) of specific degree-related distance education courses and programs.
3. Each institution must have a clearly defined process for the review and approval of proposals to plan and, once planning is completed, to establish distance education degree programs. The appropriate campus committees and authorities must approve any notification of planning or request to establish a distance education program before submitting it to General Administration.
4. The academic standards and quality of course and degree-related distance education shall be consistent with and comparable to the academic standards and quality of regular, on-campus instructional activity. The application and maintenance of academic standards are the responsibility of the academic unit and campus offering the instruction.
5. In the course of planning degree-related distance education activities, each constituent institution is urged to consider the potential for collaboration with other institutions in order to avoid unnecessary duplication. Inter-institutional coordination should be completed prior to seeking such authorization from General Administration as may be required to establish the activities.

C. ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

UNC institutions are individually accredited by the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and are responsible for ensuring that

they follow COC criteria and procedures with respect to any distance education activities that may constitute a substantive change as defined by SACS4. With respect to this policy, the Office of Academic Affairs at each institution is responsible for determining whether Procedure One (prior notification and approval) or Procedure Two (prior notification) applies and for complying with the appropriate procedure. However, actual authorization to offer the proposed program will come to the institution from the General Administration (with a copy to SACS along with the prospectus) when the proposed program is approved.

UNC institutions are also responsible for informing themselves of, and complying with, other state or international requirements for licensure or notification when they plan to offer distance education courses or degree programs in other states or nations.

D. DEGREE-RELATED DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES

The development and delivery of individual degree-related distance education courses are institutional responsibilities. Courses may be offered without prior approval of General Administration. However, institutions should list these courses on their distance education web site.

The focus of UNC distance education efforts should be primarily at the upper division and graduate levels, and where feasible in collaboration with community colleges. Therefore, except under recognized circumstances (e.g., Independent Studies correspondence courses, iSchool courses for high school, students courses developed primarily for on-campus students), UNC institutions' distance education offerings should not duplicate lower-division (freshman or sophomore) courses that are offered by a community college. In the case of site-based courses, the proposing institution should give the local community college (if located in the city of the proposed site) the opportunity to offer the course before proceeding to offer the course itself. In the case of electronically-mediated courses, institutions should avoid developing lower-division courses that have already been developed for statewide distribution by a community college except as indicated above. Proposals to offer courses or programs through the Southern Regional Electronic Campus (SREC) will be coordinated through General Administration.

Institutions planning to offer a sequence of courses for certification, licensure, and etc. off-campus should notify the General Administration in advance so that such information on these activities can be made accessible through an inventory and a web site maintained by the General Administration. Authorization to establish such courses of study is not required unless the request represents a substantive change as defined by SACS. Procedure Two of the COC Substantive Change policy defines the following as constituting a change requiring prior notification: initiating programs/courses delivered through contractual agreement or consortium (see Section L).

Information about Online courses will be made available through the University of North Carolina Online. Campuses wishing to list their online courses there should provide information about the courses in a timely fashion.

E. DEGREE-RELATED DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Off-campus Instruction Offering 26-49 Percent of a Degree

COC Substantive Change Procedure Two (prior notification) applies to a) the initiation of site-based/classroom group instruction (where the instructor is present) if the student may earn more than 25 percent and less than 50 percent of credits toward a degree program and this instruction is offered away from the main campus; and b) for distance learning/technology-based group or individual instruction (where the instructor and student are geographically separated), offering first credit courses via distance learning/technology-based instruction by which students can obtain 26 to 49 percent of their credits toward a degree program. Institutions proposing distance education activities that fall within this policy should notify SACS and copy the General Administration. Procedure Two also applies to the initiation of significant changes in existing technology-based delivery systems in distance learning/off-campus programs (without reference to the percent of the courses offered toward the degree). Prior to the initiating of such programs current COC substantive change criteria should be reviewed.

2. Distance Education Programs Offering 50 Percent or More of a Degree Program

Distance education programs in which 50 percent or more of a degree program is provided must be authorized by General Administration. The Division of Academic Affairs will maintain a listing of all UNC distance education degree programs (offering 50 percent or more of the degree program off-campus) being planned, as well as an inventory of all authorized distance degree programs. Both will be available electronically. Before submitting any proposal for a distance education degree program, institutions should ascertain whether a comparable program is being planned or offered by another constituent institution and, if site-based, whether such a program is already offered in the proposed county site (whether off-campus or on-campus). Similarly, institutions proposing an “individual access” (electronically mediated) program should determine whether a comparable “individual access” program is being planned or offered by another constituent institution. If this is the case and the institution decides to proceed with planning, it will be expected to make a compelling case for why its proposal does not constitute unnecessary duplication.

Whenever feasible, arrangements should be made to use the facilities and resources, such as media centers, computer centers, libraries, laboratories, etc., of other constituent institutions or other appropriate institutions such as community colleges or other UNC campuses when offering site-based distance education programs.

COC Substantive Change Procedure One (prior notification and approval) applies to:

- a. initiating an off-campus (additional) site (site-based/classroom group instruction) or first distance learning program at which students can earn at least 50 percent of an educational program; and

- b. initiating a branch campus.

In such cases institutions must provide written notification of the proposed change to the COC Executive Director six months in advance of implementation (using the form in Appendix F) and, in response to a request from the Executive Director, an “information copy” of its request to establish a distance education degree program (Appendix G). When a decision is made concerning the request, the Senior Vice President will notify the institution and the COC, and the chancellor should also notify the COC.

COC Substantive Change Procedure Two (prior notification) applies to:

With respect to the establishment of distance learning programs offering 50 percent or more of a degree program, COC Substantive Change Procedure Two (prior notification) applies to:

- a. For site-based/classroom group instruction (where the instructor is present): adding significantly different degree programs at a currently approved off-campus site (does not apply to new sites, in which case Procedure One applies).
- b. For distance learning/technology-based group or individual instruction (where the instructor and student are geographically separated): expanding a previously reported program from less than 50 percent of credits to 50 percent or more of a degree program or an entire degree program; or adding significantly different programs from previously reported programs offered through distance learning.

In such cases, institutions should send the Executive Director written notification (using the form in Appendix F) prior to implementation. UNC institutions also must submit Appendix G to General Administration.

Notification of Intent to Plan:

Institutions wishing to offer an existing degree program off-campus must submit a notification of intent to plan (Appendix F) to General Administration. **The electronic form available on the UNC GA Academic Planning website should be used. The institution should also print a copy of this notification and submit it to the COC Executive Director with a cover letter to fulfill the written notification requirements of Substantive Change Procedures One and Two, or the campus may use its own form of notification to the COC.** Such notice may be sent at any time, but at least one month prior to submitting a request to establish (and three months prior to the proposed implementation date) or when the institution is required to notify SACS (whichever comes sooner). Upon receipt of the notification of intent to plan, Academic Affairs will acknowledge receipt of the notification and add this program-planning activity to a list that will be maintained by Academic Affairs and made available to all UNC institutions. All UNC institutions will be expected to

consult this list periodically to remain informed about distance education programs being planned by other UNC institutions.

In cases where an institution is proposing a new academic degree program (not currently authorized in its Academic Program Inventory [API]) that will be offered both on-campus and off-campus (or, under special circumstances, only off-campus), it should follow the regular procedure for planning a new degree program. However, the notice or request, (Appendices A and B) should include information regarding the intent to offer the program off-campus. This is required because the proposed program must be a part of the institution's official API before it can be offered off-campus.

Request to Establish:

Requests for authorization to establish a degree-related distance education program (Appendix G) must be submitted at least two months prior to the proposed date of establishment (and therefore, as noted previously, notification of intent to plan must be submitted at least three months prior to implementation). **If the institution has determined that the program involves a COC Substantive Change Procedure One, Appendix G should also be sent by the institution to COC with a cover letter. Upon authorization of the program by UNC General Administration, UNCA GA will send an authorization letter to the institution with a copy to the COC Executive Director.** If the program is site-based and is to be offered outside North Carolina, the institution must also receive clearance from the appropriate licensing authority in the intended site(s). Individual access programs that are not site-based outside of North Carolina do not require such clearance. If the request is to establish a new academic degree program, the request to establish a new degree program (Appendix C) must also be completed. It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure that there are (or will be) sufficient funds to support the proposed program through a reasonable period of time for program completion.

Discontinuation of Degree-related Distance Education Programs:

Institutions must notify General Administration when approved distance education programs or certificate/licensure programs are no longer active so that they can be removed from the UNC inventory (Appendix I).

F. GENERAL PREREQUISITES FOR INITIATING DEGREE-RELATED DISTANCE EDUCATION

1. The program that is being proposed as a degree-related distance education program must be authorized in the Academic Program Inventory of the proposing institution. If the proposed program is not currently authorized, the institution must follow the procedure for new academic program development, as well as applicable procedures in this policy statement.

2. A proposed degree-related distance education course or program may be delivered through a special instructional division of the institution (e.g., extension), but instruction and supervision must be provided by the same college, school or department offering the course or program in regular term or summer term instruction on-campus.
3. Degree-related distance education programs will be authorized for operation only in instances of clear and demonstrable need.

G. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. **Admissions Requirements.** Admissions requirements for degree-related distance education programs must be comparable to the admissions requirements of the same programs offered on-campus.
2. **Residence Requirements.** The institution must state clearly its policy regarding the number of credit hours and courses applicable to a distance education degree program, if applicable, which must be earned in residence by regular term or summer term instruction on its campus (or at an authorized graduate center) and must clearly define “residence,” or else the institution must indicate that such a policy is not applicable.
3. **Curriculum and Instruction**
 - a. Programs must provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty, and among students.
 - b. The institution’s faculty must assume responsibility for and exercise oversight over distance education, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction.
 - c. The institution must ensure that the technology used is appropriate to the nature and objectives of the programs.
 - d. The institution must ensure the currency of materials, programs, and courses.
 - e. The institution’s distance education policies must be clear concerning ownership of materials, faculty compensation, copyright issues, and the utilization of revenue derived from the creation and production of software, telecourses, or other media products.
4. **Faculty**
 - a. Faculty members assigned to teach degree-related distance education courses or programs must be members of the regular staff of the institution offering the courses or programs or part-time faculty identified specifically to assist as distance education instruction faculty members and fully qualified to teach as determined by the academic department offering the course or program. If the institution has a designated graduate faculty, graduate-level instructors, whether full-time or part-time faculty members of the institution, must hold membership on the graduate faculty of

- that institution in accordance with the institutional regulations and policies governing such membership. Full-time and part-time faculty must meet the requirements described in the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement by the Commission on Colleges of SACS.
- b. Part-time faculty must possess at least the same or equivalent qualifications as the full-time faculty and must be approved formally by the academic department through which credit is to be awarded and such other institutional units or mechanisms as may be required for faculty appointments. Institutions shall adopt policies relating to the employment of part-time faculty which ensure that the use of such faculty does not result in diminished academic quality or in conflicts of interest.
 - c. Full-time faculty members may teach courses in distance education programs as a part of their regular load. However, if instead they teach such courses on an overload basis, they shall be limited to no more than one additional course per semester in addition to their regular full-time, on-campus teaching load.
 - d. Faculty members employed to teach only distance education courses or programs must have a significant orientation and involvement with the ongoing planning of policies and programs of the academic unit offering these courses or programs to assure their familiarity with the programs. They must also be involved in the assessment of student learning and other evaluation processes.
 - e. The institution must provide appropriate faculty support services specifically related to distance education.
 - f. The institution must provide appropriate training for faculty who teach in distance education programs.

5. Student Services

- a. The institution must provide adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support the programs, including admissions, financial aid, academic advising, delivery of course materials, and placement and counseling. These services must be comparable to the quality and availability of such services provided to students enrolled in programs offered on-campus.
- b. The institution must provide an adequate means for resolving student complaints.
- c. The institution must provide to students advertising, recruiting, and admissions information that adequately and accurately represents the programs, requirements, and services available. There should be a set of written policies, procedures, and guidelines pertaining to degree-related distance education courses and programs which includes information on admissions, curriculum, requirements for completion of the distance education courses or programs, costs and payment policies, financial aid, and any other pertinent information. In the case of electronically-mediated distance education, institutions must provide information about the nature of

- d. The institution must ensure that students admitted possess the knowledge and equipment necessary to use the technology employed in the program and provide aid to students who are experiencing difficulty using the required technology.

6. Library and Learning Resources

- a. The institution must ensure that students have access to and can effectively use appropriate library resources.
- b. The institution must monitor whether students make appropriate use of learning resources.
- c. The institution must provide laboratories, facilities, and equipment appropriate to the courses or programs.

7. Facilities and Finances

- a. The institution must possess the equipment and technical expertise required for distance education.
- b. The institution's long-range planning, budgeting, and policy development processes must reflect the facilities, staffing, equipment and other resources essential to the viability and effectiveness of the distance education program.
- c. The facilities needed for distance delivery must be clearly identified and described and their use must be in compliance with law and BOG policies and regulations.

H. REVIEW CRITERIA

In reviewing requests for authorization to initiate degree-related distance education programs, General Administration will consider:

1. the impact of the proposed program on the quality and capacity of existing on-campus academic programs at the requesting institution,
2. the need and demand for the distance education instruction,
3. the readiness of the institution to deliver a program comparable in quality and standards to those that are offered on-campus,
4. the impact of the proposed distance education instruction on other institutions or agencies in the area (if site-based) and in the state as a whole,

5. the compatibility of the proposed distance education activity with the mission and strategic plan of the requesting institution and with the mission and strategic directions of the University of North Carolina, and
6. the absence of duplication of the proposed program with other fact-to-face or distance programs.

I. ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Degree-related courses or programs may be offered through distance education only with the concurrence of the responsible academic dean or department head of the college, school or department as to the adequacy of faculty and other instructional resources, such as library resources, laboratory, computer resources, media support services, and classroom facilities, required for the proposed instructional activity.
2. The appropriate academic dean or department head will be accountable for all qualitative aspects of distance education operations and for ensuring the standards for awarding credit are consistent with requirements for credit that must be met by students enrolled in the program as on-campus students.
3. The appropriate academic dean or department head is responsible for ensuring that the teaching and evaluation formats for distance education instruction are comparable to the formats used on-campus or that the formats have been developed or revised specifically for distance education instruction.
4. Students enrolled in distance education courses and programs should be included in university-wide assessment programs administered to students on-campus (e.g., course/instructor evaluation, graduating senior and alumni surveys, etc.). All students should be included in the Student Data Files, and their courses should be reported on the Course Description Table Files, the Student Course load Files, and the Course Grade Files provided to General Administration. The Office of Institutional Research on the campus should coordinate this data collection.
5. The institution must assess student capability to succeed in distance education programs and apply this information to admission and recruitment policies and decisions.
6. The institution must ensure the integrity of student work and the credibility of the degrees and credits it awards.

J. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The General Administration will maintain a current inventory of authorized degree-related distance education programs. This inventory will be posted and made available electronically.
2. Institutions will maintain an electronic listing of the degree-related distance education courses and programs currently being offered.

3. In January of each year, General Administration shall submit to SACS an annual report that includes an inventory of all authorized degree-related distance education programs for the University and highlights program additions, discontinuations, and other changes during the past year.

K. PARTICIPATION OF CONSTITUENT INSTITUTIONS IN INTER-INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

1. **Procedures.** Procedures for authorizing and offering degree-related distance education programs rely heavily on the initiative of constituent institutions to inform other constituent institutions of their plans, especially those in the locale where the proposed instructional activity will be carried out and where proposed courses and programs are comparable to those offered by neighboring institutions. Institutions are expected to exercise great care that their distance education instruction activities are not unproductive, excessively costly, or unnecessarily duplicative. Where appropriate, constituent institutions are encouraged to combine their efforts to serve citizens whose educational needs are not being met in a timely or effective manner.
2. **Policy.** General Administration must approve the participation of a constituent institution in any formal inter-institutional arrangements which provide for cooperative instructional activities and operation or use of facilities and academic resources between and among public and nonpublic institutions of higher education, including community colleges, public school systems, and any cooperative association of such educational institutions formed as a corporation or consortium, including “Consortium-Based Teacher Education Programs” authorized by the State Board of Education.

An institution proposing to participate in an inter-institutional arrangement as described above should follow the format in Appendix J to present its request prior to signing any agreement. The Senior Vice President will review and approve the terms and conditions of participation in any inter-institutional or interagency organization, including the charter and bylaws thereof, and may thereafter authorize a chief administrative officer of the constituent institution, or the officer’s designee, a member of the President’s staff, or any other person to participate on the governing body of such a consortium.

Certain inter-institutional arrangements (e.g., initiating credit courses involving a contractual agreement or consortium for course content to be delivered, in whole or in part, by an organization which is not accredited by the COC or, potentially, among COC-accredited institutions) may also require prior notification to the Commission on Colleges of SACS to assure that necessary accreditation requirements are met (Substantive Change Procedure Two). Once the arrangement has been approved, the institution should submit a copy of its proposal, accompanied by a copy of the letter of approval, to the Commission on Colleges. In instances where UNC institutions contract with community colleges to offer general education programs, both institutions should notify the Commission on Colleges to ensure that requirements are met.

Any commitments, including facilities and resources, by the University or a constituent institution to any inter-institutional arrangement, association or corporation shall be made in compliance with all provisions of law and regulations governing the University or the constituent institution and shall not exceed funds appropriated or otherwise lawfully available to the University or to the constituent institution thereof in the fiscal year in which the commitments are made.

The financial standing and operations of any inter-institutional arrangement, association or corporation shall be subject to audit by the State Auditor.