

TO: Beth Dobkin, Provost

FROM: Steve Cortright, Chair
Academic Senate

DATE: April 15, 2011

RE: Senate Action S-10/11-25CA
Provisional Approval Process for
New Graduate and Professional Programs

At the April 14, 2011 meeting of the Academic Senate, the attached proposal for a Provisional Approval Process for New Graduate and Professional Programs was approved on the Senate's consent agenda. The issue was forwarded to the Senate from the Graduate Educational Policies Committee (GPSEPC) where it was approved unanimously. This action was assigned Senate Action # S-10/11-25CA.

Attachment

cc: Brother Ronald Gallagher, President
Vice Provost Chris Sindt

Approval Process for New Graduate and Professional Programs

Provisional Approval

Overview

New graduate and/or professional studies programs undergo a two-tiered process of review at Saint Mary's College. The review involves two steps:

1. *Provisional approval* (previously called "Fast Track Approval") by the GPSEPC as well as School and College administration. After submitting a proposal for provisional approval, if the proposal is accepted, the new program can be implemented on a trial basis. This document provides the guidelines for that proposal.
2. *Final approval* (previously called "Initial Program Review"), involving a full review by GPSEPC, followed by the approval of the Academic Senate and College administration. This step requires the submission of a full proposal, similar to the self-study required for the Program Review Process for an existing program. The Guidelines for Final Approval can be found on the Saint Mary's College Website.

Guidelines for Provisional Approval

The Provisional Approval process is intended to meet the needs of a School that wishes to “pilot” a program before seeking approval for it as a permanent program of the College. Proposals for new programs are submitted to the GPSEPC for approval. They must first be approved by signature of the Dean of the appropriate School, the Provost of the College, and the Vice President for Finance of the College.

The steps in these guidelines are meant to ensure that when adequate planning and oversight have been exercised, the new program can operate experimentally for an appropriate period of time. This provisional period of operation will allow for a full assessment of the program's educational and financial viability, to take place in the Final Approval phase. The general standard for “an appropriate time” is one cycle of the program, where a "cycle" is defined as the time it takes a typical student to complete the program of study. The proposers of the program may have one additional year beyond one cycle to prepare their application for final approval. The deadline for submitting the new program for final approval by the GPSEPC should appear in the proposal itself. After the proposal has been prepared and all the necessary signatures obtained, the original proposal will reside in the files of the GPSEPC. It is the responsibility of the proposers to meet subsequent deadlines and submit all needed materials in a timely way to facilitate the GPSEPC's process for final approval.

The GPSEPC will consider the proposal, based on the information provided according to these guidelines. The Chair of GPSEPC may request additional information, or seek the opinion of other faculty members and administrators if needed, before signing off on the proposal. If the

GPSEPC rejects the proposal, reasons must be provided in writing to the authors of the proposal and a revised version may be submitted subsequently for further consideration, with new dated signatures from each of the designated officials, based on the revised version.

The basis for the GPSEPC's decision to accept the proposal is strictly academic: is the program as proposed of merit, does it offer a potentially valuable contribution to the academic programs of the College, and how does it fit within the current and prospective offerings of the College? Approval by the Chair of GPSEPC at this point does NOT guarantee final approval, which will be based solely on the assessment of the program and the Academic Senate's evaluation of its merit after it has been operating for the designated period.

Proposal

The proposal itself should contain: a rationale, based on the College's Mission and the School's goals/strategic plan; a clear and complete presentation of the academic structure of the program; a business plan, with the specific, projected cost/revenue figures for the period of the proposal; a completed library resource review; a process for assessment, including the date by which all materials will be submitted to the GPSEPC for final approval; and, the signatures called for above.

Details

Name of Proposed Degree or Program:

School:

Primary Contact Person:

Other Involved Faculty:

Date:

1) Context: Describe the need for the new program.

2) Overview: Describe the academic structure for the program. Some questions and issues to address:

- a) How does the program fit within the threefold mission of Saint Mary's College?
- b) How does the program fit within the strategic plan of the sponsoring School?
- c) Describe the learning goals and learning outcomes of the program.
- d) Provide the program of study, including number of units, sample syllabi, methodologies for content delivery, location, intended calendar, and necessary facilities/support.
- e) How, if at all, does the new program build on existing programs and resources?
- f) What effects will the addition of this program have on other programs of the School and the College?
- g) What faculty have been involved in the design of the program? Who will teach in it?
- h) Describe the plan for assessing the educational effectiveness of the program, based on the learning outcomes identified in "c" and the program of study provided in "d." (When the final assessment report is made to the GPSEPC later, be sure to detail the ways in which feedback and assessment along the way have led to program enhancements or revisions.)

- i) What is the process for completing the assessment and providing it to the GPSEPC? (Interim reports are highly recommended, but at the very least there must be a specific deadline set by which time all assessment materials must be in the hands of the GPSEPC.)
- j) What are the library resource needs of the program? (This can be assessed after a library resources review has been completed. To request a library resource review, contact the SMC Library well in advance of submitting the proposal).
- k) What is the date you plan to submit the full proposal for Final Approval of the new program? (This is typically after one full cycle, plus one year).

3) Competitive Analysis and Business Plan: Present the competitive analysis and business plan that will support this new program.

- a) What analysis has been done of how this program meets educational needs in the market place?
- b) Budget (preferably in Excel format as well as in print): What are the projected enrollments, revenues, and program costs associated with the program? Include start-up and initial marketing costs, as well as ongoing operational costs in this budget. What are the financial goals of the business plan?
- c) What, if any, new resources, especially staff and faculty, will be required for the successful operation of this program over time?
- d) What, if any, legal or contractual obligations are associated with this program? (e.g. rental of space, agreements with other organizations or groups, etc.)

4) Attach the Library Resource Review (written by the librarian).

5) Signature page (see attached). The signature page indicates that due diligence has been applied to each of the critical aspects of the proposal process, and must include:

- a) The dated signature of the Dean of the School, indicating that this program has support and approval at the School level and fits within the strategic plan of the School;
- b) The dated signature of the appropriate senior administrator of the College with authority over the School involved (usually the Provost), indicating that the intended program fits within the strategic plan of the College as a whole and has administrative support;
- c) The dated signature of the Vice President for Finance, certifying that the business plan is reasonable and fits within the financial strategic plan for the College and the School
- d) Additionally, if legal contracts are involved, the signature of the College Counsel;
- e) The dated signature of the current Chair of the Graduate and Professional Studies Educational Policies Committee, on behalf of the Committee, who reviews the proposal for academic merit after all the other approvals have been given.

The properly signed proposal will be kept on file in the GPSEPC office and serve as the basis for the subsequent, final approval process.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Name of Proposed Degree or Program:

School:

Date:

The signatures below indicate approval for the proposed degree or program named above on a Provisional Basis.

Dean of the School Date

Provost Date

Vice President for Finance Date

College Counsel (if needed) Date

Chair of GPSEPC Date