
Policy Title: Program and Curriculum Development

Policy No: 5009

Approval Date: November 6, 2013

Approval Body: Academic Council

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Review Date: November 6, 2014

Policy Statement

University Canada West (UCW) is committed to creating and maintaining quality programs and courses that support the mission and goals of the University and to uphold the academic standards required for legislative consent and acceptance by the academic community. New programs and courses are expected to reflect the University's mission as a teaching university focused on career-related educational programs that promote application of theory and knowledge to practical problems in the field of study.

Purpose

The Program and Curriculum Policy outlines the requirements and processes for program and course development at UCW.

Scope

The Program and Curriculum policy applies to all new programs and courses created at UCW and to the senior academic administrators and the faculty members involved in their development.

With respect to meeting the mission and goals of UCW as stated above, new program proposals are developed around analysis of current knowledge in the field of study, labour market needs and professional standards (where relevant), resources to support student success, and effective and efficient use of university resources.

Additionally, new programs are developed around the standards required by the BC Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) based upon the standards for different levels of degrees as set out by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (2007) pertaining to:

- Depth and breadth of knowledge;
- Knowledge of methodologies;
- Application of knowledge;
- Communication skills;
- Awareness of limits of knowledge; and
- Professional capacity/autonomy.

New program development:

Undergraduate degrees will provide sufficient depth and breadth of study across disciplines as well as depth of study for concentrations or specializations within degree programs. The General Educational requirements commensurate with the degree level standards indicated above will be met. Associate degree programs will be a minimum of 60 credits. Bachelor degree programs will be a minimum of 120 credits. Master level programs will be a minimum of 30 credits.

All degree programs will identify a set of program learning outcomes that must be incorporated into the curriculum and criteria for assessment of students.

New program proposals and major revisions to existing curricula must be approved by Academic Council, following consultation with UCW faculty members and review by the Curriculum Review Committee (a Subcommittee of Academic Council), before being submitted for approval by the Degree Quality Assessment Board or other relevant approval authority. Proposals will be prepared according to the Full Program Proposal Guidelines developed by DQAB. Normally, an external review will be conducted by a subject matter expert outside of the University prior to submission to DQAB.

New programs will not be marketed or implemented prior to approval from DQAB.

An internal review will be conducted on all new programs within two years after implementation. The review will be conducted by an ad hoc committee appointed by the Vice President Academic (VPA) that will include qualified internal faculty members and may also include relevant professionals and external subject matter experts.

Course development

The VPA must approve the development of new courses or major revisions to existing courses. Course authors or development teams are approved and appointed by the VPA, supervised by the appropriate Program Chair or academic program head, and must follow the Program and Curriculum Development Policy and established curriculum development guidelines.

If new courses or course revisions are included in Academic Council's approval of a new program or revision of an existing program, they do not have to be approved by Academic Council once they have been completed.

A General Course Outline must be developed as a guide to the Course Syllabus. The General Course Outline will serve as the official course outline for transfer credit assessment and as a template to ensure consistency across course sections and instructors. While minor adjustments to course syllabi may be made by instructors, significant changes proposed to learning outcomes, course content, and assessment must be approved by the Program Chair, academic program head or the VPA to ensure adherence with, or to inform revisions to, the approved General Course Outline. New course proposals will normally be reviewed by an internal or external subject matter expert who was not involved in the writing of the new course.

The General Course Outline will be reviewed at least every two years by an ad hoc committee of faculty members teaching the course and the Program Chair or academic program head responsible for administration of the course. Every five (5) years an official review will be conducted for articulation purposes and to ensure that courses are achieving learning outcomes aligned with program learning goals and the overall mission of the University.

Ongoing Course Revisions

Faculty members must review and revise courses prior to each term start consistent with the Course Syllabus Policy and the General Course Outline. Significant and major course revisions must be approved by the Program Chair or academic program head.

Definitions

These definitions apply to terms as they are used in this policy.

Word/Term	Definition
Curriculum	A planned program of study that includes all of the courses, learning activities and learning outcomes required to complete a degree or other education credential
General Course Outline	Defines the core requirements for each course that must be reflected in the course syllabus.

	The General Course Outline is the document used for transfer credit assessment with other institutions.
Course Syllabus	The detailed course outline for each term that specifies the course learning goals, course materials, weekly lessons, assignments and other detailed instructions including specific directions from each instructor

Related legislation

Related policies

Policy Number	Policy Title
5012	Course Syllabus
6006	Copyright

Responsibility

The Vice President Academic (VPA) is responsible for developing, revising and implementing the Program and Curriculum Development policy.

Academic Council approves the Program and Curriculum Development Policy and subsequent revisions to the policy.

The Chair of Academic Council approves the appointment of members to the Curriculum Review Committee.

The VPA approves the commencement of all program, curriculum, and course development work.

The VPA oversees the development of new program proposals and approves the priorities and allocation of resources for new program development.

Academic Council has the authority to approve new program proposals and any significant revisions to existing programs and to recommend approval to the UCW Board of Governance.

The VPA is accountable to DQAB for submission and review of new program proposals.

The Program Chair, or academic program head approves the General Course Outlines and course syllabi related to the program(s) under his/her direction.

Faculty members/instructors are responsible for updating the Course Syllabus for courses that they teach each term.

PROCEDURES

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Proposals for new program development are either initiated by the Vice President Academic (VPA) or submitted to the VPA for approval to proceed.

The VPA consults with UCW faculty members and the President on ideas for new program proposals.

The VPA appoints the program development team and the appropriate Program Chair or academic program head to direct the team.

The VPA presents the proposal to UCW faculty for consultation and feedback.

The VPA approves the proposal for submission to the Curriculum Review Committee of Academic Council. The Curriculum Review Committee may recommend revisions before the proposal is submitted to Academic Council. If the Curriculum Review Committee does not recommend approval to Academic Council, it must consult with the VPA and the Chair of Academic Council. The Chair will decide if the proposal goes on the Academic Council Agenda.

When the proposal has been approved by Academic Council and the UCW Board of Governance, the VPA ensures that all revisions are made before submitting the proposal to DQAB through the approved process.

The VPA responds to any questions regarding the program proposal and organizes the visit of a review team where required.

Once a new program has been approved, the VPA oversees the implementation of the program as approved by DQAB.

Course development

The VPA appoints the course author or course development team and approves contracts (where required) and the allocation of resources for course development.

The Program Chair or academic program head, or assigned lead faculty member, directs the new course development/revision process setting the deliverables and the timelines for completion. Work will not proceed without approval of funding, a contract (where required) for the course author(s) and agreement on the deliverables.

The course author(s) consults with the Director of Library and Information Services regarding textbook availability and copyright compliance.

The course author(s) submits the completed course to the Program Chair or academic program head who then seeks final approval from the VPA.

The VPA submits a new course proposal, not formally approved as part of a program proposal or revision, to the Curriculum Review Committee of Academic Council for recommendation for approval by Academic Council. The Curriculum Review Committee may recommend revisions before the proposal is submitted to Academic Council. If the Curriculum Review Committee does not recommend approval to Academic Council, it must consult with the VPA and the Chair of Academic Council. The Chair will decide if the proposal goes on the Academic Council Agenda.

Course revisions (ongoing)

Faculty members submit course syllabi to the Program Chair, or academic program head for review and approval normally at least two weeks prior to the start of a term.