UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

Office of the Provost

PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING NEW PROGRAMS & REVISING EXISTING PROGRAMS

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I. Overview of the Process

A. Introduction

The University of New England encourages the ongoing development of and revisions to majors/programs, minors, concentrations, and credit-bearing certificates (hereafter referred to as "programs"), knowing that they are critical components to programmatic and institutional growth.

This handbook describes the required process faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders need to follow to propose ideas and shepherd them through to approval and implementation. Each step—from initial idea to preliminary proposal to feasibility study and pro forma budget—requires various levels of review. UNE encourages anyone, from faculty to administrators to other stakeholders (hereafter referred to as "lead planners"), to propose an idea and follow the steps in this process to see the idea to fruition. University and college faculty and administrators contribute to the proposals through a shared governance process.

For definitions of the types of programs referenced in this handbook, see Table 1. For information on non-credit bearing offerings (e.g., badges and continuing education programs) and their development process at UNE, see the next section.

Typically, the review entails three phases that lead planners, in partnership with the assistant provost for academic operations and university registrar (APAO), and with the support of the applicable dean, need to follow:

1) Attain the dean's and provost's approval of the program idea (Table 4).
2) Complete and attain approval of a market analysis and preliminary narrative (Table 5).
3) Complete and attain approval of a feasibility study and pro forma budget (Table 6). Use the university's template to complete the pro forma budget.

Document the approvals of every stage using the required signatures form in Appendix A.

As lead planners, in partnership with the APAO, shepherd the proposal through the various levels of review, they need to consult as early as possible with: applicable UNE administrative offices; departments, schools, or colleges that will provide support courses; and external regulatory agencies and accrediting bodies (such as programmatic, state, or institutional accreditors). Here are some UNE offices to consult with:

- Admissions (For CPS, contact its Admissions team)
- Assessment
- Facilities Management
- Financial Planning and Analysis (in Finance and Administration)
- Information Technology Services (ITS)
- Institutional Advancement
- Institutional Research and Data Analytics (IR)
- Library Services
- Registrar

- Research & Scholarship
- Student Academic Success Center (SASC)
- Student Affairs
- Student Financial Services

Some offices, such as Assessment, Admissions, Financial Planning and Analysis, Student Financial Services, and the Registrar, need to provide support throughout the process. The Registrar (Table 7) and Admissions (Table 8) also need to prepare for the changes as they get approved. Upon the program's final approval, those offices ensure the administrative details are completed and reflected in all relevant internal documents and externally-facing promotional materials.

Again, this handbook details the main steps to develop new programs and revise existing programs, yet each proposal might need to follow an individualized process that includes more or fewer steps than are outlined here. For example, new programs typically require a more comprehensive review than existing programs that seek to make minor curricular and/or administrative revisions. An existing program that wants to establish a new admissions model or a new enrollment track might only need to complete a pro forma budget. Thus, a proposal may follow a different path toward approval.

To confirm the required steps of the approval process, lead planners should consult with the APAO and the dean of the college that administratively houses or will potentially administratively house the program. The APAO and dean will then consult with the provost. Furthermore, all stakeholders should strive to maximize communication with others throughout the process so that any concerns, problems, or issues can be identified and addressed as early as possible to avoid major challenges or delays.

1. Non-Credit Bearing Offerings

Non-credit bearing offerings provide students with opportunities to learn a new skill or deepen existing skills, enrich their understanding of specific topics, and advance their personal or professional development. Such offerings might include, but are not limited to, badges, continuing education programs, fellowships, or certificates.

With some exceptions, including with badges and continuing education programs (see below*), the development of non-credit bearing offerings rests largely with individual programs and their college dean. It is within the disciplinary purview of the lead planners and the program, department, and/or school to identify and propose to their dean non-credit bearing opportunities for their related fields. Thus, lead planners who propose the offering need to confer with the dean to affirm the department's, school's, and college's capacity to run the offering. The dean decides whether to implement the offering. Generally, no further approval is required. Because non-credit bearing offerings do not lead to a degree, they do not require involvement of the Registrar or Financial Aid offices.

*Continuing Education (CE) programs need to go through an established process that the College of Professional Studies (CPS) facilitates, houses, and tracks. For information on that process, see the Continuing Education Policy and Reporting Guidelines.

*Badge proposals also need to undergo an established review and approval process. For information on the badging process, see UNE Badging Program.

B. The Review Process

See Appendix A for the required signatures form to document approval of the idea, preliminary proposal, and feasibility study and pro forma budget. See Appendix B for all of the tables and charts discussed in this section.

1. Levels of Review for Proposals (Tables 1-2)

Tables 1 and 2 outline the level of review needed for typical proposals. Table 1 provides information on new program proposals; Table 2 on program revision proposals. Again, lead planners need to partner with the APAO and involve applicable UNE administrative offices, external regulatory agencies, and accrediting bodies (if applicable) as early as possible in the process. For instance, lead planners need to work with Assessment to get a market analysis, and Admissions to estimate enrollment projections. Lead planners also need to consult with Student Financial Services regarding the proposal's potential impact on the award and dispersal of financial aid and the university's Program Participation Agreement with the Department of Education. Lead planners must also talk to the programs, departments, schools, and colleges that will provide support courses. If any questions arise about whether a level of review is required in any given instance (e.g., as noted by "TBD" in Tables 1 and 2), lead planners should consult with that office for clarification.

For more detailed definitions of programs from the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), see Appendix C. NECHE regularly updates its "Policy on Credits and Degrees" and posts it on its website. To ensure you have the most up-to-date file, also search for the policy on the NECHE web page (see file under subheading, "Commission Practices").

2. Timeline for Proposals (Table 3)

Table 3 provides recommended timelines for the three phases of review (i.e. idea; preliminary proposal; and feasibility study and pro forma budget), and the required deadlines for Student Financial Services, Admissions, and the Registrar to support the program's launch. Note that these deadlines do not preclude earlier action. Programs are encouraged to submit proposals throughout the year and start the review process of those proposals at any time. But lead planners need to follow the fixed deadlines for program launch.

**Note: In order for new programs to be voted on by the University Faculty Assembly (UFA) in a given month, new program proposals (feasibility study with pro forma budget) will be submitted*

to the UFA chair, who will share with chairs of UFA Academic Affairs Committee (UFA AAC) and UFA Financial Affairs Committee (UFA $FAC), no later than the first Wednesday of that month.

3. Decision-Making Steps in the Three Levels of Review (Tables 4-6)

From idea, to preliminary proposal, to feasibility study and pro forma budget, new programs in development and existing programs in revision undergo several levels of review. Table 4 illustrates the decision-making steps involved in reviewing the idea. Table 5 illustrates the decision-making steps involved in reviewing the preliminary proposal (which includes the market analysis and preliminary narrative). Table 6 illustrates the decision-making steps involved in reviewing the feasibility study and pro forma budget. Use Appendix A, "New or Revised Program Proposal: Required Signatures Form," to collect the required signatures for each stage in the process.

4. Involving Other Administrative Offices (Tables 7-8)

As the preliminary proposal, and the feasibility study and pro forma budget move through the levels of review, various administrative offices need to be involved in the process. Communication is key. Then, upon the proposal's final approval, UNE's administrative offices ensure that the changes are reflected in all relevant internal documents and externally-facing promotional materials. Table 7 illustrates the Registrar's responsibilities of coding the program and notifying other administrative offices and stakeholders. Table 8 illustrates the annual timeline Admissions follows for key marketing and promotional activities.

II. Preliminary Proposal

Following the program idea's approval, the next steps entail putting together: (A) a market analysis, and (B) a preliminary narrative.

A. Market Analysis

The market analysis is an integral part of the review that provides the foundation for the entire preliminary proposal and, if approved, the feasibility study and pro forma budget.

The market analysis entails analyzing available, pertinent, current data trends to demonstrate the program's market demand. Some of those data include completion rates of competitor programs, current labor market trends (e.g., annual job openings, median earnings, and job growth projections), and leading skills and qualifications employers are asking for to fill those positions.

Lead planners need to connect with the following two offices to complete the market analysis: (1) Assessment, and (2) Admissions.

1. Assessment

- For proposals in CAS, CDM, COB, COM, and WCHP: Lead planners need to contact the Office of Assessment to complete a market analysis through Lightcast Analyst.
- For proposals in CPS: Lead planners need to contact CPS's academic data coordinator to complete a market analysis through Lightcast, EAB, and other tools.

For more labor market trends, lead planners should also explore job search engine tools, such as Indeed, LinkedIn, Glassdoor, and SimplyHired.

To analyze data trends in the market, consider the following questions:

- What is the market for this program? What is the demand for this program?
- What are the regional and, if applicable, national completion rates of programs like this one?
- Who are the competitor programs? In what ways can this proposed program distinguish itself from those competitors?
- What are the regional and, if applicable, national jobs trends connected to programs like this one?
- What are the skills and qualifications graduates need to succeed in the related positions? In what ways can this proposed program offer those skills?

2. Admissions

Lead planners also need to connect with Admissions to have a conversation on determining the enrollment projections. In addition to new incoming (first-year and transfer) students, it might also be pertinent to estimate internal transfers.

- For proposals in CAS, CDM, COB, COM, and WCHP, contact the vice president of admissions and marketing.
- For proposals in CPS, contact CPS's dean.

B. Preliminary Narrative

Lead planners, in partnership with the APAO, need to use the following outline to write the preliminary narrative, focusing on the quality of the preliminary narrative, rather than the number of pages that make up the narrative.

a. Lead planners
- Include at least one point person of the proposal.

b. Proposed program
- What is the proposed program? What degree will be offered? (See Appendix B, Table 1, and Appendix C, for definitions of programs.)
- Are there expected concentrations within the program? (See Appendix B, Table 1, for definition of concentrations.)

c. Proposed college and school/department/unit to offer the program
   - Indicate all established and/or potential collaborators across UNE.

d. Proposed program's required practicum, field experiences, internships, etc.
   - Are there required practicum, field experiences, internships, etc.? If so, specify geographic reach of the location of these experiences.

e. Programmatic accreditation body approval of the program, if applicable
   - Discuss the programmatic accreditation body and related timetable for granting initial (new program) or ongoing accreditation (revision of an existing program).

f. Justification for the proposal (2-5 sentences)
   - Provide a summary of justification for the proposed program.
     - How does the program fit into the department's/school's strategic plan, and the UNE strategic plan, *Our World, Our Future*?
     - How will the university benefit from the program?
     - How does the program fit with other current UNE programs?
     - Discuss any other information that would justify further planning for this proposal.

Submit the preliminary proposal (which includes the market analysis and preliminary narrative) to the dean for review. Once affirmed, lead planners need to advance the preliminary proposal to the APAO and the provost.

Upon approval, lead planners, in partnership with the APAO, need to proceed with the feasibility study and pro forma budget, and notify the following offices:

- Admissions (For CPS, contact its Admissions team)
- Assessment
- Financial Planning and Analysis (in Finance and Administration)
- Institutional Research and Data Analytics (IR)
- Registrar
- Student Financial Services
- University Faculty Assembly (UFA)
- And any other offices that the lead planners have consulted with

III. Feasibility Study and Pro Forma Budget

A. Introduction

The proposal needs to include: (1) a feasibility study with the information described below in Part B, (2) attachments of supporting documentation, and (3) a pro forma budget using the university's

current template. Lead planners should explain any unavailable or excluded information in the body of the feasibility study.

Use the market analysis and preliminary narrative as the basis for the feasibility study and pro forma budget. Focus on the quality of the feasibility study, rather than the number of pages it includes.

Lead planners must also continue to partner with the APAO and involve applicable UNE administrative offices; departments, schools, or colleges that will provide support courses; and external regulatory agencies and accrediting bodies (such as programmatic, state, or institutional accreditors) to complete the feasibility study and pro forma budget. Among those offices, meet with the associate vice president of finance to complete the pro forma budget.

B. Feasibility Study

The following outline should be used to create the feasibility study. Use information from the preliminary proposal and the pro forma budget (see below) as applicable.

1. **Executive Summary** (Suggestion: Write after completing feasibility study and pro forma budget.)

The feasibility study begins with an executive summary (1-2 paragraphs or 300 words maximum) that briefly discusses the content of the feasibility study. The executive summary should include the following elements:

- Program and its rationale (e.g., need for program, its fit with UNE, its market niche)
- Accreditation requirements (if applicable)
- Program financial viability
- Timeline for program launch

2. **Program Name and Degree**
   - Proposed or revised (if applicable) degree and program description

3. **Program Rationale**
   - Discuss the program's conceptual fit with the department's/school's strategic plan, the university strategic plan (i.e., its mission, vision, core values, and strategic priorities), and its place in the university structure. Indicate affected and collaborative colleges and schools/departments/units. Include collaborative offices and structures.
   - Discuss graduates' career opportunities and employment outlook. Include data from other potential employers (e.g., with help of the market analysis) and published studies. Attach market analysis and other relevant reports to the feasibility study.

4. **Prospective Students**

- Include a list of competitive programs in the state, region, and beyond, as applicable. For example, include other institutions to which students may apply. For each program, list the institution name, concentrations (if applicable), tuition rate, programmatic accrediting body (if applicable), and program length/credit hours.
- Include the completion rates of other programs from the past three years, if available.

5. Model Curriculum

- Program goals (3-4 recommended)
- Student learning outcomes (5-8 recommended)
- Outline and describe required and elective courses, indicating total credits required for degree, and if the program requires field experiences, independent studies, clinical rotations, and/or internships.
    - For those programs requiring field-based experiences, include data on availability of field or clinical sites for student placement as well as mechanisms and cost for student supervision (e.g., program faculty or placement faculty supervision).
- Provide a model curriculum for each year of the program.
- Explain how the sequencing of courses, prerequisites, concentrations, practicum experiences (if applicable), and length of program is scalable to the proposed student population.
- Cite specific ways that existing course offerings may be integrated into the curriculum.
- Describe the value proposition of the program curriculum, i.e. how the curriculum is unique and distinctive from those of competitor institutions.
- Present a curriculum map displaying the introduction, reinforcement, and mastery of concepts leading to achievement of student learning outcomes.

6. Accreditation Requirements (if applicable)

- If the program requires programmatic accreditation or can achieve programmatic accreditation, describe specific requirements and their effect on the institution (e.g., faculty, curriculum, and resources).
- Describe, if applicable, any programmatic plans that have potential impacts on NECHE accreditation and/or Maine Department of Education requirements.

7. Impact on Personnel in Student Support Areas

- Discuss impact on student support areas, such as Student Affairs (e.g., Residential Life), Library Services, SASC, Athletics, ITS, and Community and Belonging.
    - Discuss the impact, if applicable, of new student demographics (e.g., age, commuter/resident, gender, race, and ethnicity).

8. Impact on Facilities (As appropriate, provide projections for five years)

- Describe any new or needed renovations of classrooms, laboratories, clinical spaces, and/or research spaces.
- Describe any additional space requirements, such as faculty offices, professional staff offices, and/or clinical and research spaces.
- Describe impact, if applicable, on Residential Life capacity.

9. Program Resources (As appropriate, provide projections for five years)

- Personnel:
  - Briefly describe position requirements of faculty and professional staff who will assume major responsibility for the program as outlined in the pro forma budget.
  - Describe specific impact on existing programs, if current faculty members are reassigned to new program.
- Equipment:
  - Briefly describe new and/or updated equipment and technology required for the program as outlined in the pro forma budget.

10. Timeline for Marketing and Implementation

- Provide an overall timeline, indicating the major events/activities from initiation through admission and enrollment of the first class. (Attach the timeline to the feasibility study.)

C. Pro Forma Budget

Collaborate with the associate vice president of finance, using the provided pro forma budget template, to make enrollment and financial projections, and incorporate those data into the feasibility study.

a. Enrollment projections

- Project full time equivalent (FTE) enrollment for years one to five, including the estimated total number of new and returning students for each term or semester.
- Calculate an appropriate attrition rate per year from year two to year five for each class and include justification.

b. Financial projections

- Include five-year financial projections with rationale for each item.
- Include five-year financial projections of costs to other academic areas that are proposed to provide support courses for the program. Identify costs of offering cross-college courses, if applicable.
- Include in narrative an estimate of start-up commitment prior to revenue generation and at what point it is expected that the proposed program's revenue is projected to exceed its expenses or reach a steady financial state.
- Include program cost computation for proposed new program and for existing programs.
- What additional funding is required beyond projected income to support the program during any given year? Identify the sources of that funding.
- Identify potential outside or independent sources of funding that may be available to the program.

IV. Advancing the Feasibility Study and Pro Forma Budget through the Review

After lead planners, in partnership with the APAO, complete the feasibility study and pro forma budget, follow the steps in Table 6 to shepherd the materials through the approval process. Meanwhile, lead planners should update the dean, Assessment office, Registrar's office, and other applicable offices with each step met.

As Table 6 illustrates, the dean, provost, SVPFA, and president first assess the feasibility study and pro forma budget. Then the applicable college assembly and University Faculty Assembly (UFA) review the documents. After the college assembly votes to recommend the proposal for approval, UFA then makes its recommendation.

A. Steps After College and UFA Recommend Feasibility Study and Pro Forma Budget

Once the college assembly and UFA recommend the feasibility study and pro forma budget for approval, the APAO will:

1) Notify Student Financial Services regarding the need to attain approval from the Department of Education and the Veterans Administration, and add the program to the university's Program Participation Agreement (PPA).
2) Bundle the following Registrar's forms with the feasibility study and pro forma budget and re-submit all of the documents to the provost for final approval and signatures.
    - The Registrar's New, Revised, or Ending Program Request Form. The Registrar, in consultation with IR and Student Financial Services, will decide on the CIP code.
    - If the proposal includes piloted and/or new courses, complete the Pilot Course Proposal Form and/or the New Course Proposal Form.
3) Forward the feasibility study, pro forma budget, and Registrar's forms to the Registrar and Assessment offices for archiving. The Registrar will notify the appropriate offices (see Table 7).

V. Three-Year New Program Review

All new programs (including new majors and minors) must undertake an evaluation following their third full academic year in the university catalog. If a new program is housed in a school/department/unit that is scheduled to conduct an internal program review within a year of this three-year new program review, the Assessment office will consider scheduling the reviews during the same time frame and adjust the timeline accordingly.

The reviewer needs to update and compare the data and projections of the original feasibility study and pro forma budget with the actual data in this three-year period. The reviewer can write directly

in the original feasibility study with updates on the program. Also, the reviewer should add a column in the pro forma budget that includes the actuals of the first three years.

For one, the reviewer needs to evaluate the extent to which the new program has met the benchmarks in the feasibility study and pro forma budget. Two, the reviewer needs to address any modifications the new program has made or will make, and if applicable, explain the ways in which the university can help the new program achieve its goals. Some questions to consider include:

- What has changed since the development of the feasibility study and pro forma budget?
- What do the data over the last three years reveal?
- What is the status of the new program now?
- Does the new program have the resources it needs from, for example, Admissions, Registrar, Student Financial Services, Student Affairs, Library Services, SASC, ITS, Facilities Management, IR, Institutional Advancement, the campus bookstores, enrollment management, and/or programs, departments, schools, and colleges that provide support courses?

The reviewer needs to evaluate the new program's financial trends, as well as its curricular offerings. The evaluation should address, for example, the curriculum's alignment to the program learning outcomes, the program's ability to offer all of the classes that students need to complete the degree, and the relevancy of the courses to disciplinary needs and market demands.

Finally, the three-year review needs to address the new program's plans for the ensuing years until the next scheduled internal program review. In what ways does the new program align with the department's/school's strategic plan and the university strategic plan? The review needs to include a revision of enrollment and financial projections to use as reference points for the coming years.

While new programs might not yet have sufficient data to undergo a comprehensive evaluation, the reviewer should provide as much available data as possible at the time of this review. For example, undergraduate majors or minors may not yet have graduation data at this point. Low or non-enrolled programs may also not have sufficient data. It is important to consider that undergraduate students sometimes flow in and out of majors, move into other programs, and find other pathways into or out of the new program. To the extent possible, new programs need to submit an update that references their original feasibility study and pro forma budget, their current findings, and their plan for moving forward. They should follow the procedures detailed in this document to report the available numbers, consider their resources, discuss the value they add to their department, school, college, and the university, and explore the level of competency students can achieve from completing the program.

Once the program submits a three-year review to their dean's office and the Assessment office, the Assessment office will consult with the dean and provost of the need to schedule a meeting with the program director/Chair, dean, provost, associate provost, SVPFA, and associate director of assessment.

In the event the three-year review indicates the program's non-viability, and revisions do not forecast positive results, the review needs to identify a general process with anticipated challenges for discontinuing the program. Include a timeline and plans for phasing out and teaching out the program, and reassigning or terminating faculty.

The Assessment office will archive the reviews in a central electronic university repository that the deans, provost, associate provost, and the president can access.

VI. APPENDIX

A. New or Revised Program Proposal: Required Signatures Form

Required Signatures of the Proposal's Three Stages

IDEA

_____
Dean / date

_____
Provost / date

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL

_____
Dean / date

_____
Assistant Provost for Academic Operations and University Registrar / date

_____
Provost / date

FEASIBILITY STUDY AND PRO FORMA BUDGET

_____
Dean / date

_____

Assistant Provost for Academic Operations and University Registrar / date

_____

Provost / date

_____

Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration / date

_____

President / date

_____

College Assembly Chair / date

_____

UFA Chair / date

FINAL SIGNATURES:

***Also use the Registrar's New, Revised, or Ending Program Request Form**

_____

Dean / date

_____

Provost / date

B. The Review Process in Tables and Charts

Table 1: Levels of Review for New Program Proposals

Type of Proposals	Definitions and Descriptions of Types of Proposals*	Preliminary Proposal	Feasibility Study & Pro Forma Budget	FEASIBILITY STUDY: LEVELS OF REVIEW						
				Dean	Provost	SVPFA	President	College Assembly	UFA	Board of Trustees
New Undergraduate Degree Program (Major)	A set of undergraduate-level curricular requirements of 120 or more semester credits, including at least 40 general education credits and 70 prerequisite, elective, and required courses, that lead to an undergraduate degree (e.g., B.A., B.S.). (See NECHE, 2026, Standards 2.5, 2.6.)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New Graduate Degree Program	NECHE states, "The level of academic work expected of students in the institution's graduate programs is significantly higher than that expected of undergraduates" (2026, Standard 2.9). Master's-level programs (e.g., M.S., M.S.Ed.) must require at least 30 semester credits (NECHE, 2026, Standard 2.5). For a doctoral degree (e.g., D.P.T., PharmD), the program and/or accreditor set the minimum number of required graduate credits.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New Undergraduate Minor	A set of undergraduate-level curricular requirements of 18 or more semester credits of required courses that typically provide undergraduate students with a secondary area of study to complement or expand beyond their major. No more than 50% of minor (typically 9 credits) can come from the students' required coursework.	Yes	TBD [1]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
New Concentration	A distinct set of courses within a major, graduate, or professional program, focusing on a specialized area within the broader field. It may be either required or optional and will be reflected on the student's transcript and degree audit.	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
New Undergraduate, Graduate, or Post-Master's Certificate	A set of curricular requirements of 12 or more semester credits designed for students who are in the process or have earned a degree and are seeking a specific skill or area of study. To be federal aid eligible, certificates must run at least one academic year in length (minimum 30 weeks) and prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation. Certificates appear on student transcripts, and the university issues an official certificate of completion.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New Non-Credit Bearing Offering	A non-credit bearing offering (e.g., continuing education course, workshop, certificate, badge) provides students with opportunities to learn a new skill or deepen existing skills, enrich their understanding of specific topics, and advance their personal or professional development. Because these offerings do not lead to a degree, they do not require involvement of the Financial Aid office.	Yes	TBD [1, 3]	Yes	Yes	TBD [4]	TBD [4]	No	No	No

***See Appendix C for NECHE's definitions of programs.**
****See following page for endnotes.**

Table 2: Levels of Review for Program Revision Proposals

Type of Proposals	Definitions and Descriptions of Types of Proposals	Preliminary Proposal	Feasibility Study & Pro Forma Budget	FEASIBILITY STUDY: LEVELS OF REVIEW						
				Dean	Provost	SVPFA	President	College Assembly	UFA	Board of Trustees
Revision of an Undergraduate or Graduate Degree Program	Changes to an existing undergraduate or graduate degree program.	TBD [1]	TBD [1]	Yes	Yes	TBD [4]	TBD [4]	Yes	No	No
Revision of a Minor	Changes to an existing minor.	TBD [1]	TBD [1]	Yes	Yes	TBD [4]	TBD [4]	Yes	No	No
Revision of a Concentration	Changes to an existing concentration. See Table 1 (previous page) for the definition of a concentration.	TBD [1]	TBD [1]	Yes	Yes	TBD [4]	TBD [4]	Yes	No	No
Revision of a Certificate	Changes to an existing certificate. See Table 1 (previous page) for the definition of a certificate.	TBD [1]	TBD [1]	Yes	Yes	TBD [4]	TBD [4]	Yes	No	No
Degree Change	Change of a degree designation to an existing program (e.g., from B.S. to B.A., or from B.A. to B.S.).	TBD [1]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Endnotes for Tables 1 and 2

[1] The provost, SVPFA, and president, in consultation with the dean and APAO, will determine if needed.

[2] If the concentration has cross-college implications, the provost, SVPFA, and president, in consultation with the dean(s) and APAO, will determine if an UFA review is needed.

[3] Badge proposals need to undergo a process that entails committee review, and the provost's preliminary and final approval. For more information, go to the UNE Badging Program. Continuing education programs need to undergo a separate review that the College of Professional Studies (CPS) oversees. For more information, see the Continuing Education Policy & Reporting Guidelines.

[4] If the project merely involves existing, sufficiently enrolled courses and there are no other financial or high-level strategic implications, SVPFA and presidential approval is not needed. Otherwise, such approval is required.

Table 3: Timeline for Program Proposals

Step	Action	Summer, Fall, or Spring Launch: Recommended Deadlines [1]
Idea for New Program or Program Revision [2]	Discuss idea with: (a) dean, and (b) provost.	Recommended by June to launch in 18 months
Preliminary Proposal [3]	Submit market analysis and preliminary narrative to: (a) dean; (b) APAO; and (c) provost.	Recommended by mid-July
Feasibility Study and Pro Forma Budget [4]	Submit feasibility study and pro forma budget to: (a) dean; (b) provost, SVPFA, and president. Consult with Registrar's office.	Recommended by end of August
Step	**Action**	**Summer, Fall, or Spring Launch of the Following Academic Year (e.g., March 2027 for Fall 2028): Fixed Deadlines**
Feasibility Study and Pro Forma Budget	Submit feasibility study and pro forma budget to: (a) College Assembly and (b) UFA.	October-November
	Re-submit feasibility study and pro forma budget to provost.	February
Student Financial Services, Admissions, and Registrar	Billing and financial aid needs	Consult with Student Financial Services [5]
	Common Application and Coalition Application deadline [6]; marketing deadline	March 1
	UNE catalog final deadline [7]	April 1
	First undergraduate student cohort → - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - First graduate student cohort →	The following fall semester - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Per the feasibility study timeline
Implementation	Program launch (first recruited cohort) [8]	Fall or summer semester in the academic year that the catalog was published (e.g., programs in the AY 2027-28 catalog will start in summer or fall 2027)

Notes:

[1] The university encourages continuous program development/revisions and thus lead planners should not wait to move forward if they have an idea. But lead planners need to follow the fixed deadlines for program launch.

[2] See Table 4 for a flow chart of the decision-making steps in reviewing the idea.

[3] See Table 5 for a flow chart of the decision-making steps in reviewing the preliminary proposal.

[4] See Table 6 for a flow chart of the decision-making steps in reviewing the feasibility study and pro forma budget.

[5] Students are awarded aid packages up to eight months before their scheduled enrollment.

[6] March 1 is the Common Application and Coalition Application deadlines for the following recruitment/application cycle and academic year (e.g., March 2027 for the class entering Fall 2028).

[7] April 1 is the latest possible deadline to submit changes to the UNE catalog for the following academic year. The catalog is published on the last Friday of April.

[8] Program Launch: New program is listed on the Common and Coalition Applications and has been fully marketed by Admissions.

Table 4:
Step 1: Review of the Idea

This flow chart illustrates the typical process lead planners, in partnership with the assistant provost for academic operations, need to follow to seek approval for an idea of most new programs and program revisions. If the dean and provost approve the idea, lead planners should secure the senior leaders' signatures on the Required Signatures form (Appendix A) and proceed to Step 2 (Table 5).

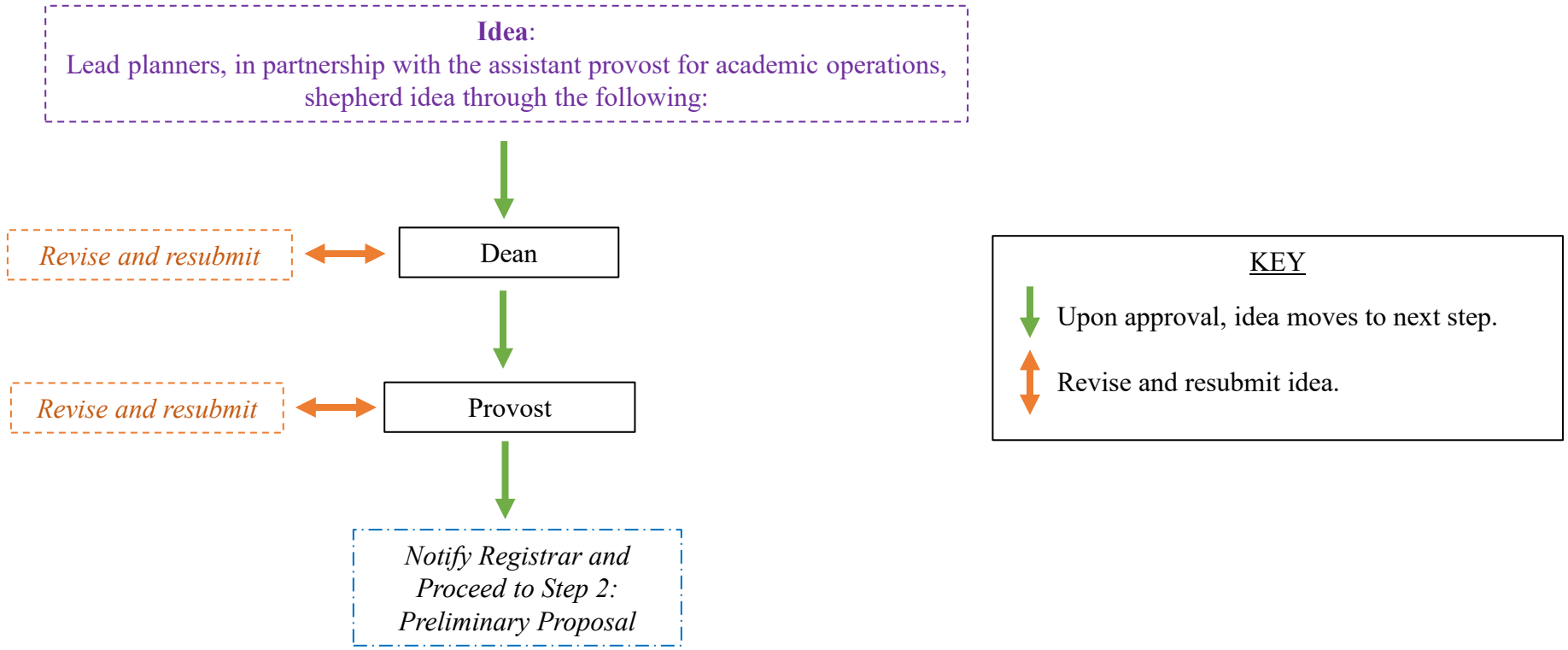


Table 5:
Step 2: Review of the Preliminary Proposal

This flow chart illustrates the typical process lead planners, in partnership with the assistant provost for academic operations, need to follow to shepherd through most preliminary proposals. Refer to Table 2 for the programs that need to complete a preliminary proposal, and the stakeholders who need to be involved in the review. Consult with the Assessment office and Admissions to complete market analysis, and all other applicable offices to complete the preliminary narrative. If the dean, APAO, and provost approve the preliminary proposal, lead planners should secure the senior leaders' signatures on the Required Signatures form (Appendix A) and proceed to Step 3 (Table 6).

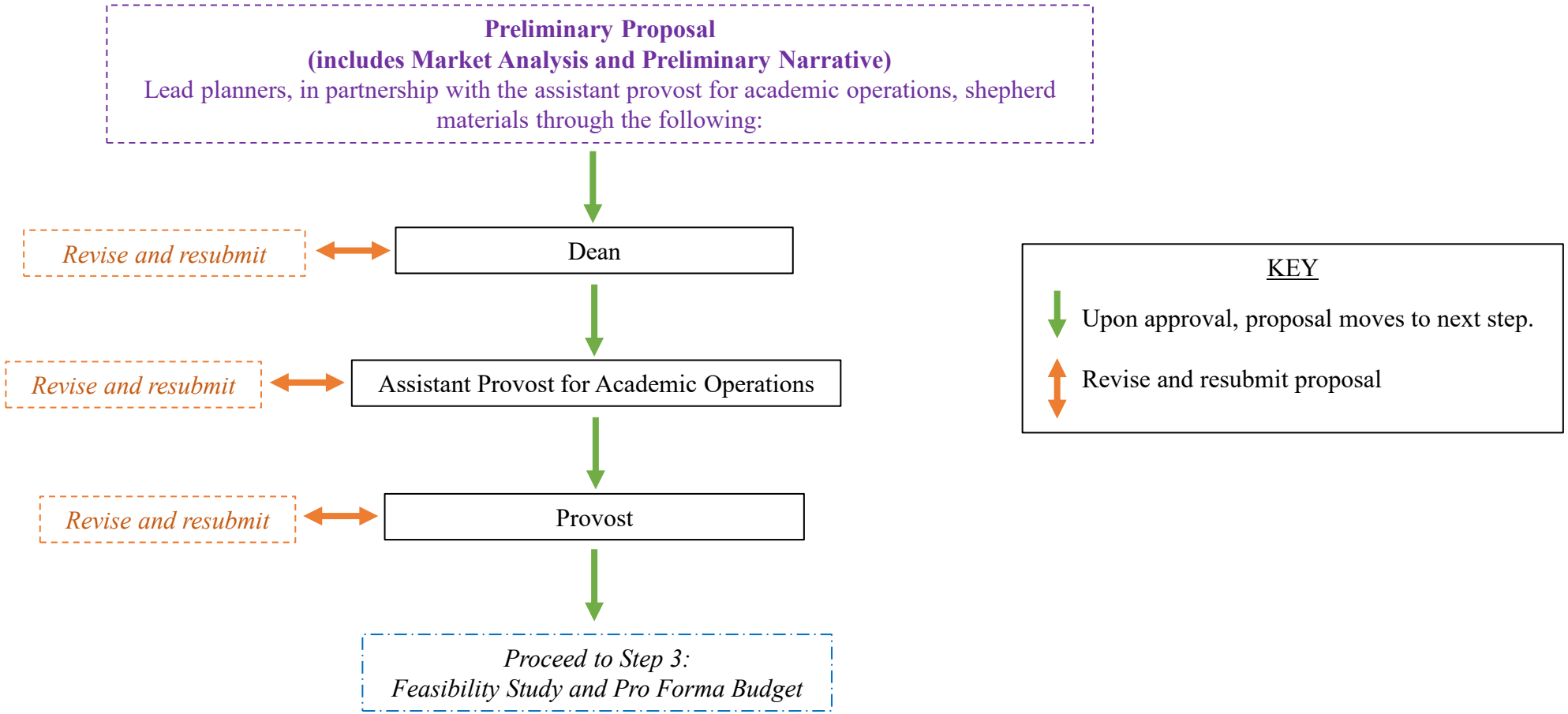


Table 6:
Step 3: Assembly and Review of the Feasibility Study and Pro Forma Budget

This flow chart illustrates the typical process lead planners, in partnership with the assistant provost for academic operations and associate VP of finance, need to follow to shepherd through most proposals. Refer to Tables 1-2 for the programs that need to complete a feasibility study and pro forma budget, and the stakeholders who need to be involved in the review. Consult with Financial Planning and Analysis to complete the pro forma budget, and all other applicable offices to complete the feasibility study. As lead planners move the proposal through these steps, they should secure senior leaders' final approval signatures on the Required Signatures form (Appendix A).

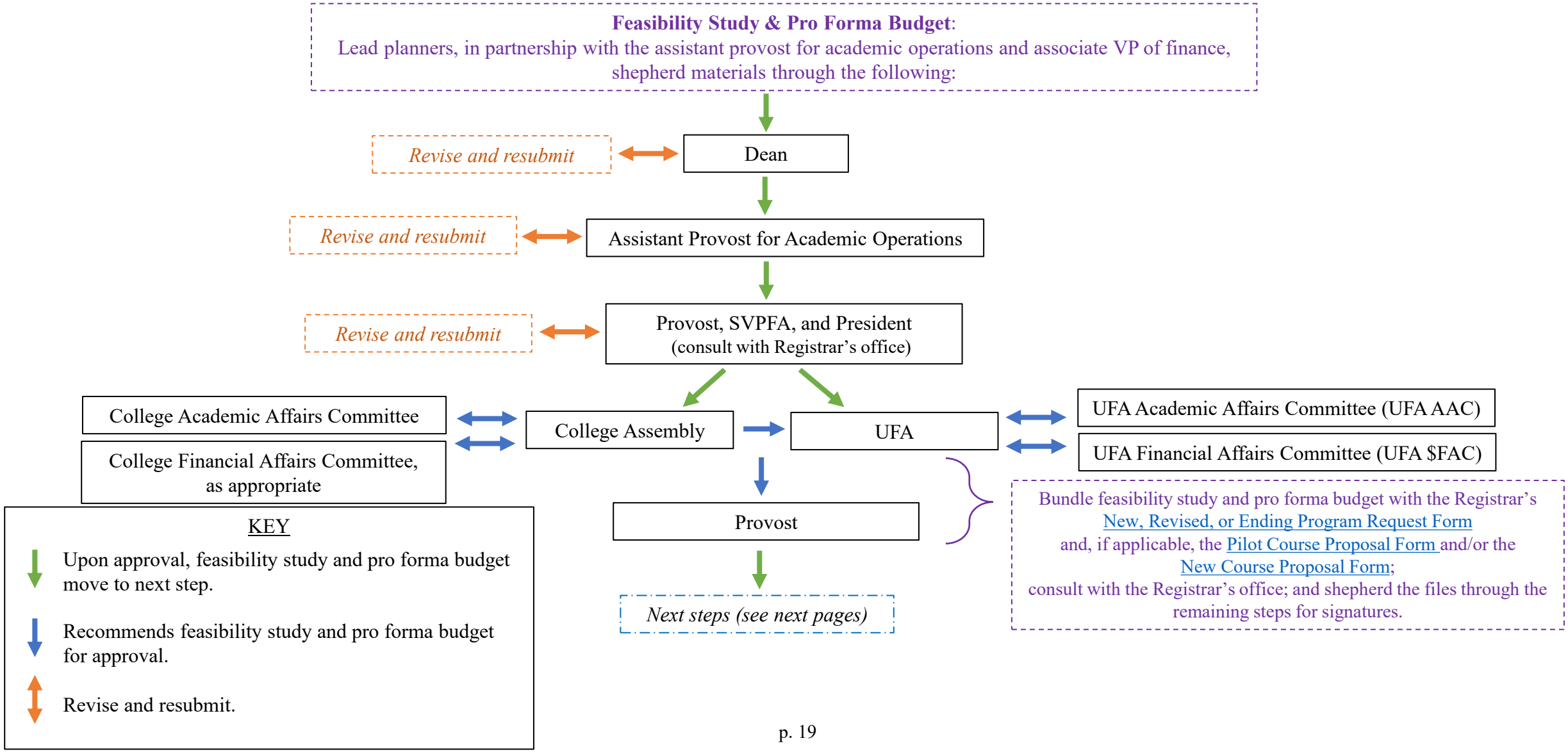


Table 7:
Step 4A: Next Steps for the Registrar's Office

Once steps 1, 2, and 3 (Tables 4-6) are completed, and all noted parties recommend or approve the proposal, the files are complete, and the New, Revised, or Ending Program Request Form and, if applicable, the Pilot Course Proposal Form and/or the New Course Proposal Form are signed, the process then continues with UNE's other administrative offices and stakeholders. This flow chart illustrates the Registrar's responsibilities of coding the program, updating its internal documents, and notifying other offices and stakeholders.

Lead planners ensure that the Provost, SVPFA, and President approve proposal, and the appropriate parties sign the New, Revised, or Ending Program Request Form, and, if applicable, the Pilot Course Proposal Form and/or the New Course Proposal Form. Lead planners then send all of the documents to the Registrar.

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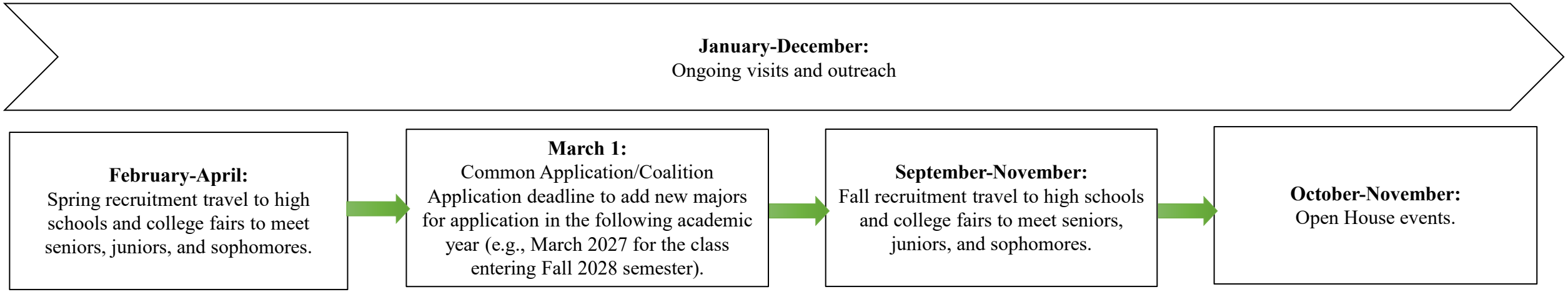
Registrar notifies relevant stakeholders of program's formal approval and coding.

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Admissions (*see next page for important deadlines*)
Academic & Career Advising
Assessment
Communications
Facilities/Space Committee
Finance and Administration
Housing and Residential/Commuter Life
Human Resources
Information Technology Services
Institutional Research and Data Analytics
Library Services
Registrar
Research & Scholarship
Safety & Security
Student Affairs
Student Financial Services (Financial Aid, Student Accounts)
Student Success (including SASC)

Table 8:
Step 4B: Next Steps for Undergraduate Admissions

This flow chart illustrates the typical recruitment timeline Undergraduate Admissions follows on an annual basis. Admissions engages prospective students with email communication flows and other opportunities up to three years prior to students entering college. Involve Admissions in the new program development process as early as possible to give the office time to prepare for the key promotional activities, including the following.



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Policy on Credits and Degrees

The purposes of this policy are to provide guidance to institutions and evaluation teams on the Commission's expectations regarding credits and degrees.

Background

The credit system was invented in New England, originally as a way to provide students with the opportunity to elect certain courses as part of their overall degree which had previously consisted of a fully required curriculum. Created to support academic innovation, the academic credit has provided the basis to measure the amount of engaged learning time expected of a typical student enrolled not only in traditional classroom settings but also laboratories, studios, internships and other experiential learning, and most recently distance learning. Students, institutions, employers, and others rely on the common currency of academic credit to support a wide range of desirable functions, including the transfer of students from one institution to another, study abroad programs, formalized recognition of certain forms and quality of non-collegiate study, inter-institutional cooperation on academic programs, and the orderly consideration of students applying to study at the higher degree. To support these functions, institutions offering competency-based or direct assessment programs are expected to record progress toward the degree as credits on the student's academic transcript. For several decades, the federal government has relied on credits as a measure of student academic engagement as a basis of awarding financial aid.

When applying the definition of the credit hour below, other considerations may also be relevant. For example, some institutions may require more academic time than the norms defined below, and such expectations are typical at the graduate level. Also, the Commission's Standards and practices welcome perceptive and imaginative innovation aimed at increasing the effectiveness of higher education, measuring student achievement directly rather than relying on academic engaged time. As stated in the Preamble to the *Standards for Accreditation*, "The institution whose policies, practices, or resources differ significantly from those described in the Standards for Accreditation must demonstrate that these are appropriate to higher education, consistent with the institution's mission and purposes, and effective in meeting the intent of the Commission's Standards."

Definition and Commission Review of the Credit Hour

The Commission has adopted the federal definition of a credit hour: an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that reasonably approximates not less than –

(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

(2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

In determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, the institution may take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.

At the time of the Comprehensive Evaluation, the Commission will review the institution's policies and procedures for determining the credit hours that the institution awards for courses and programs and how those policies and procedures are applied to the institution's programs and coursework. As part of its review, using sampling or other methods, the team will make a reasonable determination of whether the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education and will include the findings in their report.

Degrees

The Commission's expectations are based on common institutional practice in the U.S. and are consistent with practices of institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and with the Commission's Standard on *The Academic Program, Faculty, and Students:* "A bachelor's degree consists of a minimum of 120 credits, an associate's degree a minimum of 60 credits, a master's degree a minimum of 30 credits. An institution must have approval to offer specific modified degrees with fewer credits" (2.5).

Undergraduate degrees:

A.A., A.S., A.A.S, etc.: An undergraduate degree normally representing the equivalent of two academic years of full-time study (and requiring a minimum of 60 semester credits) or its equivalent in depth and quality of experience. The A.S. usually implies more applied orientation and the A.A. more liberal education orientation, although these distinctions are not always clear. The A.A.S. degree prepares students to enter the workforce while A.A. and A.S. degrees prepare students for the workforce or for transfer to a baccalaureate program.

B.A., B.S., etc.: An undergraduate degree normally representing about four academic years (and requiring a minimum of 120 semester or 180 quarter units) of full-time study. The distinctions between the B.S. and the B.A. are similar to those between the A.S. and the A.A.

Graduate Degrees: Graduate degrees include a significant component of coursework in addition to any supervised research or practice.

M.A., M.S.: A first graduate degree, representing at least one year of post-baccalaureate study (requiring a minimum of 30 semester or 45 quarter units). The distinctions between M.A. and M.S. are similar to those between B.A. and B.S. and A.A. and A.S. Some M.A. and M.S. degrees are merely continuations at a higher level of undergraduate work without basic change in character. Others emphasize some research that may lead to doctoral work.

M.B.A., M.Div., M.F.A., M.P.A., M.S.W., etc.: Professional degrees normally requiring two or more years of full-time study. Extensive undergraduate preparation in the field may reduce the length of study to one year.

Pharm.D., D.P.T., Au.D., etc.[1]: Entry level clinical practice degrees normally requiring three years more full-time study than a baccalaureate.

Ed. D., Psy.D., D.B.A., etc.[1]: Degrees with emphasis on professional knowledge. These degrees normally require a baccalaureate for entry and three or more years of prescribed postgraduate work.

M.D., J.D., D.D.S., etc.: First professional degrees, generally requiring a baccalaureate degree for admission and three or more years of prescribed postgraduate work.

Ph.D.[1]: The standard research-oriented degree which indicates that the recipient has done, and is prepared to do, original research in a major discipline. The Ph.D. requires a baccalaureate degree or higher for admission and usually requires three years or more of postgraduate work including an original research dissertation.[2]

Joint, Dual or Concurrent Degrees[3]: While the nomenclature for various arrangements in which students study simultaneously from or for two degree programs is not entirely consistent among institutions, the definitions below will be used by the Commission for purposes of consistency:

Joint degree: A single degree awarded by two institutions.

Dual or concurrent degrees: Two degrees, awarded by one or two institutions to students who have been admitted to each degree program, based on the normal qualifications. At the undergraduate level, students must typically take the equivalent of a full year of study beyond the first baccalaureate degree to earn the second degree. At the graduate level, enrollment in a dual or concurrent degree program typically results in a reduction in time, for example, a reduction in total time of a semester for two degrees which if taken separately would require four years of full-time study.

Terms of Study:

Quarter: A calendar of ten weeks of instructional time or its equivalent.

Semester: A calendar 15 weeks of instructional time or its equivalent in effort.

Effective July 1, 2011
Editorial Changes July 2016
Editorial Changes October 2017
July 2020
September 2021
Editorial Changes July 2026

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[1]Normally, doctoral degrees represent a minimum of 64 credits beyond the bachelor's degree. Requirements vary by field, with some areas having requirements of specialized or professional accreditors. Students in some doctoral programs progress by examination, dissertation defense, and/or field or clinical work in addition to credit requirements.

[2]The initiation of the Ph.D. is considered a substantive change.

[3]Institutions considering joint, dual, or concurrent degrees should consult the Commission's Policy on Substantive Change.