

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

September 22, 2009

## MEMORANDUM

To: University Committee on Curriculum  
Fr: Linda O. Stanford, Associate Provost for Academic Services  
Re: **Role of the University Committee on Curriculum**

In response to recent questions, the following information is provided.  
How is the responsibility of the University Committee on Curriculum unique and how does this responsibility relate to the University Committee on Academic Policy and the University Graduate Council and to the Teacher Education Council?

For information regarding the University Committee on Curriculum, visit  
<http://www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/ucc.asp>

### **University Committee on Curriculum (UCC), Bylaws for Academic Governance:**

*The Committee on Curriculum shall exercise the faculty's delegated authority to review and approve or reject all changes in undergraduate courses, curricula, and degree requirements proposed by academic units, and shall have delegated authority to approve or reject changes in graduate and graduate-professional courses, curricula, and degree requirements, recommended by the Graduate Council.*

*4.5.4. The Committee on Curriculum shall advise the Provost on criteria for the establishment and deletion of courses and curricula.*

*4.5.5. The Committee on Curriculum shall coordinate its activities with those of the Committee on Academic Policy, the Graduate Council, and other appropriate Academic Council Standing Committees.*

The UCC reviews all requests for new or changed undergraduate, graduate and graduate-professional programs and courses.

- a. The UCC reviews each program to determine that the requested change:
  - fulfills University requirements (ex: 120 credits for a bachelor's degree; 30 credits for a master's degree).
  - holds together as a cohesive, stand-alone, high-quality program.
  - includes the correct credit count for individual sections of the degree program.
  - has a realistic choice of courses from which to select.
  - is clearly stated so a student can understand readily.
  - avoids hidden prerequisite courses.
  - allows room for electives (particularly for undergraduate programs).
  - avoids unnecessary duplication of programs
  - has the appropriate sign-offs and required approvals from other units.
  
- b. The UCC reviews the responses from the University Committee on Academic Policy, the University Graduate Council, and the Teacher Education Council before it approves or does not approve a program request.



### **UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM and CATALOG**

Michigan State University  
176 Administration Building  
East Lansing, Michigan  
48824-1046

PH: 517/355-8420  
FAX: 517/353-1935

- c. The UCC reviews all course requests in terms of the:
- degree program to which they relate.
  - appropriateness of the course number (ex: 100-299; 300-499; 500-699; 800-999; 900-999) in relation to the course content.
  - attributes of the course description and its ability to reflect course content accurately.
  - relationship between the long title (which appears in the Course Descriptions catalog) and the short title (which appears on the transcript) and the course content.
  - need to list the course as Remedial-Developmental-Preparatory (RDP).
  - need to list the course with an Integrative Studies attribute.
  - need to list the course as a Tier I or a Tier II writing course.
  - relationship to other courses.
  - prerequisite.
  - recommended background.
  - co-requisite.
  - restrictions.
  - semester alias.
  - appropriate sign-offs and requested approvals from other units.
- d. The UCC reviews all curricular requests. This responsibility provides the UCC with a unique vantage point from which to observe and consider curricular trends and make recommendations for policy changes by sending proposals to the University Committee on Academic Policy, the University Graduate Council, and/or the Teacher Education Council for action.

#### **Relationship to Other University Standing Committees:**

UCC review and approval of any request for a new or changed undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional program occurs in accordance with a schedule coordinated to provide the University Committee on Academic Policy, the University Graduate Council, and/or the Teacher Education Council the opportunity to review those aspects of program requests that are within their respective purview for action. Course requests are not sent to these committees.

- **University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP)** receives undergraduate programs that include a request regarding the admission requirement, a grade-point requirement, a moratorium (suspension of admission), a disbandment (curtailment), or a new type of program (ex: linked bachelor's-master's degree program) to make a recommendation regarding the request and assess policy implications.
- **University Graduate Council (UGC)** receives graduate programs that include a moratorium (suspension of admission), a disbandment (curtailment), or a new type of program (ex: linked bachelor's-master's degree program). The UGC receives all graduate program requests to assess policy implications and to consider the overall quality of programs and issues such as:
  - faculty capacity.
  - critical mass of students.
  - completion rates.
  - placement of graduates.
  - program assessment.
  - intellectual rigor.

For doctoral programs, the UGC is also interested in research opportunities and the scope and kind of support provided for students.

- **Teacher Education Council** receives programs that lead to teacher certification to determine if, in addition to the changes the UCC will approve, teacher certification policy and requirements are met.

### **Why Do Different University Standing Committees Exist?**

To provide an objective examination of policy issues that affect academic programs by a committee (UCAP, UGC, TEC) that is responsible for guiding the University regarding undergraduate education, graduate education, and teacher education.

### **Number of Programs and Courses Approved by the UCC Each Academic Year:**

Approximately 150 program requests (including changes, deletions, and new programs) and over 900 courses (including changes, deletions, and new courses).

### **Relationship to the University catalog:**

- Academic Programs, <http://www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/AcademicPrograms.asp>
- Course Descriptions, <http://www.reg.msu.edu/Courses/search.asp>

After Academic Council approves the University Committee on Curriculum report at its monthly meeting, University Curriculum and Catalog staff updates Academic Programs within the next one to three days. This occurs seven times a year.

At other institutions curricular approvals may not be linked with catalog updates placing the institution in a situation in which the University catalog, which functions as a contract with the student, is not up-to-date or is unevenly up-to-date, including some changes and not others.

### **Review cycle for programs and courses:** <http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/UCC/programcycle.pdf>

Most years, the University Committee on Curriculum is able to approve requests submitted through the month of February by its April meeting. January 1<sup>st</sup> is the date listed for the receipt of requests because programs vary in terms of the amount of work required to prepare them for a University Committee on Curriculum agenda.

Cc: Linda Good, Chairperson, University Committee on Curriculum  
Douglas Estry, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education  
and Dean of Undergraduate Studies  
Karen Klomparens, Associate Provost for Graduate Education  
and Dean of The Graduate School