

UNIVERSITY POLICY **AC- 09.00 – 06/09**

TO: University of West Florida Community

FROM: Dr. Judith Bense, President

SUBJECT: New Academic Program Approval Policy

REFERENCE: Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.011

Responsible Office: Academic Affairs

- I. In order to ensure that new academic programs implemented by The University of West Florida (“UWF”) are of the highest quality, are aligned with the goals of UWF and the Florida Board of Governors, meet the needs of the citizens of Florida, and conform with Florida Board of Governors regulations, the following criteria and guidelines for new academic program authorization are established.

- II. Definitions - Within the context of this policy academic programs are defined as follows:
 - A. Degree Program – An organized curriculum leading to a college degree in an area of study recognized as an academic discipline by the higher education community, as demonstrated by assignment of a Classification of Instructional Programs (“CIP”) code by the National Center for Educational Statistics, or as demonstrated by similar programs existing at other colleges and universities, and having designated faculty and instructional resources. Each degree program will be assigned a CIP code by the Florida Board of Governors Office of Academic and Student Affairs and included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory.

 - B. Program Major – An organized curriculum offered as a major area of study that is part of an existing or proposed degree program and does not constitute sufficient distinct coursework, faculty, and instructional resources to be considered a separate degree program. A Program Major must be reasonably associated with the degree program under which it is offered and share common core or prerequisite courses with other majors within the same degree program. A Program Major will not be assigned a CIP Code, will not be included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory, and will not be recognized as a stand-alone degree program at UWF. The number of credit hours for a Program Major will be established by UWF for each degree level.

 - C. Program Minors, Concentrations, Areas of Emphasis, Tracks, and so forth. - Any organized curriculum that is offered as part of an individual student’s degree plan and which enhances or complements the degree to be awarded in a manner that leads to specific educational or occupational goals shall be defined by the UWF Board of Trustees, with the credit hour length set in accordance with University policy, except that the number of credit hours must not equal or exceed the number of credit hours

established for a program major at the same degree level. Such curricula offerings will not be assigned a CIP Code and will not be included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory as a stand-alone academic program at UWF.

- D. College Credit Certificate Program - An organized curriculum of college credit courses offered as a distinct area of study that leads to specific educational or occupational goals, and for which UWF awards a certificate or diploma upon completion. College Credit Certificate programs may consist of courses that are part of a degree program or distinct courses that are created outside of any degree program. The number of credit hours for College Credit Certificate Programs will be set by the UWF Board of Trustees within guidelines established by Florida Board of Governors regulations. Such curricula offerings will not be assigned a CIP Code and will not be included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory as a stand-alone academic program at UWF.
- E. Non-College-Credit Certificate – An organized curriculum of study of any length that is offered as non-college-credit (clock hours, continuing education credits, competency exams, etc.) that leads to specific educational or occupational goals and for which UWF awards a certificate or diploma upon completion. The length of Non-College-Credit Certificate Programs will be set by UWF. Such curricula offerings will not be assigned a CIP Code and will not be included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory as a stand-alone academic program at UWF.

III. Criteria for New Degree Program Approval - Proposals for new degree programs shall be authorized by the UWF Board of Trustees only if they have been found to meet the following criteria.

A. Institutional and State Level Accountability

1. THE PROGRAM IS CONSISTENT WITH THE UWF MISSION AND BOG STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM STRATEGIC PLAN – The proposal must demonstrate that the goals of the program are aligned with UWF's mission and relate to specific institutional strengths, and that the program is consistent with the current State University System Strategic Planning Goals as demonstrated by an explanation of the goals which the program will directly advance.
2. DEMONSTRATE NEED FOR PROGRAM GRADUATES, RESEARCH OR SERVICE – The proposal must demonstrate a need for more individuals to be educated in this program at the level proposed, and contain an estimate of the headcount and FTE for students who will major in the program and indicate steps to be taken to achieve a diverse student body. If an argument is made for the program based upon research or service, then specific information supporting the argument must be provided. If the program duplicates other degree programs in Florida, evidence must be provided that the potential impact on those programs

has been investigated, opportunities for collaboration have been discussed, and the need for duplication can be substantiated.

3. **FINANCIAL PLANNING AND RESOURCES ARE SUFFICIENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION** - The proposal must provide a complete budget for the program which reflects the text of the proposal, that is comparable in cost to similar existing programs, and that provides evidence that, in the event resources within UWF are redirected to support the new program, such a redirection will not have an unjustified negative impact on other needed programs.
4. **PROJECTED BENEFIT OF THE PROGRAM TO UWF, LOCAL COMMUNITY, AND STATE** - The proposal must provide a statement that describes the projected benefit to UWF, the local community, and the State if the program is implemented. The statement should demonstrate efficient use of resources and justification for the investment. The projected benefit can be both quantitative (data driven) and qualitative in nature, but there should be a clear distinction between the two in the proposal.
5. **ACCESS AND ARTICULATION ARE MAINTAINED FOR ALL PROGRAMS**— The proposal must demonstrate that:
 - a. All prerequisites for a baccalaureate program are consistent with standardized prerequisites for similar degree programs within the State University System, or that an exception will be sought through the Oversight Committee of the Articulation Coordinating Committee;
 - b. If limited access status is sought for a baccalaureate program, adequate justification exists for such designation and evidence must be provided that diversity, articulation, and workforce issues are appropriately addressed when seeking approval from the Florida Board of Governors; and
 - c. The total number of credit hours for a baccalaureate program does not exceed 120, or that an exception will be sought from the Florida Board of Governors; and
 - d. The proposal for all degree levels must include a plan to achieve a diverse student body in the program.

B. Institutional Readiness

1. **INDICATION OF ABILITY TO IMPLEMENT A HIGH QUALITY PROGRAM** - The proposed program must specifically relate to existing institutional strengths such as programs of emphasis, other academic programs and/or institutes and centers. If program reviews or accreditation activities in the discipline pertinent to the proposed program or in related disciplines have been undertaken, the proposal

must provide evidence that progress has been made in implementing the recommendations from those reviews, as appropriate.

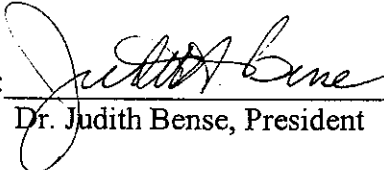
2. **CURRICULUM IS APPROPRIATE FOR THE DISCIPLINE AND PROGRAM LEVEL** - The proposal must describe a sequenced course of study, including expected student learning outcomes, an assessment strategy for student learning, and, in the case of advanced technology and related disciplines, industry-driven competencies. Admissions and graduation criteria must be clearly specified and appropriate. The course of study and credit hours required may be satisfied within a timeframe consistent with similar programs. In cases where accreditation is available for existing bachelor's or master's level programs, evidence must be provided that the program will seek accreditation, or a rationale as to why accreditation may not be beneficial.
3. **SUFFICIENT QUALIFIED FACULTY ARE AVAILABLE** – The proposal must demonstrate that sufficient qualified faculty are available to initiate the program based on estimated enrollments, and that, if appropriate, there is a commitment to hire additional faculty in later years. The proposal must demonstrate that the academic unit(s) associated with this new degree has been productive in teaching, research, and service. For Professional and Doctorate Programs only - evidence must be provided that the faculty in the aggregate has the necessary experience and research activity to sustain Ph.D programs and other professional or doctoral programs for which research and grant funding is an expectation of the discipline.
4. **SUFFICIENT INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE** – The proposal must demonstrate that the necessary library volumes and serials; classroom, teaching laboratory, research laboratory, office, and any other type of physical space; equipment; and appropriate clinical and internship sites will be available to implement the program. For all Graduate Level Programs, the proposal must indicate whether appropriate fellowships, scholarships, and graduate assistantships are in place, or if UWF has made sufficient plans for their existence where student support is the norm in similar programs in the discipline.

IV. New Degree Program Approval –

- A. *Professional and Research Doctoral Degree Programs* – The UWF Board of Trustees must approve new professional and research doctoral degree programs for submission to the Florida Board of Governors for authorization, in accordance with the criteria outlined in Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.011(3).
 1. If it is contemplated that a master's and a doctoral program will be implemented in the same field simultaneously, a single proposal for both degree levels should be developed, differentiating elements within the proposal as necessary. Both degree levels must be approved by the UWF Board of Trustees prior to submitting the doctoral program for approval by the Florida Board of Governors.

- B. *Bachelor's, Master's, Advanced Master's, and Specialist Degree Programs* – The UWF Board of Trustees has the responsibility and authority to approve for implementation new degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, advanced master's, and specialist level in accordance with Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.011(3) and (6).
- C. *New Program Approval Procedures and Guidelines*. To implement this regulation on new academic program approval, the UWF Division of Academic Affairs will prepare operational procedures and guidelines for review and approval of the Faculty Senate and the UWF Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee. Copies of the UWF regulation on new academic program approval and the associated procedures and guidelines must be provided to the Florida Board of Governors Office of Academic and Student Affairs. The approval procedures and guidelines for new academic programs must include at a minimum:
1. A formal process for determining degree programs that UWF will explore for implementation over the period covered by UWF's strategic plan and Florida Board of Governors' State University System Strategic Plan;
 2. A formal process for review and approval of proposed programs by the appropriate curriculum, financial, and administrative entities of UWF;
 3. A formal written review of all professional and doctoral level program proposals by a qualified external consultant prior to consideration of the proposal by the UWF Board of Trustees;
 4. A process for final consideration by the UWF Board of Trustees that includes review of the proposed program by its Academic and Student Affairs Committee with regard to implementation costs and the Florida Board of Governors approval criteria; and
 5. Adoption of the common State University System new degree proposal format.
- V. *Other Academic Program Approval* – The UWF Board of Trustees has the responsibility and authority to promulgate policies consistent with applicable accreditation standards for the approval and implementation of other types of academic programs as defined in Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.011(2) and as described in the following subsections:
- A. Program Majors, Program Minors, Concentrations, Areas of Emphasis, Tracks and College Credit Certificates within an existing bachelor's, master's, advanced master's, specialist, and doctoral degree program;
 - B. College Credit Certificate programs when more than half of the courses are not part of the curriculum of an existing degree program;

- C. Establishment and annual review of off-campus degree program offerings outside of its assigned service area, to include: programs offered through continuing education, degree programs offered under contract as sponsored credit for an external public or private entity, and degree programs offered in foreign countries;
 - D. Non-college credit programs offered through continuing education that lead to a certificate or diploma recognized as a credential for employment;
 - E. Copies of the UWF Board of Trustees regulations and UWF's procedures and guidelines for Other Academic Program Approval must be provided to the Florida Board of Governors, Office of Academic and Student Affairs.
- VI. Independent Degree Programs at Branch Campuses and Off-Campus Sites - Complete degree programs, or substantially complete degree programs, having designated faculty lines with independent curricula decision making authority, designated facilities and instructional resources, and a designated student body may not be implemented at any of UWF's branch campuses or other subsidiary instructional locations unless approved by the UWF Board of Trustees; regardless as to whether UWF already has authority to offer the degree program. Each such program must meet the UWF Board of Trustees and Florida Board of Governors new degree program approval criteria and follow the same approval process as other new program offerings at UWF. This regulation does not apply to programs that share faculty and students between instructional locations.
- VII. Legislative Approval - In accordance with Section 1004.03, Florida Statutes, any request for authorization to plan a new college, school, or functional equivalent of a program leading to a degree offered as a credential for a specific license granted under the Florida Statutes or the State Constitution must be approved by the Legislature before final implementation of the program pursuant to Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.011(7).

Approved By:  Date: 7/6/09
Dr. Judith Bense, President