



Office of the Provost  
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## Montana University System (MUS) Curriculum Change Policy

According to [Montana Board of Regents Policy 303.1](#), the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) and the Board of Regents (BOR) are responsible for monitoring and approving proposals for new offerings and modifications to existing offerings. The Office of the Provost coordinates UM's proposals for submission to BOR. Proposal types are categorized depending on the level of the involvement of OCHE and BOR.

### Proposal Type by Level (Table)

<b>Level I</b>
<b>Campus Approvals</b>
Placement of a postsecondary educational program into moratorium
Withdrawing a postsecondary educational program from moratorium
Establishing, re-titling, terminating, or revising a campus certificate of 29 credits or less
Establishing a B.A.S./A.A./A.S. area of study
Offering an existing postsecondary educational program via distance or online delivery
<b>OCHE Approvals</b>
Re-titling an existing postsecondary educational program
Terminating an existing postsecondary educational program
Consolidating existing postsecondary educational programs
Establishing a new minor where there is a major or an option in a major
Revising a postsecondary educational program
Establishing a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S. degree program
<b>Request to Plan and Level II</b>
<b>RTP Required</b>
Establishing a new postsecondary educational program
Forming, eliminating, or consolidating an academic, administrative, or research unit
<b>No RTP Required</b>
Permanent authorization of a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S. degree program
Exceeding the 120-credit maximum for baccalaureate degrees
Re-titling an academic, administrative, or research unit

Source 1 [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#)

Additional details and definitions are available in the [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#).

## Required Forms by Proposal Type (Table)

Proposal Type	Change Requested	Forms Required
Level I, Campus Approval	Placement of a postsecondary educational program into moratorium	Academic Proposal Request Form, Program Termination/Moratorium Form
Level I, Campus Approval	Withdrawing a postsecondary educational program from moratorium	Academic Proposal Request Form
Level I, Campus Approval	Establishing, re-titling, terminating, or revising a campus certificate of 29 credits or less	Academic Proposal Request Form
Level I, Campus Approval	Establishing a B.A.S./A.A./A.S. area of study	Academic Proposal Request Form
Level I, Campus Approval	Offering an existing postsecondary educational program via distance or online delivery	Academic Proposal Request Form
Level I, OCHE Approval	Re-titling an existing postsecondary educational program	Academic Proposal Request Form
Level I, OCHE Approval	Terminating an existing postsecondary educational program	Academic Proposal Request Form, Program Termination/Moratorium Form
Level I, OCHE Approval	Consolidating existing postsecondary educational programs	Academic Proposal Request Form, Curriculum Proposal Form
Level I, OCHE Approval	Establishing a new minor where there is a major or an option in a major	Academic Proposal Request Form, Curriculum Proposal Form
Level I, OCHE Approval	Revising a postsecondary educational program	Academic Proposal Request Form, Curriculum Proposal Form
Level I, OCHE Approval	Establishing a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S. degree program	Academic Proposal Request Form
Level II, RTP Required	Establishing a new postsecondary educational program	Request to Plan, Academic Proposal Request Form, Curriculum Proposal Form, Fiscal Analysis Form, Required Courses Form
Level II, RTP Not Required	Permanent authorization of a temporary C.A.S. or A.A.S. degree program	Academic Proposal Request Form, C.A.S./A.A.S. Curriculum Proposal Form, Fiscal Analysis Form, Required Courses Form
Level II, RTP Not Required	Exceeding the 120-credit maximum for baccalaureate degrees	Academic Proposal Request Form
Level II, RTP Required	Forming, eliminating, or consolidating an academic, administrative, or research unit	Request to Plan. Academic Proposal Request Form, Center/Institute Proposal Form (for centers/institutes only)
Level II, RTP Not Required	Re-titling an academic, administrative, or research unit	Academic Proposal Request Form

## **University of Montana (UM) Curriculum Approval Process**

The first step to any curriculum proposal is working with the Office of the Provost to identify which type of change you are making. Please consult with the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and/or the Academic Policy Manager (APM) before completing any paperwork to ensure you are taking the correct route. All curriculum proposals must travel through CourseLeaf (UM's internal curriculum management software). The necessary forms and approvals are tied to the workflow within CourseLeaf, so it is important to choose the correct pathway from the beginning. (Minor program modifications and course-level changes are not subject to MUS oversight and are not covered in this handbook.)

### **Level I and Level II not requiring a Request to Plan.**

Level I and II proposals must undergo review by ASCRC for undergraduate programs, or Graduate Council for graduate programs, and then the full Faculty Senate before moving through the state-level review process. Faculty Senate has two curriculum deadlines per academic year, one in the fall and one in the spring, which are posted on the [Faculty Senate website](#).

Once a proposal is submitted, it will be routed for review and approval by (1) the Department Chair; (2) the Dean; (3) the committee (ASCRC/Grad Council); (4) the full Faculty Senate; (5) the Provost; and (6) the President. Upon final approval, the Offices of the Provost and President will coordinate submission to OCHE at the next possible opportunity.

OCHE accepts Level I and II proposals on a monthly basis ([OCHE submissions due dates and call schedule](#)). Level I and II proposals are discussed on monthly Chief Academic Officer (CAO) calls with representatives from other MUS institutions. Proposal authors may be asked to attend the CAO call to answer questions about their proposal. After the CAO call, the Office of the Provost will send OCHE's approval memo to the proposal author and other relevant parties, prompting implementation of the change.

### **Level II requiring a Request to Plan: RTP Stage**

The Request to Plan (RTP) is a pre-approval process that brings a summary of the proposed new program before the Board of Regents (BOR) for comment and approval prior to further planning. The Faculty Senate does not review proposals at the RTP stage. Proposal authors should send a one-paragraph description of the new program to the Office of the Provost by mid-May for inclusion in UM's Forthcoming Academic Proposals spreadsheet, which is submitted to BOR each May with the Academic Priorities and Planning Statement. Exact deadlines are posted on the [Office of the Provost's webpage](#).

Requests to Plan should be submitted in mid-May for consideration at the September BOR meeting ([see Optimal Level II Timeline](#)). It is possible for RTPs to receive approval on alternate timelines, but this does not guarantee inclusion in the next academic year's catalog. Exact deadlines are posted on the [Office of the Provost's webpage](#). Once an RTP is submitted, it will be routed for review and approval by (1) Department Chairs, the Dean, and Graduate Dean (for graduate level programs); (2) the Provost; and (3) the President. Upon final approval, the Offices of the Provost and President will coordinate submission for the September BOR meeting ([OCHE submission due dates and call schedule](#)).

Requests to Plan receive comment from other MUS institutions at the CAO call in preparation for the BOR, which is held two weeks before the BOR meeting. They will then be discussed at the Academic, Research, and Student Affair (ARSA) committee BOR call, which is held one week before the BOR meeting. Final discussion and approval of RTPs happens at the September BOR meeting. Exact call and meeting dates are available on [OCHE submission due dates and call schedule](#). Proposal authors will be asked to attend the CAO BOR call, the ARSA BOR call, and possibly the BOR meeting to answer any questions. After the BOR meeting, the Office of the Provost will send OCHE's approval memo to the proposal author, chair, and dean, initiating the full proposal stage.

### **Level II: Full Proposal Stage**

Following RTP approval at the September BOR meeting, Level II proposals follow the same process outlined above for Level I & II approvals. The Level II documents should be submitted for Faculty Senate's [fall curriculum deadline](#). Once submitted, the proposal will be automatically routed through CourseLeaf for review and approval by (1) the Department Chair; (2) the Dean; (3) the Faculty Senate committees (ASCRC/Grad Council); (4) the full Faculty Senate; (5) the Provost; and (6) the President. Upon final approval, the Offices of the Provost and President will coordinate submission to OCHE at the next possible opportunity.

OCHE accepts Level II proposals on a monthly basis ([OCHE submission due dates and call schedule](#)). Level II proposals are discussed on monthly CAO calls with representatives from other MUS institutions. Proposal authors may be asked to attend the CAO call to answer questions about their proposal. After the CAO call, the Office of the Provost will send OCHE's approval memo to the proposal author and other relevant parties, prompting implementation of the change.

There are some types of Level II changes that do not require RTPs (see [MUS Curriculum Change Policy](#)). They will follow the monthly OCHE approval timeline described above, with the exception of proposals to re-title academic, administrative, or research units. These proposals require a BOR vote and are due seven weeks prior

to a BOR meeting. See the [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#) and [OCHE submission due dates and call schedule](#) for more information.

## Forms

All forms are contained within CourseLeaf, and all proposals must be initiated through CourseLeaf. However, it may be helpful to look at the word version of the forms required by OCHE during your planning process. See the [Required Forms by Proposal Type](#) table for additional guidance.

The word versions of all forms are available on the [OCHE forms webpage](#), unless noted otherwise.

- Academic Proposal Request Form
- Curriculum Proposal Form
- C.A.S./A.A.S. Curriculum Proposal Form
- Fiscal Analysis Form
  - Required Courses Form (This is an internal UM form that can be found on the [Office of the Provost's webpage](#) and must be submitted with the fiscal analysis form.)
- Program Termination/Moratorium Form
- Research Center and Institute Proposal Form
- Request to Plan Form

## Optimal Level II Timeline

OCHE approves Level II proposals on a monthly rolling basis while UM's campus-level processes and deadlines happen semesterly. There is some flexibility in the timeline for RTP submission, but the optimal timeline is outlined below. Following this timeline is the surest way to guarantee implementation of the new program for the following academic year. For example, if an RTP is submitted in May 2024 and is approved at

each stage, the program will be implemented for AY25-26. See page 9 for a visual representation of this timeline.

**Optimal Level II Timeline**





## Form FAQs

- Word document versions of all forms are available on [OCHE's Academic Forms webpage](#). It may be helpful to use the word document for drafting and collaboration.
- CIP codes - Find the appropriate CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) Code using the [CIP user site](#).
- A.A.S./C.A.S. Curriculum Proposal Form
  - The A.A.S./C.A.S. Curriculum Proposal Form is required for proposals to seek permanent authorization of a temporary A.A.S. or C.A.S. degree. Programs granted temporary authorization must seek permanent authorization within two years.
  - The form asks for projections of program headcounts and graduates. You should consult UOnline, as they will provide data that will help justify your projections to BOR. BOR will follow up once the program is implemented to check on the accuracy of projections.
  - Review "Level II Academic Program Follow-Up" in the [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#) for details (pp. 12-13).
- Academic Proposal Request Form
  - The Academic Proposal Request Form is required for all Level I and II changes.
  - If your proposal requires any new resources, they should already be approved by your Dean.
  - You are required to upload catalog language. The Registrar's Office will use the language you provide to update/create the program's entry in the UM Course Catalog, so the language should be accessible to students.

## Center/Institute Proposal Form

- The Center/Institute Proposal Form is required for creation or consolidation of a center or institute.
  - Before beginning work on your proposal, review Appendix B of the [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#) for guidance on proposing research centers/institutes (pp. 26-27).
  - If the new center/institute is the result of a gift and a name is associated with its creation, the proposal must also follow the process outlined in [BOR's building naming policy](#).
- Curriculum Proposal Form
    - The Curriculum Proposal Form is required for some Level I changes and most Level II changes. This form requires detailed information about the need for the program, plans for implementing the program, the program's relationship to UM's goals and other MUS institutions, etc.
    - You must provide projections of program headcounts and graduates. You should consult UMLearn, as they will provide data that will help justify your projections to BOR. BOR will follow up once the program is implemented to check on the accuracy of projections. A program review process is required for new programs that fall short of their projections.
    - Review "Level II Academic Program Follow-Up" in the [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#) for details (pp. 12-13).
    - The section titled "Revenues and Expenditures" asks for detailed budget projections. If you are requesting new resources, they must first be approved by the respective college's Dean.
- Fiscal Analysis Form and Required Courses Form
    - The Fiscal Analysis Form is an Excel spreadsheet, the template for which is available on [OCHE's Academic Forms webpage](#). The Required Courses Form is an internal UM form that must accompany the Fiscal Analysis Form.
    - Before beginning work on the Fiscal Analysis Form, review Appendix C of the [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#) for guidance (pp. 28-29).
    - Before beginning work on the Required Courses Form, review the [Required Courses Form Instructions](#).

- Contact Hillary Stowell, Director of Academic Budgets and Personnel ([hillary.stowell@mso.umt.edu](mailto:hillary.stowell@mso.umt.edu)) with questions about the Fiscal Analysis and Required Courses forms.
  - Once submitted, the Fiscal Analysis and Required Courses forms will be routed to the Vice President for Operations and Finance and the Director of Academic Budgets and Personnel for review and approval.
- Request to Plan Form
    - The Request to Plan (RTP) Form is the first step for proposals that feature substantive additions to, alterations in, or termination of programs, structures, or administrative or academic entities. The RTP is required for two of the Level II change categories.
    - RTPs must receive BOR approval before the Level II forms for a full proposal can be submitted.
- Termination/Moratorium Form
    - The Termination/Moratorium Form is required for proposals to terminate a degree/program, or place a degree/program into moratorium.
    - Review p. 6 of the [MUS Academic Affairs Procedural Guidebook](#) for guidance on terminations and moratoriums. Note that a program will be automatically terminated if it is not withdrawn from moratorium within three years.

## Questions

Contact the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (VPAA), John DeBoer ([john.deboer@mso.umt.edu](mailto:john.deboer@mso.umt.edu)) and/or the Academic Policy Manager (APM), Megan Burns ([megan.burns@mso.umt.edu](mailto:megan.burns@mso.umt.edu)) in the Office of the Provost for questions regarding curriculum proposals.

(This is the end of the handbook. Contact the Academic Policy Manager with questions or suggestions. Check [the Provost's Curriculum webpage](#) for updates and deadlines.)