Process for the Approval of New Academic Programs at Vanderbilt University

The pathway for new academic programs (Bachelors, Masters, PhD or equivalent degree) is:

1. Approval of Department(s) or Program(s), if relevant.

2. Approval of School(s) curriculum committee(s) and faculty and/or faculty councils, if applicable.

   For the School of Nursing: Approval of the Curriculum Committee, Approval of the Executive Faculty Council, vote by the Faculty Assembly (full faculty).
   For the Divinity School: Approval of the Academic Programs Committee, Approval of Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty, Approval of the Dean.
   For Owen School of Business: Approval of the Program Committee, Curriculum Committee, Faculty and Dean.
   For the School of Engineering: Approval of the Curriculum Committee, the Administrative Committee, and vote by the full faculty.
   For the Law School and Peabody College degree programs: Approval of relevant curriculum committees and Faculty Councils.
   For Blair School: Approval of ad hoc committee, Dean, curriculum committee and vote by full faculty.
   For Arts and Science:
      Undergraduate—Discussion with the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, approval of the Committee on Educational Programs and Faculty Council, and vote by the full faculty.
      Graduate—Approval of the A&S Dean, the Committee on Graduate Education, the Faculty Council, and vote by the full faculty.
   For Medical School degree programs the appropriate Senior Associate Dean will provide oversight and guide approval by:
      a. Designated subcommittees
      b. Academic Enterprise Executive Committee
      c. Executive Faculty
         [for Ph.D. programs in the basic sciences – the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research/Senior Associate Dean for Biomedical Sciences and the Quarterly Basic Science Education Group; for degrees relating to health professions education (excluding nursing) – the Senior Associate Dean for Health Sciences Education; for clinical and translational research education programs – the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research/Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Sciences].

3. Approval of the Dean(s) of the host School(s)—Arts and Science, Blair, Divinity, Engineering, Law, Medicine, Nursing, Owen, Peabody. All proposals must carry both the name and contact information of the individual(s) submitting the proposal as well as the appropriate submitting Dean(s).

4. Program Proposals for academic Master’s and PhD degrees are sent to the Dean of the Graduate School for three-part review:
   a. Graduate School solicits external reviews.
   b. Graduate Faculty Council approval (academic Master’s and all PhD degree programs only).
   c. Graduate Faculty Delegate Assembly.
5. Consultation with the Academic Policies & Services (APS) Committee of the Faculty Senate.

6. Full Faculty Senate review: Post-review, the appropriate submitting Dean is informed of the consultative recommendations of the Senate by the Chair of the Senate.

7. The submitting Dean prepares a letter of endorsement and sends the reviewed proposal to the Provost or Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, who then transmits the reviewed proposal to the Chancellor.

8. The Chancellor presents the vetted proposal to the Vanderbilt Board of Trust for approval. Following Board of Trust approval, the submitting Dean is informed of the outcome. This Dean then informs the individual(s) who submitted the proposal of its approval.

Note that Programs and/or Departments may not officially publicize a new degree program until approval by the Vanderbilt Board of Trust has been officially received by the relevant Program director(s).

It may be useful for those working on petitions for new academic programs to contact Ms. Andrea Hewitt-Gibson, Faculty Senate Program Coordinator (phone number, 343-3841; email, andrea.hewitt-gibson@vanderbilt.edu) for samples of well-crafted, previously approved proposals.

Approximate Timetable for steps outside Department and School Approval Process:

Step 4 above. 2-4 months depending upon the length of time required for receipt of external reviews.
Step 5 above. 2-3 months depending upon scheduling of meetings. The APS committee meets monthly during the academic year, shortly before scheduled Faculty Senate meetings (September-April).
Step 6 above. 1-2 months depending upon scheduled meetings. The Faculty Senate meets monthly during the academic year.\(^b\)
Step 7 above. \(<1\) month.
Step 8 above. 1-4 months, depending upon scheduled meetings. The Board of Trust meets three times per year (February, April, and November).\(^c\)

\(^a\) Both committees are chaired by the Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School; consult Vice Provost to determine composition of these committees.

\(^b\) Please consult: [www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/meetings.html](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/meetings.html) for exact dates.

\(^c\) Please consult: [www.vanderbilt.edu/boardoftrust/schedule.html](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/boardoftrust/schedule.html) for exact dates.

In general, all petitions for new academic programs should address the following:

- Purpose of the degree--What will the new academic degree enable a student to do that could not be accomplished via existing programs at Vanderbilt University?
- Benchmarking--Do similar programs exist elsewhere? How does the proposed program compare to other programs?
- Target student population size.
- Description of the size of the potential applicant pool.
- Projected number of students to be admitted per year; total number of students in the program at steady state.
- Qualifications for admission to the new program.
- Mechanisms to be utilized for student recruiting.
- A listing of the faculty members who will be participating in the new program.
- Name of the Director of Program and/or Director of Graduate/Undergraduate studies for the program.
- Curricular requirements, including existing courses to be used, and new courses to be created.
- Criteria for graduation.
- Expected timeline for completion of the program.
- Resources available to develop the new degree program.
- For programs emanating from University Central, a statement indicating that Dean Connie Dowell, Dean of Libraries, has been consulted regarding any potential implications for Vanderbilt Library system.
- For programs emanating from the Medical Center, a statement indicating that Dr. Nunzia Giuse, or designate, has been consulted regarding any potential implications for the Eskind Biomedical Library.
- Mechanism of program support.
- External letters of assessment and support of the proposed program (if not solicited and obtained by the Graduate School; see Step 4 page 1, above).