

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 0512F

Date of Senate Approval 11/08/12

Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

IDC Document 1: Institutional Development Committee (IDC) Statement on Planning and Approval of New Degree and Certificate Programs at UNC-Asheville

Background/Rationale.

IDC has observed that several recent efforts toward the initiation, development and launch of new academic programs at UNC-Asheville have proceeded without the required prior review by the Faculty Senate and/or Senate subcommittee. The most prominent example is the post-baccalaureate Certificate in Climate and Society, which has been in place at UNC-Asheville since January 2011 and recently accepted its 2nd cohort of students. Although this Certificate Program was approved by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), it did not receive review by the Faculty Senate, a procedure described in Senate Document #18 (1984-85). A second example is the recent submission to UNC General Administration of planning documents for two new degrees, a BA in Art History and a BFA in Jazz and Contemporary Music, both without prior review/approval of these plans by IDC as mandated in Senate Document #39 (1982-83).

IDC does not intend to assign blame or mete out punitive measures for this lack of adherence to Faculty Handbook policies, but we do seek a clearer, more accessible, and better-defined description of the stepwise process required for the planning, initiation, development, and approval of these and similar programs, so that Faculty Senate will not be excluded from oversight of such ventures. In the specific example of the new degree programs in the Art and Music departments, IDC acknowledges that the procedure is confusing as currently written. Whereas Senate Document #39 indicates that “IDC reaffirms its responsibility... to give a first review to new academic programs and tracks”, Faculty Handbook section 5.4.2 states: “At the time of submitting a request to plan a degree program such request should receive approval of IDC and the Faculty Senate. This review is to consider the concept, purpose, feasibility, and appropriateness of the request.” Senate Document #2 (1981) contains essentially the same statement; however, both Senate Document #2 and #39 are hyperlinked within section 5.4.2 of the Faculty Handbook. IDC recognizes that “at the time of submitting” could be construed as “at the soonest opportunity,” particularly in the case of the recent Art and Music initiatives for which UNC General Administration urged eleventh-hour submission of documents during summer months when IDC and Senate were not in session.

Specific Recommendations for the Procedure of Planning/Approval for New Degree Programs.

Senate Document #39 states, “There are many tests an academic program must pass, the first and most challenging is a test of intellectual content. This test must be administered by the University’s faculty.” Also, Senate Document #18 states, “Certificates are subject to the normal academic review procedures of the University.” Because it is indisputable that Certificate programs fall within the realm of academic programs, IDC asks that such requests be stated clearly and prominently, with new Certificate programs subject to the same *internal approval procedures* as Degree Programs. IDC recommends the following stepwise procedure (see below) be placed prominently in the Faculty Handbook, or linked within the Handbook, with APC receiving final editorial authority:

1. The planners of the new academic initiative consult with the Department Chair, appropriate Academic Dean, and Provost regarding the basic concept, alignment with University mission, and general resource requirements. For example, will the proposed initiative require new faculty/staff resources or use existing resources?
2. Once approval to proceed has been granted by the Provost (in consultation with the appropriate Academic Dean), *Appendix A: Request for Authorization to Plan a New Degree Program* should then be completed. This downloadable document is found at the following website: http://www.northcarolina.edu/aa_planning/degrees/index.htm At this time, it is recommended that the UNC-Asheville Director of Institutional Research be consulted for the purpose of enrollment projections, identifying similar programs and enrollment trends, determining the appropriate Classification of Instructional (CIP) code, responding to accreditation issues, and preparing the document in the appropriate format.
3. Once the *Request for Authorization to Plan* is completed, it is submitted to the appropriate Department Chair(s) and Academic Dean for review.
4. The *Request for Authorization to Plan* is submitted to the Institutional Development Committee (IDC) for approval and announcement to the full Faculty Senate.
5. If approved by IDC, the document is submitted for final approval by the Provost, who will then submit it to the Chancellor, whose signature is required for submission to UNC General Administration. Authority to approve the *Request for Authorization to Plan* resides with the UNC Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.
6. After UNC General Administration has approved the *Request for Authorization to Plan*, UNC-Asheville has 4 months to prepare and submit *Appendix C: Request for Authorization to Establish a New Degree Program*. This downloadable document is provided on the website referenced above. If the *Request for Authorization to Establish* is not submitted within 4 months, authorization to plan will expire.
7. Once the *Request for Authorization to Establish* is completed, the appropriate Department Chair and Academic Dean review this document.

8. The *Request for Authorization to Establish* is submitted to APC, who will receive input from IDC on any concerns that were raised in step 5 (above). The APC review is limited in that the curriculum may not be fully formed at this point.
9. After approval by vote of the Faculty Senate, the *Request for Authorization to Establish* document is submitted to the Provost for final approval and the signature of the Chancellor.
10. The UNC Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will review the *Request for Authorization to Establish* and make a recommendation to the Board of Governors Planning Committee. The full UNC Board of Governors will vote on the request.

*Specific Recommendations for
the Procedure of Planning/Approval for New Certificate Programs.*

For new Certificate Programs, IDC recommends the following truncated and modified version of the above procedure be followed:

1. The planners of the new academic initiative consult with the appropriate Academic Dean and the Provost regarding the basic concept, alignment with University mission, and general resource requirements.
2. A brief document is prepared for IDC review, describing the basic rationale, objective, expected pros and cons, and expected resource implications of the proposed Certificate Program. IDC will review this document and also announce the proposed initiative to the Faculty Senate.
3. If IDC approval is received, the planners complete the *Request for Authorization to Establish a New Degree Program* (http://www.northcarolina.edu/aa_planning/degrees/index.htm) with the exception of any queries or items that are clearly pertinent only to new Degree Programs and not non-degree, Certificate Programs.
4. Once the appropriate sections of the *Request for Authorization to Establish* are completed, this document is reviewed by the appropriate Department Chair and Academic Dean, and then is submitted to APC, who will receive input from IDC on any concerns that were raised in step 2 (above).
5. After approval by vote of the Faculty Senate, the *Request for Authorization to Establish* document is submitted for final approval by the Provost.

*Recommendations for
Faculty Senate review of the current Climate and Society Certificate Program at UNC-Asheville.*

IDC appreciates the clear information, cooperation, and acceptance of responsibility provided by the Dean of University Programs with regard to the steps that were omitted in the planning and launch of this Certificate Program. In order to bring this Certificate Program into alignment with the review requirements of the Faculty Senate, without undue hardship on students already taking courses in this Program, IDC proposes the Climate and Society Certificate Program be placed on an **internal review status** for one calendar year. During this time, the Program should be subjected to the approval process as described in items 1-5 above, with the exception that the *Request for Authorization to Establish a New Degree Program* (see above) can be replaced by the information detailed in Senate Document #18 (1984-85). Note that any future Certificate Programs must address items in the *Request for Authorization to Establish*. IDC envisions three outcomes as possibilities for the Climate and Society Certificate Program:

1. The Certificate Program in its present form meets with full approval of IDC, APC and the Faculty Senate. If this occurs, the internal review status will be lifted.
2. APC (with input from IDC) and/or Senate recommend changes in the Certificate Program. If this occurs, APC and/or Senate should meet with the Dean of University Programs and possibly faculty who teach within the Certificate Program to address these concerns. Once these changes are incorporated to the satisfaction of the Senate, the Program's internal review status will be lifted.
3. The Certificate Program is judged by APC and/or Senate to contain flaws for which a resolution cannot be reached. Or, issues raised within outcome 2 are not addressed to the satisfaction of APC and/or Senate within one calendar year. If this occurs, the Climate and Society Certificate Program will be disbanded but will allow already-enrolled students a reasonable period (such as two semesters) to complete the coursework for this Certificate.