



COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Proposal for Changing the Procedure for Modification of the Curriculum in terms of notification of affected departments

RATIONALE

The current procedure asks departments making a proposal to modify a curriculum, add a new course or modify an existing course to notify departments which would be affected by the change and obtain the chair's signatures from those departments, indicating that they have been informed of this change. This element of the procedure provides an opportunity for affected departments to offer input into the proposed change.

The form that departments use indicates a number of steps to follow to modify courses and curricula. The first step is Departmental approval. The second step asks for the notification of affected departments and the third is the school curriculum committee's approval. According to the way these steps are presented, affected departments could provide input if they wish *before* the proposal is reviewed by the school committee, so that changes, if agreed to by the proposing committee, could be made at that point.

At CUCAS, we have experienced problems with this system in the following ways:

1. The way this system works, the onus of deciding what other departments are affected is on the proposing department. Sometimes it may be obvious, as when a department proposes eliminating a course which is part of another department's program. This is not always the case, however. At times, departments consider themselves affected when the proposing department does not. Sometimes members of CUCAS consider a department affected by a proposal and ask the proposing department to go back and inform the affected department of the change.
2. There is no clear definition of what constitutes an "affected department."
 - A. Resource issues. If department A proposes that all their majors must take a particular course in department B, then B will be expected to provide enough sections to accommodate them. If a course is an option for students, however, there is disagreement about whether that is an affected department.
 - B. Content issues. When a department proposes modifying the content or level of a course, and another department's students take that course as part of their general education requirements, are they an affected department? This concept has been applied erratically.

C. Practical issues. When a proposal includes several departments which may be affected, the person responsible (usually the department chair) must go through sometimes considerable inconvenience to obtain the signatures of the affected departments' chairs. This makes the process longer and more burdensome than need be. When the issue comes up at the CUCAS review stage (that is, when committee members designate a department as affected when the proposing department did not) the revision is always delayed at least a month.

PROPOSAL

CUCAS proposes that we change the curriculum revision sheet and procedure in this way:

1. Delete step 2 ("the following affected departments have been notified").
(<http://www.wcsu.edu/facultystaff/handbook/forms/p098.pdf>)
2. Implement the system below concerning affected departments. In this way, "affected department" will be self defining. Any department may consider a proposal to have an effect on their resources or program and may provide input to the proposing department about that effect.

PROPOSED STEPS FOR CURRICULUM /COURSE REVISIONS

1. Departmental approval (as always) of the proposed change(s).
2. Transmission of the proposal to the appropriate school review committee in electronic form.
3. Each school review committee chair will electronically post the proposals and notify all department chairs that they should check the proposals. [The place where this should be posted and the manner should be determined by the deans and the appropriate technical staff.]
4. Department chairs will decide whether they think their departments are affected and if so, go to the complete proposal. When a department chair thinks the change has an effect on the department, she or he will provide input to the review committee before or during the approval process.
5. After approval by the school committee, the proposal proceeds to the next step of the process as before (CUCAS or Graduate Council) where departments who consider themselves affected may also provide input.