

COORDINATING COMMISSION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION  
STATE OF NEBRASKA

**GUIDELINES  
for Submitting  
PROPOSALS FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS  
and NEW ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS<sup>1</sup>**

INTRODUCTION

Several parties share responsibility for the authorization of new instructional programs and new organizational units within public institutions in Nebraska, including the public colleges and universities, their governing boards, and the Commission. Goals common to the parties who authorize new programs are quality and the assurance of efficiencies in the use of institutional and state resources. Each party in the authorization process, however, emphasizes different aspects of a new instructional program or organizational unit. Each party in this process must be aware and respectful of the special emphasis and needs of the others. Effective review of proposals for new programs will result in stronger institutions and increased accountability to state government and the general public.

OBJECTIVES FOR REVIEW

Nebraska statutes require that the program approval criteria be designed to:

- (a) meet educational needs,
- (b) assure efficiency,
- (c) avoid unnecessary duplication,
- (d) assure adequacy of resources, and
- (e) assure new programs approved by the Commission meet minimum performance standards established by the Commission.

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL, REVIEW, AND DISAPPROVAL

The Commission applies five primary criteria for the approval, review, and disapproval of programs:

1. Centrality to Role and Mission
2. Consistence with the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*
3. Evidence of Need and Demand
4. Adequacy of Resources
5. Avoidance of Unnecessary Duplication

Other considerations may apply. The Commission may also grant conditional approval or require that programs meet minimum performance standards.

<sup>1</sup> For definitions of programs, see Appendix A.

## OPTIONAL PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

The purpose of optional preliminary notification is to provide an opportunity for the Commission to offer comments to the institutions regarding potential state-level issues and to inform other postsecondary institutions about proposed instructional programs to encourage collaboration and cooperation. The following are recommendations for submitting the notifications to the Commission:

- ▶ Include the title and a brief description of each new instructional program that is in an early stage of planning on the campus.
- ▶ Submit to the Commission twice each year:
  - Community colleges - July 1 and January 1
  - State colleges - September 1 and March 1
  - University - November 1 and May 1.

### CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL: NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The proposal consists of two sections: descriptive information and review criteria. The type of institutional response is identified below each section or subsection, including examples of evidence typically provided by institutions to assure consistency with the criteria.

#### I. Descriptive Information

- ▶ The name of the institution proposing the program
- ▶ The name of the program (major) proposed
- ▶ Degrees/credentials to be awarded graduates of the program (e.g., diploma, BA, MA, etc.)
- ▶ Other programs offered in this field by this institution
- ▶ CIP code
- ▶ Administrative units for the program (e.g., college, division, department, etc.)
- ▶ Proposed delivery site(s), and type(s) of delivery, if applicable
- ▶ Date approved by governing board
- ▶ Proposed date (term/year) the program will be initiated
- ▶ Description, including credit hours and other requirements (program of study), and purpose of the proposed program

#### II. Review Criteria

##### A. Centrality to Role and Mission

The institution offers assurances that the proposed program is consistent with its role and mission, as defined in the Nebraska statutes and in the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*.

## B. Evidence of Need and Demand

### 1. Need for the program—in the institution, the community, the region, the state, or the nation

The institution provides information, such as data, surveys, or studies, regarding:

- ▶ workforce needs of business, industry, and employers,
- ▶ job and educational advancement opportunities for graduates, and
- ▶ potential for the program to contribute to society and economic development, where appropriate.

### 2. Demand for the program—the extent of student interest in the proposed program

The institution provides studies, surveys, or other evidence about student demand, including:

- ▶ the number of students expected to enroll in the program in each of the first five years of operation, and
- ▶ the minimum number of students required to make the program viable.

## C. Adequacy of Resources

The institution offers assurances that the proposed program has resources adequate to develop and implement the program, provides a summary of the resources that will be available to the program, notes any special plans to encourage or maximize the efficient use of resources, and explains the basis on which a decision about the adequacy of the resources was made.

### 1. Faculty and Staff Resources

The institution provides:

- ▶ the number of faculty and staff required to implement the proposed program in the responsible unit, and
- ▶ any additional faculty and/or administrative and support staff required, including graduate assistants.

### 2. Physical Facilities

The institution describes

- ▶ the location of the proposed program,
- ▶ any additional physical facilities, such as classrooms, laboratories, and offices, that will be required for the program, and
- ▶ any plans for renovating existing facilities, constructing new facilities, or leasing additional facilities for the proposed program within the next ten years. This item can be omitted if the institution indicates it has had a capital construction project submitted to or approved by the Commission.

### 3. Instructional Equipment and Informational Resources

The institution describes the availability and needs related to informational resources and instructional equipment, including:

- ▶ computers,
- ▶ data services, and
- ▶ telecommunication connectivity.

### 4. Budget Projections—for the first five years of the program

The institution completes Tables 1 and 2 showing the projected ~~incremental and total~~ expenses, as well as the reallocation of existing resources and/or the revenue sources for those expenses. Appendix B provides instructions for displaying and explaining those projections in the footnotes to the tables.

## D. Avoidance of Unnecessary Duplication

The institution:

- ▶ identifies other similar programs offered in the state by public or private institutions,
- ▶ identifies any similar programs offered within the states that are members of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact, and
- ▶ for graduate and professional programs, identifies similar programs offered in contiguous states that would be reasonably accessible to Nebraska residents.

## E. Consistency with the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*

The institution explains how this program would enhance relevant statewide goals for education. This explanation may strengthen a program proposal, bolstering information regarding need and demand, or ameliorating concerns about unnecessary duplication. A summary of the major statewide goals can be found in Appendix C, including the use of instructional technology and cooperation and collaboration among institutions in the sharing of resources, facilities, and courses.

## CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL: NEW ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS

When the new program is a new organizational unit, including an “institute”, as defined in Appendix A, submission of the proposal need only include or address the following:

### I. Descriptive Information

- ▶ The name of the institution proposing the new unit
- ▶ The name of the unit proposed
- ▶ ~~Other programs offered in this field by this institution~~
- ▶ Administrative units for the new unit (e.g., college, division, etc.)
- ▶ Date approved by the governing board
- ▶ Proposed date (term/year) the unit will be initiated
- ▶ Description and purpose of the proposed unit

### II. Review Criteria (from above):

A.

B1. (third bullet only) and B2 in the context of the appropriateness of the new unit

C1-C3, as appropriate to the type of new unit proposed; C4.

D. first bullet only

E.

## SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSAL

The Commission is aware that institutions provide their governing boards, and perhaps other state agencies, with evidence that may inform the Commission’s review of proposals for new instructional programs or organizational units. Wishing to avail the institutions of any opportunity to reference similar information in existing documents, the Commission offers institutions a choice. Institutions may:

- ▶ develop proposals that correspond directly and sequentially to the Commission’s criteria,
- ▶ append references to the criteria contained in accompanying documents, or electronically-transmitted documents compatible in format with the Commission’s computer system, or documents filed previously with the Commission [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 85-1417 (Reissue 1999.)], or
- ▶ utilize a combination of these choices.

**Definitions of Program(s)**

The following definitions including those identified in Title 281, NAC, Chapter 4 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations apply to *Program(s)*:

1. Program shall mean any program of instruction, public service program, off-campus instructional program, any new college, school, major division, education center, or institute, but shall not include reasonable and moderate extensions of existing curricula which have a direct relationship to existing programs [281 NAC 4:003.01].
2. Instructional Program shall mean a sequence of courses and activities leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate in an academic discipline or subject area offered by a public institution. This type of program is commonly called a major [281 NAC 4:003.01.A].

Any course of study that meets any of the following triggers is an "instructional program" for the purpose of defining an instructional program new to an institution, or for the purpose of initiating the review of an existing instructional program:

- a. The title of the program will appear on the student's transcript or other official records signifying the student's achievements, skills, or knowledge in the discipline or area of study.
  - b. The program will be identified in the catalog, bulletin, or other publications of the institution as a distinct program of study leading to a credential awarded by the institution.
3. Existing Instructional Program shall mean an instructional program authorized by the Legislature or the appropriate governing board prior to January 1, 1992, or an instructional program authorized by the Commission after January 1, 1992 [281 NAC 4:003.01.B].
4. New Instructional Program shall mean a proposed instructional program not included in the definition of "existing instructional programs." A substantial modification of an existing instructional program constitutes a new instructional program. A substantial modification occurs when the principal objective of the program is changed. A reasonable and moderate extension of an existing instructional program is not classified as a new instructional program [281 NAC 4: 003.01.C].
5. New Organizational Unit shall mean any proposed new college, school, major division, or institute that provides, facilitates, or coordinates instruction, research, or service and within which related disciplines or services are grouped. Name changes or reasonable and moderate extensions of, or reorganizations within, existing organizational units shall not be considered as new organizational units [281 NAC 4: 003.01.D].

6. Institute(s) shall mean the organization of major interdisciplinary and/or multiple academic divisions (*e.g.*, schools, major divisions, collections of departments) within a sector to address new and emerging problems and issues.
  - a. The Commission recognizes that some terms such as “institute” and “center” are used interchangeably in academe.
  - b. For the purpose of Commission approval, a working definition of *centers* will normally be interpreted to mean an institutions and/or sectors academic entities that demonstrate the following characteristics:
    - i. Have an identifiable and significant budget.
    - ii. Propose to seek new state support for its creation, and/or operation.
    - iii. Exist as a level of administration that is higher than that of the department, and/or report at an administrative level above a dean.
    - iv. Are associated with assigned FTEs of faculty and/or research or other professional staff.
    - v. May or may not include association or entities outside the institution.
  - c. It is intended that “centers” would not include interdisciplinary units with a variety of characteristics, including those that:
    - i. Normally encompass an assemblage of faculty assigned to one or more departments.
    - ii. Provide, facilitate, or coordinate instruction, research, or services across the disciplines represented by faculty of a single unit.
7. Moderate Extensions of Existing Organizational Units are normally considered by the Commission based on variables that include:
  - a. Whether the unit itself is a reasonable and moderate extension of, or reorganization within, one or more existing organizational units, in which case it would not be considered a new organizational unit.
  - b. The extent to which the unit will utilize existing resources.
  - c. The extent to which the foci of its faculty and/or instructional programs, research, and/or services will be a reasonable and moderate extension of existing units.
  - d. The extent to which the purposes and operations of the unit will support the institution’s existing role and mission.
  - e. The extent to which the organization and operation of the new unit will require substantial, additional resources.

**TABLE 1: PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT**

	(FY____) Year 1		(FY____) Year 2		(FY____) Year 3		(FY____) Year 4		(FY____) Year 5		Total	
	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost								
<b>Personnel</b>												
Faculty <sup>1</sup>											0	\$0
Non-teaching staff: Professional <sup>2</sup>											0	\$0
Graduate assistants											0	\$0
Non-teaching staff: support											0	\$0
Subtotal	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>Operating</b>												
General Operating <sup>3</sup>												\$0
Equipment <sup>4</sup>												\$0
New or renovated space <sup>5</sup>												\$0
Library/Information Resources <sup>6</sup>												\$0
Other <sup>7</sup>												\$0
Subtotal		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00

<sup>1</sup> Show the number of additional full-time equivalent faculty and related salary and fringe benefit expenditures needed to implement and maintain the unit.

<sup>2</sup> Show the number of additional full-time equivalent professional staff and related salary and fringe benefit expenditures needed to implement and maintain the unit.

<sup>3</sup> Included in this category should be allowances for faculty development, laboratory supplies, travel, memberships, office supplies, communications, data processing, equipment maintenance, rentals, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Show anticipated expenditures for the acquisition of new or upgrades or replacement of existing equipment necessary for the implementation and/or operation of the unit.

<sup>5</sup> Identify the space for the proposed unit, if appropriate. Show projected expenditures for any facilities (general classroom, laboratory, office, etc.) that will be required. Include renovation of existing facilities and construction of new facilities.

<sup>6</sup> Show anticipated expenditures for library materials or other informational resources directly attributable to the new unit.

<sup>7</sup> Additional Other Expenses: Show other expenses not appropriate to another category.

NOTE: All items requiring explanation may be included on this page or in the proposal narrative.

**TABLE 2: REVENUE SOURCES FOR PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT**

	FY(____) Year 1	(FY____) Year 2	(FY____) Year 3	(FY____) Year 4	(FY____) Year 5	<b>Total</b>
Reallocation of Existing Funds <sup>1</sup>						\$0
Required New Public Funds <sup>2</sup>						\$0
1. State Funds						\$0
2. Local Funds						\$0
Tuition and Fees <sup>3</sup>						\$0
Other Funding <sup>4</sup>						\$0
1						\$0
2						\$0
3						\$0
<b>Total Revenue <sup>5</sup></b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

<sup>1</sup> Show the total amount of dollars the institution will reallocate from its budget to support this unit. Identify the source of funding and provide an explanation of the impact that the redistribution of funds and other resources will have on exiting programs or unit.

<sup>2</sup> This represents a requirement for additional public funds to support this unit. If additional state funds are required, this request will have to be included in the institution's budget request. Separately detail all sources for additional funds. For community colleges, this would include local tax funds.

<sup>3</sup> Show additional tuition and fee revenues that will be used to support this unit.

<sup>4</sup> Show the amount of external funding or donations which will become available each year to support this unit. Include a brief explanation of the nature of these resources including their specific source and the term of the commitment.

<sup>5</sup> **Revenues are not expected to match expenses.**

NOTE: Where appropriate, show calculations and/or formulas that were used to project new revenue; e.g. number of new students projected multiplied by tuition and fees.

**TABLE 1: PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

	(FY____) Year 1		(FY____) Year 2		(FY____) Year 3		(FY____) Year 4		(FY____) Year 5		Total	
	FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost								
<b>Personnel</b>												
Faculty <sup>1</sup>											0	\$0
Professional <sup>2</sup>											0	\$0
Graduate assistants											0	\$0
Support staff											0	\$0
Subtotal	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>Operating</b>												
General Operating <sup>3</sup>												\$0
Equipment <sup>4</sup>												\$0
New or renovated space <sup>5</sup>												\$0
Library/Information Resources <sup>6</sup>												\$0
Other <sup>7</sup>												\$0
Subtotal		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00

**FOOTNOTES are for guidance only. Please provide your own footnotes where appropriate and delete ours.**

<sup>1</sup> Show the number of additional full-time equivalent faculty and related salary and fringe benefit expenditures needed to implement and maintain the program.

<sup>2</sup> Show the number of additional full-time equivalent professional staff (post-docs, non-faculty academic administrators, etc.) and related salary and fringe benefit expenditures needed to implement and maintain the program.

<sup>3</sup> Include allowances for faculty development, laboratory supplies, travel, memberships, office supplies, communications, data processing, equipment maintenance, rentals, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Show anticipated expenditures for the acquisition of new or upgrades or replacement of existing equipment necessary for the implementation and/or operation of the program.

<sup>5</sup> Show projected expenditures for any facilities (general classroom, laboratory, office, etc.) that will be required. Include renovation of existing facilities and construction of new facilities.

<sup>6</sup> Show anticipated expenditures for library materials or other informational resources directly attributable to the new program.

<sup>7</sup> Additional Other Expenses: Show other expenses not appropriate to another category.

NOTE: All items requiring explanation may be included on this page or in the proposal narrative.

**TABLE 2: REVENUE SOURCES FOR PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

	FY(____) Year 1	(FY____) Year 2	(FY____) Year 3	(FY____) Year 4	(FY____) Year 5	<b>Total</b>
Reallocation of Existing Funds <sup>1</sup>						\$0
Required New Public Funds <sup>2</sup>						\$0
1. State Funds						\$0
2. Local Tax Funds (community colleges)						\$0
Tuition and Fees <sup>3</sup>						\$0
Other Funding <sup>4</sup>						\$0
1						\$0
2						\$0
3						\$0
<b>Total Revenue <sup>5</sup></b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**FOOTNOTES are for guidance only. Please provide your own footnotes, where appropriate, and delete ours.**

<sup>1</sup> Show the total amount of dollars the institution will reallocate from its budget to support this program. Identify the source of funding and provide an explanation of the impact that the redistribution of funds will have on existing programs.

<sup>2</sup> This represents a requirement for additional public funds to support this program. If additional state funds are required, this request will have to be included in the institution's budget request. Separately detail all sources for additional funds. For community colleges, this would include local tax funds.

<sup>3</sup> Show additional tuition and fee revenues that will be generated by this program.

<sup>4</sup> Show the amount of external funding or donations which the institution anticipates will become available each year to support this program. Include a brief explanation of the nature of these resources including their specific source and the term of the commitment.

<sup>5</sup> **Revenues are not expected to match expenses.**

NOTE: Where appropriate, show calculations and/or formulas that were used to project new revenue; e.g. number of new students projected multiplied by tuition and fees.