Senate Committee on Programs Curricula and Courses

Charge and Committee Makeup

- The Programs, Curricula and Courses Committee formulates, reviews and makes recommendations to the Senate and the Provost concerning policies and actions related to academic programs, curricula & courses, and related to the academic units that offer credit-bearing programs or courses.

- The committee consists of an appointed presiding officer; ten (10) faculty members; one (1) staff member; two (2) undergraduate students and one (1) graduate student; and the following persons or a representative of each: the Senior Vice President and Provost, the Associate Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, and the Dean of Libraries.

Types of actions to be considered

6.8.d Charge: The committee shall review and make recommendations to the Senate in at least the areas designated by (1) through (3) below…

(1) All proposals for the establishment of a new academic program, the discontinuance of an existing academic program, for the merger or splitting of existing academic programs, or for the renaming of an existing academic program;

(2) All proposals for the creation, abolition, merger, splitting, or change of name of colleges, schools, departments of instruction, or other units that offer credit-bearing programs of instruction or regularly offer courses for credit; and

(3) All proposals to reassign existing units or programs to other units or programs.

Types of actions to be considered

6.8.e Charge: The committee shall review and shall directly advise the Office of Academic Planning and Programs concerning proposals to modify the curricula of existing academic programs, or to establish citation programs consistent with College rules approved by the Senate. The committee shall inform the Senate of its actions in these cases.

Criteria for Review

6.8.g Charge: The committee shall be especially concerned with the thoroughness and soundness of all proposals, and shall evaluate each according to the mission of the University, the justification for the proposed action, the availability of resources, the appropriateness of the sponsoring group, and the proposal's conformity with existing regulations. The committee shall be informed of any recommendations made by the Academic Planning Advisory Committee concerning resource issues, the consistency of the proposed action with the University's mission and strategic directions, or both.

e.g.,   if financial resource issues are involved, our office will work with the unit, the college, and the Provost's budget office to confirm that they are identified.

Review processes for typical actions

useful reference:

Senate PCC Web site within Academic Planning and Programs:
provost.umd.edu/academic_planning/senate-programs

Basic Principles:
- If the change is "significant", it must be approved by the University Senate, the President, the University System and the state's regulatory agency, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)

→ *"significant" = change to the program inventory or to any major administrative unit on campus*

- If not "significant," then the Senate PCC is usually the last stop

- If it is a graduate program, it will have been reviewed by the Graduate PCC before it is reviewed by the Senate PCC

Some proposals are handled "administratively"

- Internationalizing a degree program (if existing and no change to the program)

- Establishing a fully electronic delivery of an existing program if no changes to the program (review may be called for based on MHEC's and campus-level guidelines for online programs)

- Establishing an existing program in a new location (may require off-campus review)

- Discontinuation of programs/concentrations that have had no students in them for a long while

- Very minor changes to curriculum, if impact is only within the specific unit

- PCC items that come at the end of the academic year and are time-critical

See approved actions from prior years at the Curriculum Management (CIM) web site.

Items to think about (particularly for new programs or new academic minors)

- Can students complete the curriculum in an appropriate time?

- Does the unit have the required instructional resources (faculty, library, advising)?

- If the curriculum relies on courses from other units, is their involvement confirmed?

- If a new program, is there student demand?

- If a new program, are there learning outcomes and an evaluation plan?

- For undergraduate programs, is there a four-year plan?

- If a revision, is there a "grandfathering plan" for current students?

- If online, has the proposal addressed the expected guidance for online programs?