

Guide for Proposing a New or Revised* Graduate Certificate, Subprogram or Degree Program

College of Education – University of Iowa

Thank you for considering the creation or revision of a graduate certificate, subprogram, or degree program (from now on: “graduate program”) and enriching the opportunities for students in the College of Education. The steps outlined in this guide should be followed as closely as possible, and in the order outlined. **This process should be started at least one year before the graduate program aims to start accepting students.**

[This webpage, from the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations, offers much helpful information that will be referenced throughout this document.](#)

Step One: Informing the department and impacted faculty

As you first imagine your new or revised graduate program, you should inform the colleagues in your area and your department, as well as department leadership like your DEO. All graduate programs must be housed in a department and will need the support of faculty within the college, so beginning with those conversations will both assure future success and potentially offer some ideas about the best ways to proceed with the program proposal. Although you do not need to write a formal proposal for this step, you should be prepared to provide details as needed to answer questions.

Step Two: Informing the college

You should next inform college leadership. To do this, you should contact the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs and meet with them about your proposed graduate program or proposed change. They may choose to bring in other college leadership to the meeting, depending on the nature of the program being proposed or revised. Again, you will not need a formal written proposal at this step, but you should be ready to respond to questions.

Step Three: Writing the first draft of the proposal

This written proposal should be drafted according to the guidelines at the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations, in Section B of the document linked above. Internal and external letters are not required at this point in time. Please work with the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs during the drafting process.

Step Four: Undergoing administrative review of proposal

Once a strong draft of the proposal has been prepared, the proposal should be discussed with key administrative support personnel in the college. This meeting, arranged by the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs, is designed to identify what some of the administrative needs and procedures will be regarding the proposal. In some cases, this meeting will reveal edits to the proposal that should take place before it is advanced any further.

Step Five: Undergoing Executive Council review

The Executive Council in the College of Education, comprised of the DEOs, Associate Deans, and the Dean, will review the proposal and meet briefly with you to ask questions and consider it for approval at the collegiate level. The Council members may request further information, revisions, or letters of support before approving the proposal. Once the proposal is approved in this step, you will be given a letter of support from the College that is required for the next step.

Step Six: Undergoing preliminary Graduate College review

You should now submit the approved proposal and the collegiate letter of support to the Graduate College. It will undergo its preliminary review (as outlined at the link above), and further feedback about the proposal will be given at that point. The Graduate College will also work with you to identify the internal and external letters of support needed for the next steps in the review. This review will also potentially get the program put on the calendar for approval by the Graduate Council (see Step Eight).

Step Seven: Securing letters of support

The letters of support for the graduate program, both internal and external, should be solicited and collected at this time. Although all proposals require a letter of support from the College, the other type of letters required will differ depending on the nature of the program. You should consult with the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs as well as the Graduate College to be sure that you are getting the necessary letters.

Step Eight: Undergoing Graduate Council review

The Graduate Council meets every other week on Thursday mornings. For this review, you will send the final proposal with all letters of support to the Graduate College, and they will distribute it to the Graduate Council. The proposal author(s) and the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs will attend part of the Graduate Council meeting so council members can ask questions before taking a vote on the proposal. Typical questions/concerns from the Graduate Council include:

- How will students be affected?
- What sort of communication is needed to support this proposed program?
- What resources does this proposal require to be enacted?

Steps Nine +: Final steps

The remainder of the steps depends somewhat on the nature of the proposal. See Section C at the link above; in some cases, the proposal will require approval by the Graduate Faculty, Provost, or Board of Regents. It is unlikely that further presentations of, or revisions to, the proposal will be required during these final steps.

*Steps One through Six are also required for program revisions or changes to existing graduate certificate, subprogram, or degree programs, including program closures. After that point, the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs will consult with the Graduate College Dean to determine what type of review and approval will be needed at the Graduate College level. In some cases, the changes will require the completion of all steps in this document; in other cases, the Graduate College might simply accept the collegiate decision as sufficient.