Navigating the Graduate Curriculum Approval Process

I. INTRODUCTION
The graduate curriculum approval process consists of steps that involve online and hard copy submission of specific forms and supporting materials. Multiple committees review those documents. This document is designed to give you a map of those processes.

II. GENERAL
- Use the curriculum forms found on the Graduate College UGC website. The same forms are used for both the UGC and UCC.
- If two or more curricular changes are related, you must also submit a separate summary of the curricular change, explaining the relationship of the proposed changes.
- The University Graduate Committee reviews curriculum seven times during the academic year. The UGC schedule is published on the Graduate College UGC website and includes all dates associated with the curriculum approval process. Each college is assigned a specific UGC meeting on which its curricular submissions are evaluated and a vote is taken for approval. Colleges are encouraged to submit materials before, or by, the assigned meeting deadline. Timely submissions shall receive priority. If time allows, the UGC will consider late proposals.
- Be sure to plan ahead in order to meet deadlines. All curriculum proposals approved through the February meeting will be included in the next academic catalog. Any approvals after the March meeting will go into the catalog for the subsequent academic year.
- The agenda for the UGC meeting is available on the Graduate College UGC website one week before the meeting. All deans, associate deans, department chairs and graduate coordinators are notified via e-mail when the agenda is posted. A departmental representative is required to attend the UGC meeting to answer questions about the proposal (except for items that appear on the consent agenda). The item will be automatically tabled if a representative is not in attendance.

III. PROCESS
- Prior to submission to the University Graduate Committee, all proposals will be reviewed and approved by the Professional Education Unit (if applicable for programs related to K-12 education), the academic unit, and the academic college. New degrees and plan changes that alter the intent of the plan or its integral components may require additional review by the college dean, the graduate dean, and the provost before submission to the academic college curriculum committee.
- After approval by the academic college curriculum committee, all forms shall be submitted electronically by the academic college dean’s office to the Graduate College via the curriculum process associate (contact information may be found on the UGC website). Proposals may not be submitted directly to the Graduate College via individual faculty or departments. The academic college dean’s office shall also submit
one signed paper copy of the form. Curricular items will not be forwarded to the full UGC meeting until the signed paper copy is received by the Graduate College via the curriculum process associate.

- The UGC Review Subcommittee is charged with evaluating curriculum to ensure that the submission is complete and ready for presentation to the UGC. The Curriculum Process Associate and the associate dean of the Graduate College will work with the academic unit chair, graduate coordinator and/or faculty contact for the curriculum submission to resolve any issues identified by the UGC Review Subcommittee before forwarding the proposal to the full UGC meeting.

- The Graduate College forwards every submission to the Registrar’s Office Curriculum and Systems (ROCS) office where the proposal is reviewed for technical issues related to the course catalog and LOUIE. ROCS notifies the Graduate College of any problems and the Graduate College works with the academic unit to get problems corrected before the item moves on to the full UGC meeting.

- At the UGC meeting, a representative must be on hand in support of the submission and shall be prepared to answer questions from the UGC. If no representative is in attendance, the item will be automatically tabled.

- If approved by the UGC, the curriculum changes are forwarded to ROCS. ROCS staff update LOUIE and the appropriate academic catalog.

IV. THINGS TO VERIFY BEFORE SUBMITTING CURRICULUM PROPOSALS

- Syllabus in the approved format. For new courses, ensure that the syllabus is in the approved university format. This is the most common problem associated with new course proposals. You may find a standard template for graduate syllabi here.

- Program of Study. Updated Programs of Study showing changes from the current catalog are required as part of the review process. Official Programs of Study are housed in the Graduate College and available for download on the Programs of Study website.

- Prerequisites. Louie cannot verify undergraduate prerequisites for graduate courses. If an undergraduate prerequisite is required, it must be verified manually for each student who enrolls. For undergraduate prerequisites a general statement is preferred (e.g. Undergraduate course in statistics is required). Graduate-level prerequisites must have specific prefixes & numbers.

- Learning Outcomes. See the Office of Curriculum, Learning Design, and Academic Assessment website for guidance and resources in writing learning outcomes and learning objectives.

- Written responses from affected academic units. If the proposal affects another academic unit’s enrollment or degree plan (e.g., is used in another department’s degree plan, certificate, emphasis or concentration), a written acknowledgement from the affected department(s) is required and must accompany both the electronic submission and the hard copy.

- Course name and/or description changes. If substantive changes are proposed in a course name and/or course description, a syllabus may be required to determine whether a new course proposal is necessary, rather than a course change.

- Plan changes. For plan change proposals that represent changes to the intent of the plan or its integral components, review by the college dean, graduate dean, and/or the provost may be required prior to submission to the college curriculum committee.

- Co-convened, cross-listed, and courses adapted from an undergraduate level course. If a course is to be co-convened or cross-listed, submit the form for the graduate-level course, syllabus for the graduate-level course and syllabus for the
undergraduate-level course. Differentiations between the undergraduate- and graduate-level courses should be consistent with the university’s co-convene policy, available on the Office of Curriculum, Learning Design, and Academic Assessment website. One-time cross-listed or co-convened (usually 5xx/4xx) courses do not go through the UGC process and are submitted directly to the associate dean of the Graduate College for graduate approval. The associate dean of the Graduate College then forwards the one-time co-convened courses to Associate Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment for undergraduate approval.

V. DRAFT PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHIGN NEW DEGREE PROGRAMS

- Hold initial meetings with your academic dean and the graduate dean to discuss the possibility and logistics of establishing a new graduate degree program.
- All initiatives regarding new degree programs must be communicated to the Provost through your Academic Dean and/or Graduate Dean. All approved initiatives (generally early Spring) will be entered into the Academic Strategic Plan which is submitted to the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) Academic Affairs Committee.
- Complete appropriate forms found on the Provost website and submit all information requested to the Office of the Provost.
- Once written approval is obtained from the Office of the Provost, begin the Graduate Curriculum Approval Process described in Section III.
- Degree implementation will only begin once the Provost’s office notifies the unit (generally in the summer following approval) that the program may be offered or the organizational change has been approved.

VI. DRAFT PROCESS FOR PROGRAM NAME CHANGES

- Hold initial discussions with your academic dean and the graduate dean regarding name changes of existing graduate degree programs.
- Name changes must be communicated with the Provost through your Academic Dean and/or Graduate Dean.
- Once support is obtained from the Office of the Provost, begin the Graduate Curriculum Approval Process (use Plan Change Form) described in Section III.
- The Graduate College notifies the Office of the Provost regarding any approval of changes.
- The Provost’s office notifies the unit that the plan name change has been approved.
Academic Unit Approval:
The Provost, Academic Dean & Graduate Dean review (for new & significantly changed degrees)

Professional Education Unit Approval (if applicable)

Academic College Curriculum Committee Approval

Academic Dean’s Office submits electronic and signed paper copy to the Graduate College via the Curriculum Process Associate (CPA)

Registrar’s Curriculum and Systems Team (ROCS) reviews for technical and catalog issues

University Graduate Committee Review Subcommittee

Revised proposals sent to full University Graduate Committee via CPA

Approved copies are forwarded to ROCS for catalog changes

CPA works with dept to clear up any minor or technical problems

CPA forwards Review Subcommittee feedback to academic associate deans with deadline for revisions