

# New Graduate Degree Program Process

## Policy Memorandum No. 160

Recommended by the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies: February 21, 1996

Approved by University Council: April 1, 1996

Approved by the President: April 1, 1996

Effective: Immediately

The University Council, on recommendation of the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies, unanimously approved a resolution concerning procedures for and review of proposals for new graduate degrees.

Following is the text of the resolution as adopted by University Council.

**WHEREAS**, the Graduate Curriculum Committee and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies review and approve proposals for new graduate degree programs; and

**WHEREAS**, in the past such proposals have come to the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies without clear statements that arrangements have been made to assure the resources necessary for the program; and

**WHEREAS**, the Graduate Dean and the Provost should be aware that new degree proposals are forthcoming.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the following New Graduate Degree Program Process, defined as follows, be adopted to enhance the review of proposals for new graduate degrees.

### The New Graduate Degree Program Proposal Process

The Pre-proposal. The first step in proposing a new graduate program is the pre-proposal. It is a two to three page rationale for the new program. Areas addressed should include:

The need and justification for the program in the Commonwealth, region, and nation.

A statement of support from the college dean(s).

The status of the program at present and what the expected status will be regionally and nationally five years after implementation.

The size and composition of the student pool the program will serve.

The estimated costs of the program for the first five years.

Current and future funding sources.

The ability of the faculty to support the additional teaching and research demands of the new program.

The pre-proposal should first be reviewed with the college dean(s). If the dean(s) support(s) the program pre-proposal, the advocates will discuss the pre-proposal with the Vice Provost for Research/Dean of the Graduate School. At this point it is also advisable to discuss the pre-proposal with Virginia Tech's SCHEV Academic Affairs Coordinator to gain input.

The Vice Provost for Research/Dean of the Graduate School and the Senior Vice President and Provost together will determine whether the pre-proposal has merit and should be used to develop a full proposal or whether a full proposal should not be written.

If the Vice Provost for Research/Dean of the Graduate School and the Senior Vice President and Provost decide that (1) there is justification for the program, (2) the program meets the university's goals for graduate education, and (3) the benefits of the program justify its costs, they will send a copy of the pre-proposal to all college dean's and request their response. After consideration of the responses of the deans, they will decide whether or not a full proposal should be written.

The New Graduate Program Proposal. After a full proposal has been written following the SCHEV format, it is reviewed by the College Curriculum Committee and by the Academic Dean. The proposal, following full College approval, is submitted to the Graduate Associate Provost for Graduate Studies for review, and revised if necessary. Twelve (12) copies of the proposal should then be submitted to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School will distribute copies to members of the Graduate Curriculum Committee prior to their meeting to discuss the proposal.

The Graduate Curriculum Committee will evaluate the proposal using the SCHEV Policies and Procedures for Program Approval. The minutes of the meeting will constitute a written critique of the proposal.

The Graduate Curriculum Committee Chair shares the minutes and also discusses the overall impressions of the committee with the Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School and the advocates of the proposal.

If the proposal requires revision before being considered by the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies, the advocates will be invited to discuss the proposal with the Graduate Curriculum Committee at a second meeting. The advocates may present a response to the Curriculum Committee's review comments and will be prepared to answer questions about the proposal. Steps 2-4 are repeated until the proposal is acceptable to the Graduate Curriculum Committee.

The proposal is then presented to the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies. Advocates of the proposal may be present to answer questions. Following the discussion, the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies will vote on acceptability of the proposal.

If the proposal is approved, it is be forwarded to University Council for consideration. If University Council approves the proposal, it is then forwarded to the Vice Provost for Research/Graduate Dean and to Senior Vice President and Provost for review, and if found acceptable at this stage is submitted to the Board of Visitors for approval.

The proposal approved by the Board of Visitors is submitted to SCHEV review.

SCHEV conducts its review of the proposal and notifies the Senior Vice President and Provost of its approval or disapproval of the proposal.

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President's Policy Memorandum

**URL: <http://purl.vt.edu/vtdocs/policies/ppm160>**