

**Academic and Student Affairs Committee**  
Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education  
39 Woodland Street, Hartford, Connecticut  
Boardroom 123  
**10:00 a.m. - Tuesday, January 10, 2012**

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

**1. Action Items**

- \*Review of Process and Forms for the Approval of Academic Programs

**2. Information Items**

- Teacher Education Reform
- BOR-ASA Committee Meeting Schedule

**3. Other**

- Future Topics for Discussion

\*= Attachments

**ITEM**

The procedure to be followed for the approval of new academic programs for public institutions of higher education in Connecticut.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION FOR FULL BOARD**

Adoption of the process as described in the analysis below for approving new programs from public colleges and universities for licensure and accreditation in the State of Connecticut.

**BACKGROUND**

The Connecticut General Assembly's PA #11-48, as amended by PA #11-61, reorganized the governance structure of public higher education in the state, and transferred the responsibility for academic program approval to the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR)<sup>1</sup>. This document outlines the process and conditions to be adopted in conducting academic program approvals under the BOR beginning in 2012. The intent in adopting the new process is to maintain consistency with state regulations while at the same time embracing the operating principles spelled out in the section immediately below.

**ANALYSIS**

BOR review of the effectiveness and efficiency of the program approval process itself will be thorough and ongoing. A full evaluation will be conducted at the end of the first year, and modifications introduced accordingly. Institutions will begin using the proposed forms in January, 2012, with official action on the process by the BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee in early January, and by the full BOR on January 19, 2012.

Programs formerly requiring Board of Governors for Higher Education (BOGHE) approval need to be reviewed and approved by the BOR under one of the following categories:

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<sup>1</sup> Sec. 253. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2011) Notwithstanding sections 10a-34 to 10a-35, inclusive, of the general statutes, as amended by this act, the Board of Regents for Higher Education shall have the authority, in accordance with the provisions of said sections 10a-34 to 10a-35, inclusive, as amended by this act, over academic degrees awarded by public institutions of higher education, including the (1) operation of public institutions of higher education and the programs offered by such public institutions of higher education, (2) licensure and accreditation of public institutions of higher education and programs offered by such public institutions of higher education, (3) evaluation and approval of applications to confer academic degrees made by public institutions of higher education, and (4) assessment of any violation by a public institution of higher education of the authority of said board as described in subdivisions (1) to (3), inclusive, of this section and the imposition of a penalty for such violation.

- *New programs are:* a) A new degree program; b) a new major; or c) a new stand-alone certificate program that is Title IV eligible. No prior approval has existed for the program by either the BOR or the former BOGHE. Institutions may seek approval of new programs as:
  - a) *Licensure*, normally granted for a period of three years, authorizing the enrollment of students and their advancement toward the completion of degree requirements; or
  - b) *Simultaneous Licensure and Accreditation*, simultaneously authorizing the enrollment and award of credentials to students. The accreditation action is considered renewed with each regional accreditation of the institution. Simultaneous licensure and accreditation is generally sought for new degree and certificate programs that are closely related to a set of already existing programs and aligned with institutional strengths. A full description of the approval process of new programs is provided beginning on page 4 of this paper.
  
- *Accreditation of a Licensed Program:* Program accreditation authorizes the institution to award credentials in the program. Accreditation is considered renewed with each renewal of the regional accreditation of the institution offering the program. Program accreditation should be pursued in a timely fashion toward the expected date of first graduation. The process for Accreditation approval requires a report on any changes to the program since its licensure action, details on program enrollments, any financial considerations, and the addressing of any issues brought up at the time of the BOR/BOGHE licensed the program.
  
- *Program Modification:* A program modification is the substantive change to a previously BOR/BOGHE-approved program. The following instances are processed as Program Modifications:
  - a) Creation of a new degree program composed exclusively of courses belonging to previously approved program(s), or through the merging of previously approved programs;
  - b) Creation of a new undergraduate certificate program of more than 30 semester credit hours of courses belonging to a previously approved baccalaureate major(s) at a four year institution, or an associate degree program(s) at a two year institution; a new baccalaureate minor of more than 18 semester credit hours; a new undergraduate option or certificate containing more than 15 semester credit hours of courses not falling within a previously approved program(s), or a new graduate option or certificate program including more than 12 semester credit hours of courses not falling within a previously approved program(s). Modifications below these thresholds may also require approval if required by existing state regulations for the licensed professions or work area of the program;
  - c) Significant modifications in courses or course substitutions of more than 15 credits in a previously approved undergraduate degree program or more than 12 credits within a previously approved graduate degree program;
  - d) The authorization for an approved program to be offered at an off-campus location or using an alternate modality (e.g., on ground to online); and

- e) A change in the title of a degree or title of program. Application formats for the approval of program modifications will contain sections for background, rationale and nature of the modification, enrollment/degree awards estimates, and resource summary. Depending on the nature of the modification and the constituent unit to which the institution belongs, other additional details such as full course descriptions, course sequences, etc. may be required.<sup>2</sup>
- *Program Discontinuation:* The discontinuation of an existing BOR/BOGHE-approved degree or certificate program must be authorized through BOR action. Program discontinuation consists of a phase out period during which any students in the program graduate and a termination step in which the program is taken off the official list of existing programs maintained by OFAAHE. Program discontinuation should: a) occur in the context of a related academic improvement, e.g., the merging of programs with declining enrollment/completions into a new program that effectively addresses relevant state needs and students' interests; b) emerge as a result of the periodic Academic Program Review for all programs at each institution, under the guidance of existing BOR policy; c) other institutional considerations such as redirecting capacity, adoption of new mission, etc. Program discontinuation should not impact state priorities for workforce preparation.

### **Informational Items for the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the BOR**

The following instances require a communication to be submitted for inclusion in the BOR-ASA agenda and do not require any BOR action:

- new minors, concentrations, specializations or certificate programs not classified in the categories outlined above;
- any programs that under previous legislation and process would not have required BOGHE approval; and
- programs that do not qualify students to become eligible for federal financial aid.

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<sup>2</sup> Constituent Units of Higher Education are: the Connecticut Community College System, the Connecticut State University System, Charter Oak State College, and the University of Connecticut. Administrative processes within these units may require additional information and review beyond what is outlined or required in this document and related process forms. For example, any certificate program created at a CC System institution, even if below threshold for BOR approval, requires an administrative review and entry of such program and its courses in the of system-level operated programmatic database.