

UAF New Course Approval Process: Responsibilities and Best Practices

The UAF new course approval process provides a structured review and approval process for new course proposals. By outlining responsibilities and best practices at each level of review, this document strives to ensure the review process functions effectively and efficiently to best serve UAF students, faculty and staff. This document does not prescribe or mandate practice at any level of review, as decision-making authority for how departments, units, Faculty Senate, and administration conducts their review resides with the leaders conducting the review. We recommend that submitters first familiarize themselves with the entire review process before beginning their proposals.

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Faculty member or course submitter

- Supporting documents, access to CourseLeaf, and important dates are available at: <https://www.uaf.edu/uafgov/faculty-senate/curriculum/>
- Submit to CourseLeaf by first Friday in November for course edits and new courses to be reviewed and potentially approved for the next **Fall** semester.
- Submit to CourseLeaf by first Friday in November for course edits and new courses to be reviewed and potentially approved for the next **Spring** semester. Proposals are due to the Office of the Registrar by December 1.
- A note on deadlines for Spring semester: the listed November deadline refers to when proposals need to be submitted into CourseLeaf, but they are reviewed at multiple levels, which can take substantial time depending on the extent of revisions necessary. Thus, submission by the November deadline does not guarantee sufficient time for review and revision prior to final approval at all levels.
- Review the [UAF Faculty Senate Academic Course & Degree Procedures Manual](#).
- Review the [UA Board of Regents R10.04.020. Degree and Certificate Program Approval policy. REGENTS' POLICY PART X – ACADEMIC POLICY Chapter 10.04 - Academic Programs](#)
- Ensure the UAF syllabus checklist is complete. (Go to this site for the most recent checklist: <https://uaf.edu/uafgov/faculty-senate/curriculum/>)
 - Be sure to address the following:
 - List the page of your syllabus for each required element of your syllabus and for each suggested element that you choose to include; this greatly expedites review at all stages by peers.
 - Adequately describe and include student learning outcomes for the course that are measurable.
 - If there is a participation grade, explain what is expected for a participation grade and how it differs from attendance.
 - Include a course calendar that at a minimum has weekly topics, readings, major assessments and exams.

- Include examples of readings and assignment descriptions.
 - Clearly describe the grading criteria for the course.
 - Check that the way credit hours are calculated are accurate using [UAF's Credit Hour Calculator](#).
 - Check that the hours in the course add up to the credit hour distribution as assigned, especially with lab hours.
 - See the [UAF Student Learning Outcomes by Schools and Colleges](#) for reference.
- Check for title and course number availability within the UA system. Ensure that it matches the syllabus.
- The course description in CourseLeaf should be 50 words or less and match the syllabus, and in general there should be agreement between language in syllabus and CourseLeaf.
- If applicable, review the course designation and classification requirements to ensure that the course meets the designation and classification criteria.
 - [Things to Know About the New General Education Requirements \(GER\) at UAF](#)
 - [UAF Catalog: General Education Requirements](#)
 - [UAF Catalog: Alaska Native-themed Requirements](#)
- If the course is stacked ensure that all levels of material are included, such as:
 - A **separate syllabus** for both levels of stacking that demonstrates how the two versions differ.
 - The difference between undergraduate and graduate-level expectations at both levels are reasonable. New guidelines for stacked courses are forthcoming, but at minimum be sure that the course **descriptions are identical** between levels (<50 words) but the **student learning objectives must be distinct** between levels
- If the course is cross-listed, both titles, course descriptions, credits, prerequisites, and restrictions must be the same.
- Check that prerequisites are understandable, accurate, and included for upper-division courses.
- If there are no prerequisites included, make sure that there are no overlooked assumptions.
- Review documentation for correct grammar, spelling, and formatting.
- Prepare a rationale that includes planning, justification, and evidence, for the need for a change or new course and the **associated impacts** at all levels. Evidence includes documentation of conversations with, for example, Unit Curriculum Committees or Program Committees, or other instructors or Department Chair that may be impacted. Saved email exchanges should be uploaded to CourseLeaf and are considered the strongest evidence of investigated impacts and planning.
- Notify the Department Chair that you are submitting this request PRIOR TO submission. While the Department Chair will receive this request for formal approval through CourseLeaf, they should be aware of this request prior to receipt.
- Respond promptly to questions from any of the course approval levels: (Dept Chair, Unit Peer Committee, Dean, Curriculum Review Committee, Provost's office, Registrar's office).

Department Chair, Unit Peer Committee, and Dean of School or College Unit

- Responsible for leadership in developing high-quality domain-specific academic programs that fulfill department, college, and university objectives. (UAF Department Chair Policy)
- Promote academic program quality, including program assessments. (UAF Department Chair Policy)
- Ensure the catalog is current. (UAF Department Chair Policy)
- Initiate, plan, oversee implementation of, and review the preparation and offering of the academic program, after appropriate involvement of members of the department and consultation with the dean. (UAF Department Chair Policy)

- Ensure that the new course fits within the program and mission of the unit and that any changes to already existing courses also align with program goals.
- Ensure that any effects on other UA programs or degrees have been researched and addressed. Relevant emails must be attached to the proposal to establish that you have resolved any concerns that representatives of affected programs or degrees may have.
- Check if the course is replicated in the system:
 - If so, detail why this course is needed and how it differs from the existing course.
 - Verify that the other program(s) has (have) been contacted.
- Confirm that there is a need for the course and support from faculty and administration.
- Check the syllabus to confirm that it meets each requirement in the syllabus checklist and reflects appropriate academic quality.
 - Give special attention to the Student Learning Outcomes and ensure they are explained and here is a plan to assess them.
- Ensure that there are adequate resources (facility, faculty, equipment, etc.).
 - Establish if library resources are needed to support the course.
- Check to make sure staffing and course rotation can be covered given existing (or proposed) departmental resources.
- Ensure that any associated fees are reasonable and justified, and have been approved by the Provost. Attach the memo from the Provost's Office approving any proposed fees.
- Verify the paperwork and forms are complete and all questions have been addressed.
- All proposals are due to Faculty Senate Curriculum Review Committees by February 1st.
- Expected review and turnover times for Unit Curriculum Review Committee:
 - New courses: 2 weeks
 - Changes to courses: 1 week

Faculty Senate Coordinator

- Approves the proposal by verifying that the workflow is accurate.
- Confirms that all additional paperwork (syllabus, syllabus checklist) is completed.
- Does not review the content of the proposals.

Faculty Senate Curriculum Review Committee or Graduate Academic & Advisory Committee

- Review the syllabus checklist. If more than a few small matters are identified, proposals will be rolled back to the Department Chair.
- Determine whether the possible impacts on other programs/courses have been considered and evidence is documented. The CRC considers documented email exchanges to be the best form of evidence. Relevant email exchanges should be uploaded to Courseleaf during the initial proposal construction stages.
- Determine whether the proposal includes other disciplines.
 - If so, ascertain whether those disciplines have been involved in the development.
 - Confirm that the proposal includes any relevant email exchanges to document the inclusion of any other disciplines (or lack thereof) in the development of this course.
- Determine whether this program/course already exists within the system
 - If so, ascertain whether the home department/program has communicated with the other program(s) to determine whether the other program(s) is (are) in support of this addition.
 - Confirm that the proposal includes any relevant email exchanges to document the support (or lack thereof) expressed by the other program(s).
- Consult with team members on issues of concern that you are unsure how to address yourself.

- Send an email about any changes or clarifications needed, as well as the status of those updates as contact continues between the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) and the proposal submitter. Include deadlines or dates in which feedback is expected. (cc Chair of CRC)
- Send final update on approval/disapproval of proposal after committee votes. (cc Chair of CRC)
- All reviews should generally be finalized by Faculty Senate Curriculum Review Committees by March 1st.
 - The date is dictated by the CRC & GAAC, in conjunction with the Office of the Registrar depending on the date of catalog publication.
- Expected review and turnover times for Faculty Senate Curriculum Review:
 - New courses: 4 weeks
 - Changes to courses: 2 weeks

Provost

- Final review and approval of documents.
- Signs approval.

Registrar's Office

- Ensures accuracy of the submission and has "final approval" to verify the proposal received the appropriate approvals.

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