

# **WVU Policy and Procedure for Creation and Approval of Degree Programs, Majors, Minors, Areas of Emphasis, Teaching Specializations and Undergraduate and Graduate Certificate programs at WVU**

**PURPOSE:** To establish a uniform, institutional standard for the categorization of all degree programs, majors, minors, areas of emphasis and undergraduate and graduate certificate programs at current locations presently served by West Virginia University, and to provide a summary document on the approval level and process for each level of categorization.

These designations are to be used by all academic units to describe the areas of study within the unit.

*(Note: HEPC has the authority to review and approve academic programs that are proposed to be offered at a new location not presently served by the institution.)*

## **Definition and Approval Process for New Degree Programs and Majors, Titles and Designation Changes (Also see Attachment A for Flow Chart)**

**Degree Program (Degree Designation and Program Title):** an area of study approved as such by the institution and BOG and listed on the official HEPC inventory of degree programs. The Degree is represented by the official degree designation (e.g., B.A. - Bachelor of Arts, M.A. - Master of Arts, B.S.J. - Bachelor of Science in Journalism, B.S.P.Ed. - Bachelor of Science in Physical Education, etc.).

**Major:** a field of study within an approved degree program, having its own prescribed curriculum. A degree program may have more than one major. Program title and major may be the same. For example, in the case of Bachelor of Arts: English, English is both the program title and the major.

The program degree designation and the major literal appear on the diploma.

- A formal proposal is prepared by the department.
- Proposal is then forwarded to the Dean, Academic Affairs, and to Faculty Senate (or the University Graduate Council if a graduate program) for approval.
- Academic Affairs will work with Admissions and Records/SSD and the Division of Planning/Institutional Research to determine appropriate CIP and Major Codes.
- Academic Affairs presents the new program or change to the BOG.
- Upon approval from the BOG, Academic Affairs will notify HEPC, Admissions and Records/SSD and Division of Planning/Institutional Research.
- HEPC will update the HEPC inventory of degree programs.
- Admissions and Records/SSD will ensure the appropriate codes are in Banner and that appropriate departmental personnel are notified of changes.

- Division of Planning/Institutional Research will update the Curriculum Matrix and implement changes for State and Federal Reporting.

**Definition and Approval Process for Minors (Also see Attachment B for Flow Chart)**

Minor: formally recognizes strategic work in an area of study and thus encourages students to pursue a secondary field. Students may not earn a minor in the same field as their major. Requirements for a minor are set by the academic unit offering the minor and must include at least 15 hours of coursework, with a minimum of nine (9) hours at the upper division level (course numbers 300 or above). Note: Minors will be added to a student's transcript only at the time of graduation.

- A formal proposal is prepared by the unit wishing to deliver the minor.
- Proposal is forwarded to the Dean and then sent to Senate Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate.
- Approved minors are forwarded to Academic Affairs for presidential approval as delegated by the BOG.
- Academic Affairs will work with Admissions and Records/SSD and the Division of Planning/Data Analysis and Reporting to determine appropriate Minor Codes.
- Admissions and Records/SSD will ensure the appropriate codes are in Banner and that appropriate departmental personnel are notified of changes.
- Division of Planning/Institutional Research will update the Curriculum Matrix.

**Definition and Approval Process for Area of Emphasis (within a major and approved degree program)  
(Also see Attachment C for Flow Chart)**

Area of Emphasis: a specific subject area of study which has limited course offerings within an approved degree program and major. Normally, a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours and no more than eighteen (18) credit hours would be expected for an area of emphasis within a baccalaureate degree program. Normally, a minimum of six (6) and no more than twelve (12) credit hours would be expected for an area of emphasis within a graduate degree program. Note: Areas of Emphasis will be added to a student's transcript only at the time of graduation.

- A formal proposal is prepared at the program level.
- Proposal is then forwarded to the Dean for approval; final presidential approval is obtained from Academic Affairs as delegated by the BOG.
- Academic Affairs will notify Admissions and Records/SSD and the Division of Planning/Institutional Research when a new Area of Emphasis needs to be created.
- Admissions and Records/SSD will ensure the appropriate codes are in Banner and that appropriate departmental personnel are notified of changes.
- Division of Planning/Institutional Research will update the Curriculum Matrix.

### **Definition and Approval Process for Teacher Specializations (Also see Attachment D for Flow Chart)**

Teacher Specialization: A specific subject area of study to enable a student to meet teaching certification standards. Note: Teaching Specializations will be added to a student's transcript only at the time of graduation.

- A formal proposal is prepared for a new teacher specialization by the College of Human Resources and Education upon consultation with the WV State Department of Education.
- The proposal is forwarded to Academic Affairs and to the BOG for formal approval.
- Academic Affairs will notify Admissions and Records/SSD and the Division of Planning/Institutional Research when a new Teacher Specialization needs to be created.
- Admissions and Records/SSD will ensure the appropriate codes are in Banner and that appropriate departmental personnel are notified of changes.
- Division of Planning/Institutional Research will update the Curriculum Matrix.

### **Definition and Approval Process for Undergraduate and Graduate Certificates (Also see Attachment E for Flow Chart)**

Undergraduate and Graduate Certificate Programs: A certificate program (as distinguished from the one-year Certificate Degree program offered by the community and technical colleges) is a coherent, specialized curriculum designed for students in search of a specific body of knowledge for personal/career development or professional continuing education. The certificate program is not attached to a degree program, although credit hours earned in a certificate program may be applied to a degree if they are deemed appropriate by the institution. The awarding of a certificate upon completion of the program is not contingent upon completion of a degree program. The certificate appears on the student's transcript and an institution may issue an official certificate of completion. Normally, a minimum of twelve (12) and no more than twenty-one (21) credit hours constitute a certificate program at the baccalaureate or graduate level. Note: Undergraduate and Graduate Certificates do not have a formal code but will be added to the student's transcript as a comment at the time of graduation.

- A formal proposal for new undergraduate and graduate certificates is prepared at the program level.
- Proposal is then forwarded to the dean for approval.
- Graduate Certificates proposals are also forward to Graduate Council for approval. Final presidential approval is obtained from Academic Affairs as delegated by the BOG.
- Academic Affairs will notify Admissions and Records/SSD and the Division of Planning/Institutional Research when a new Area of Emphasis needs to be created.
- Division of Planning/Institutional Research will update the Curriculum Matrix.