

External Program Proposal Timelines

In order for a program to be included in a particular year's catalog, all *internal approvals must be completed by May of the academic year before the catalog deadline*, and all *external approvals must be completed by the November catalog deadline*.

Prior to submission to the State Board of Education and/or the Northwest Commission on Colleges & Universities, all internal Idaho State University approvals must have been completed.

State Board of Education (SBOE) Processes & Approval

Pursuant to SBOE Policy III.G.3.b.i.:

All new, modification, and/or discontinuation of academic program majors certificates, bachelor's, master's, doctorates, instructional units, administrative units, expansions, consolidations, and transition of existing programs to an on-line format require completion of the program proposal prior to implementation.

These should also be listed on ISU's Five-Year Plan. Five-year plans are updated annually between January and April and approved by the SBOE at their August Board meeting.

Once a proposal has been vetted through ISU's internal processes, then the Provost's Office will submit the proposal to the SBOE for the 30-day review and comment period. During this time, the other public colleges and universities have an opportunity to express support and/or concerns for an institution's proposed program. Once the 30-day review period has been completed, the SBOE requests that the Council on Academic Affairs & Programs (CAAP) review and make recommendations to the Instruction, Research, Student Affairs (IRSA) committee of the SBOE. CAAP meets monthly. CAAP will then recommend support (or not) for the proposal to be forwarded to the IRSA Committee for their review prior to being placed on the next SBOE meeting agenda. IRSA meets two to three weeks prior to all regularly scheduled SBOE meetings. IRSA will then review and discuss the recommendations of CAAP, address any questions or concerns they may have, and make recommendations to forward the proposal to the full SBOE for their consideration at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Overall, the SBOE process can take three to four months to complete depending on meeting schedules, provided there are no concerns or additional information requested.

Northwest Commission on Colleges & Universities (NWCCU) Processes & Approval

For all changes that have been identified by the NWCCU as Substantive or Minor (as specified below), ISU must notify the Commission in writing prior to implementation of the proposed change. When considering a substantive or minor change, an institution is required to submit an Application Form one month prior to the submission of a substantive change proposal. This is coordinated through ISU's accreditation liaison officer (ALO), associate vice president for institutional effectiveness.

Overall, the NWCCU process can take two to three months to complete, provided there are no concerns or additional information requested.

Substantive Changes include, but are not limited to, the following (*Requires NWCCU Review Panel*):

- Any change in institutional mission, legal status, form of control, ownership, or sponsorship
- Addition of a new degree level or branch campus
- Acquisition of, or merger with, another institution/organization
- Teach-out agreement with another institution
- Contractual agreements with non-accredited entities/institutions
- Initial education offering as competency-based (or direct assessment) learning
- Initial course or program offerings through distance education delivery
- Program offerings outside of NWCCU region including international locations
- Contractual agreements with accredited organizations
- Substantial increase or decrease in program length, or clock hours to credit hours (or vice versa)
- Addition of courses or a program significantly different from existing offerings since the last NWCCU evaluation
- Additional site or location geographically apart from main campus (more than 20 miles)

Minor Changes include, but are not limited to, the following (*Requires NWCCU Staff Review*):

- Curriculum revisions which do not significantly affect program outcomes
- Pilot study or a limited time offering
- Addition of offerings less than a year in length to an existing site or location not significantly different from existing offerings
- Addition of degree program (undergraduate or graduate) or a certificate program of 30 semester or 45 quarter credits in length and related to existing offerings

- Placement in moratorium, suspension, or elimination of a degree program (undergraduate or graduate) or a certificate program of 30 semester or 45 quarter credits in length
- Addition of courses in distance education delivery and less than 50% of total required credits for a program completion but not previously evaluated for delivery modality
- Addition of a site or location in geographic proximity to the institution's main campus (within 20 miles)
- 50% or more of a degree (undergraduate or graduate) or certificate program's requirements completed through distance education or competency-based learning with previous evaluation of delivery modality