

**Curriculum Development Guidelines**  
College of Arts and Sciences 2018 10 20

## **New Courses**

In preparation for review of a course proposal by the Arts and Sciences Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Committee (CTLC), the College will work with you to ensure that your proposal materials address these points.

1. **The Course and the Curriculum.** A course proposal is a program proposal. How does the proposed course embody and advance the instructional mission and strategic curricular initiatives of the unit? What need does it fill in the program or programs that it serves? How will it function within the program curriculum? What are the course outcomes? How do the course outcomes align with the program outcomes? (Is it time to revisit the program outcomes?)

Well-formulated outcomes will

- reflect the program's instructional mission and pedagogical approach
- capture the knowledge, dispositions, capacities, and skills and that students will develop and/or refine in the course
- align with program outcomes
- be tailored to the course's curricular level
- be measurable

→*The College can provide advice and/or examples.*

2. **Student Learning.** How will students grow intellectually in the course? What knowledge will they expand? What capacities will they deepen? What competencies will they develop? What research or professional development—readings in the learning sciences, research on pedagogy in your discipline, best practices published by professional organizations, teaching conferences or workshops—informs the pedagogical approach? What evidence-based teaching practices will the course feature? How would you articulate the theory of learning that informs those practices? Does the course incorporate experiential learning? How will student progress toward course outcomes be captured and made visible to the students and to the program?
  - A list of recommended readings in the learning sciences is included below. A good place to start is Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
3. **Demand.** Will the course serve all students within the home program or is it targeted toward a subset? What functionality could the course have beyond the home unit/program? Could it become part of an interdisciplinary program? Could it serve as

an elective for other programs? Could it be eligible for the Arts and Sciences Multidisciplinary Component (MDC)? Or possibly for general education?

4. **Staffing and Offerings.** A new course needs a sustainable staffing/delivery model. Who will teach this course? When that person is not able to, who else will? If the course is important enough to be part of a program, then it should be delivered on a regular basis. *That calls for a staffing model that does not hinge on one colleague alone.* How frequently will the course be offered? If applicable: How will offerings of this course balance with offering of courses that serve similar curricular functions, such that similar courses do not compete with one another?

The key elements of a new course proposal are:

1. Course proposal cover sheet (“blue sheet”) and the accompanying Course Change Request Form.
  - Ask the College for a document that cues where your responses to the prompts in the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Development Guidelines can be incorporated in the Course Change Request Form.
2. Sample syllabus.
3. Proposed updates to catalog copy and check sheet, accompanied by an EZ blue sheet.
4. Any appropriate supporting documentation. Examples include a cover memo to address things that the Course Change Request Form does not directly prompt and/or correspondence that documents consultation and support for the course beyond the unit.

## New Programs

In preparation for review of a program proposal by the Arts and Sciences Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Committee (CTLC), the College will work with you to ensure that your proposal materials address these points.

1. **Mission.** Articulate the mission of the program and clarify how it links with our encompassing mission of liberal arts education for the public good.
2. **Prospective Demand, Growth Potential, Recruitment & Outreach Strategy.** What regional, national, global developments call for the program’s establishment? What constituencies will the program serve? What is the case for growth? How will the program bring new students to BGSU?
  - As part of this discussion, schedule a consultation with a curriculum a-dean and the College Student Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator.
3. **Program Distinction.** How will the program distinguish itself from programs in similar fields at other institutions? How will the program both distinguish itself from and positively interact with programs currently offered at BGSU?

4. **Student Learning.** How will students grow intellectually in the program? What capacities will they deepen? What competencies will they develop? How will student growth be captured and made visible to the program, to current and prospective students, and to other constituencies?

a) **Integrative Learning.** The goal of integrative learning is to raise students' metacognitive awareness of the *applicability* of academic learning and the *transferability* of knowledge, capacities, and skills across different areas, for example: from college to careers, from academic life to civic life, and from undergraduate studies to advanced studies. Programs can foster integrative learning by establishing meaningful links between

- different academic disciplines
- general and specialized studies
- classroom and experiential learning
- curriculum and co-curriculum
- academic programs and communities within and beyond campus
- academic settings and professional settings

Ideally, integrative learning across the undergraduate career culminates in *Signature Work*, which functions both as a capstone achievement and a document of a graduate's preparation for life beyond graduation. Signature Work could be undergraduate research, creative work, an internship, a community-based project, etc. In all its forms, it incorporates a robust reflective element that enables students to frame for themselves and for different audiences the value and impact of their undergraduate experience. Consult within your unit and with the College on possibilities for building integrative learning into your program. Two links to more information about integrative learning are included below.

b) **Experiential Learning.** Each new program will feature an experiential learning component. There are multiple institutionally-defined options: internships, undergraduate research and creative work, study abroad, service-learning, and others. Consult within your unit and with the College on what option(s) will work best for your program.

c) **Evidence-Based Pedagogy.** How would you articulate the theory of learning that informs the teaching culture of the program, and how is that theory applied throughout the curriculum? What research or professional development—readings in the learning sciences, research on pedagogy in your discipline, best practices published by professional organizations, teaching conferences or workshops— informs the pedagogical approach? What evidence-based teaching practices will the program feature?

- A list of recommended readings in the learning sciences is included below. A good place to start is Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

5. **Curricular Coherence, Outcomes, Structure.** Well-formulated outcomes will reflect the program’s mission and distinguishing features and elegantly capture the knowledge, dispositions, capacities, and skills and that will define the program’s graduates. Working backward from the outcomes, the program design should feature an integral, sequenced set of learning experiences that foster growth toward the outcomes. The following materials will work together to give a cogent textual and visual depiction:

- A tabular curriculum map, to provide an overview of the program courses, identify the program outcomes around which the courses are focused, and indicate the level of the learning experiences in each course:
  - *Benchmark* level (acquisition of foundational knowledge, identification and initial development of key dispositions, capacities, skills), typically associated with year one in a traditionally structured program.
  - *Milestone* levels (diversification/deepening of knowledge, further development/reinforcement of key dispositions, capacities, skills), typically associated with years two and three in a traditionally structured program.
  - *Capstone* level (completion-stage depth and breadth of knowledge, refinement of dispositions and capacities, mastery of skills), typically associated with final year or term in a traditionally structured program.
- A tabular legend to the curriculum map, to provide concise narrative descriptions of what progress toward each outcome looks like at the benchmark, milestone, and capstone levels, to indicate the type of curricular and co-curricular experiences that will foster that progress, and to identify examples of student work products that document progress.
- A sample 4-year plan that shows a practical path to completion within that timeframe.

→ *The College can provide advice and/or examples.*

6. **Resource Impact.** Proposals need to account for facilities/space, equipment, staffing, program promotion, other aspects as appropriate. Work with the College on a memo (and an accompanying spreadsheet, if called for) to address resource impact.

7. **Sustainability.** The reality that we inhabit requires us to argue persuasively that the program can be launched with the faculty and infrastructure that we currently have in place (or that has already been agreed to by unit, College, and Provost). Future allocation of additional resources and/or hires is contingent on enrollment growth.

Framing this will require good consultation within the unit and between the unit and the College.

The key elements of a new program proposal are:

1. Proposal cover sheet (“blue sheet”) and the accompanying Program Change Request Form. Proposed catalog copy and check sheet should accompany this program proposal.
  - Ask the College for a document that cues where your responses to the prompts in the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Development Guidelines can be incorporated in the Program Change Request Form.
2. Outcomes-based curriculum map and legend, sample four-year plan.
3. Course proposal materials for new courses and/or courses that will change with the implementation of the program.
4. Any appropriate supporting documentation. Examples include a cover memo to address things that the Program Change Request Form does not directly prompt, resource impact memo and spreadsheet, correspondence that documents consultation and support for the course beyond the unit (other units on campus, community partners, profession-based groups, etc.).

### **Course and Program Proposals: Key Steps**

1. Review the inventory: When you’re putting a new course, a new program, or a major program change forward, review your course inventory. This is about curricular coherence and truth in advertising. If there are courses on the books that, de facto, no longer exist, they should be off the books. If there are courses on the books that have become obsolete, they should be revamped or eliminated.
2. Consult within the unit: Some units have formal curriculum committees, others have less formal curricular advisory structures. Proposers should handle unit-level discussion in accordance with unit policies and practices. In any case, it needs to be clear that the unit at large is aware and supportive of proposals that come forward to the College.
3. Consult with other units: Other departments and/or schools will likely be affected in ways that they perceive as positive or negative. Consultation is important in both instances. The College can point out possible connections or implications that you may not be aware of, and we can provide advice on how to marshal support or deal with the lack thereof.
4. Consult with the College: We defer to your judgment on exactly when to open a channel to us, but it is wise to be in communication with us during drafting/development of proposals. You can request a meeting, you can share draft proposals electronically for feedback, etc. We can provide guidance and/or act as sounding board on things like evidence-based teaching practices, outcomes formulation, curriculum mapping, making the case for demand and growth, communication with other units, etc. When we have

effective consultation as proposals evolve, the process overall is more efficient, open, and satisfying.

5. Prepare yourself for an iterative, multi-stage process: Course proposals go through a review and approval process in the College office and in the Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Committee (CTLC). Program proposals go through those two stages as well as the following:
  - New majors or degrees: Undergraduate Council, Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, Senate Exec, Faculty Senate, Provost, Board of Trustees, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).
  - New minors or specializations: Undergraduate Council, Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, Senate Exec, Faculty Senate, Provost.
6. Draft your materials, email to College for feedback, finalize based on that feedback: Send us your draft materials electronically—no need to submit hard copy drafts. Once you’ve revised and we’re in agreement that things are set, run final hard copies and send those forward.

### **Course and Program Proposals: FAQs**

- Does our proposal require a full blue sheet (i.e., cover sheet plus Course or Program Change Request Form) or can we do an EZ blue sheet?
  - If you are making a small change to a course number, title, or description, or if you are making a small change to the program structure & check sheet, you may use the EZ form. If you’re making multiple changes at once or a larger-scale change to a course or program, it will likely require a full blue sheet. Tip: Consult the College for guidance.
- How long does it take for things to get approved and implemented?
  - It depends on how many approval levels are required, how much revision may be requested at each stage, how packed the agendas of a given review body are, etc. To make the Fall catalog, a proposed course or program needs to reach the Office of Registration and Records after approval at all required stages and the final OK of the Provost by mid-February.
    - Rule of thumb for new courses: Get finalized proposals to the College a year in advance of the start of your target term for catalog activation.
    - Rule of thumb for new programs: Get finalized proposals to College two years in advance of the start of your target term for catalog activation.
- When you say “Consult the College,” who are you talking about, exactly?
  - A-deans Ted Rippey and Phil Dickinson, Admin Asst Chris Bloomfield.

### **Readings in the Learning Sciences**

Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M. W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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- Sawyer, R. K. (Ed.) (2014). *The Cambridge handbook of the learning sciences (2nd edition)*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

### References for Integrative Learning

Integrative Learning for Liberal Education (Mary Taylor Huber, Pat Hutchings and Richard Gale)  
[www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/integrative-learning-liberal-education](http://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/integrative-learning-liberal-education)

Mapping a Path from Curriculum to Career: The Lynk Initiative at Mount Holyoke College  
[www.aacu.org/campus-model/mapping-path-curriculum-career-lynk-initiative-mount-holyoke-college](http://www.aacu.org/campus-model/mapping-path-curriculum-career-lynk-initiative-mount-holyoke-college)