

AIC Supplemental Guide for Institutions: Processes Regarding New Academic Degree Program Regulations

OVERVIEW

In late March 2022, the Academic Issues Committee (AIC) and Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) presented several workshops to inform New Jersey institutions of several modified AIC processes as a result of the new academic degree program regulations as outlined in N.J.A.C. 9A:1-2.10 through 2.14. From these workshops and survey results, additional points of clarification seemed to be necessary for a select number of items. To further explain the recent changes and new State regulations, this supplemental document is intended to provide New Jersey institutions with additional guidance regarding modified AIC processes, completing sufficient program proposals, and clarifying academic degree program regulations. Institutions should always refer to the updated 2022 [AIC manual](#) for the most up to date information. Content from the March 31, 2022 [AIC/OSHE recorded workshop](#) may also be helpful. For questions not answered in this document or accessible in the AIC manual, please email aic@njcu.edu for further assistance.

HIGHLIGHTS

- All forms and checklists are protected, fillable, and downloadable Word documents located on the [AIC website](#).
- All templates are downloadable Word documents with content that can be completed as necessary and inserted onto letterhead if preferred.
- All documents contain an updated footer so institutions know they are using the most recent version.
- Using the templates and forms, program announcements only need to include a cover letter, a cover page, and a brief summary.
- The new academic degree program proposal requires institutions to use the forms and templates provided by the AIC, when applicable.
- A consultant site visit now includes a required form intended as a two-way communication document between the consultant and the institution. This form is to be included with the program proposal.
- A new form titled Standards for New Academic Degree Programs is required for submitting each new academic degree program in accordance with the standards outlined in N.J.A.C. 9A:1-2.10 through 2.14.
- Institutions that want to convert programs that existed previously as a concentration or option into a new academic degree will now require a full program proposal.
- For new academic degree programs which exceed programmatic mission a new form is to be included with the program proposal.

PROCESSES

- The AIC and OSHE must receive program announcements and program proposals. Email AIC aic@njcu.edu. Email OSHE at academic.degree.programs@oshe.nj.gov
- Processes for informational items remains the same. Please refer to the AIC manual for further clarification.

- Institutions can submit program proposals on a rolling basis to the AIC. Program proposals will be addressed at the following AIC meeting if submitted by the respective deadline found on the AIC website.
- If an institution's proposal is returned with comments and concerns, then they must submit a memorandum with the changes made. A proposal can only be returned twice for review.

GUIDANCE

Fillable Forms

- When completing the Standards for New Academic Degree Programs form to respond to the State regulations for academic degree programs, all information related to each element should be entered into the text box provided. This would include all narratives, citations, or footnotes as applicable, graphics, charts, rubrics, and/or tables. If items cannot appropriately fit in the text box, adding appendices is ok, however answering each element in the text box is the preferred method. Please refrain from including any hyperlinks that would link to any of the above documents, unless absolutely necessary.
- Institutions should provide as much evidence as possible to demonstrate the new academic degree program meets the four standards as outlined in N.J.A.C. 9A:1-2.10 through 2.14.
- If there is an item or text box that does not require an answer, do **not** leave it blank. Please leave "N/A" in the section to avoid any misunderstanding that the proposal may be incomplete.

Consultant

- As of April 8th, 2022, all institutions are allowed to utilize virtual consultant visits for their academic degree programs as long as they include a video chat tour of the facilities and campus that would be required as support for the degree program. The process of virtual consultants must mimic an on-site visit.
- If a consultant was contracted by the institution previously for another type of service, it is acceptable to utilize them to evaluate a new academic degree program.

Four Standards of New Academic Degree Programs (*these items depict a select few areas that warranted additional clarification and are not a full list of all items within each of the four standards*)

Standard 1: Sufficient Academic Quality

- Regarding the section related to student learning outcomes, it is recommended that institutions provide a representative variety of assessments and rubrics to demonstrate quality of the curriculum for the new academic degree program. It may not be necessary to include multiple assessments and rubrics that are duplicative of content, however institutions may find it beneficial to note such duplication in the curriculum within their narrative.
- Regarding the section related to program rigor, it is preferred that institutions include a comprehensive list of all course descriptions for the proposed new academic degree program. However, institutions may consider including a sampling of the General Education and elective courses outlined in the new academic degree program to demonstrate evidence of program rigor in the curriculum.
- Regarding comparisons of curriculum of the same of similar programs in the program rigor section, institutions should engage in a comprehensive search both in and out of New Jersey, to demonstrate the rigor of their proposed new academic degree program in comparison with other similarly designed programs across the nation.

Standard 2: Sufficient Labor Market Demand

- There are three possible methods to demonstrate sufficient labor market demand are outlined in Standard 2.
- In the first method, institutions must provide the CIP and SOC codes as well as evidence of demand supported by the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development in order to bypass the remaining two methods. Multiple codes that reflect different concentrations or options within a program can be provided as evidence for this section, however only the primary CIP code for the new academic degree program to be used in the program inventory should be listed on the program announcement's cover page.
- For the second and third methods, providing as much evidence of labor market demand and/or employer support will strengthen a proposed new academic degree program.

Standard 3: Duplication with Comparable Programs

- The list of all currently offered degree programs in the State should be comprehensive throughout New Jersey and should not be limited to the region within the State where the institution operates.
- Providing extensive details of evidence available for justification of duplication within the State will strengthen a proposed new academic degree program.

Standard 4: Additional State Resources

- Institutions can extrapolate a general amount of funds necessary for their new academic degree program based on similar programs at their institution, unless there are distinguishing factors that require more State support. As an example, such amounts can be based on percentages of an institution's budget.
- Examples of indirect State support could be student specific funding such as TAG, CCOG, NJ STARS, EOF and/or Garden State Guarantee. Examples of direct State support may be state appropriations that go directly to the institution or state supported capital construction funding. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but a sampling of options.