

Academic Planning Policy & Process
UW Tacoma Executive Council, voted on January 28 2019

Rationale

The faculty and administration of the UW Tacoma recognize the need for a comprehensive academic planning process to guide the future development of our campus. The academic planning process is a faculty driven, campus-wide evaluation of the scope and nature of academic offerings and initiatives. Academic planning ensures alignment with the campus mission, vision and strategic plan, and it allows identification of synergies and opportunities for collaboration. It is important to balance continuing improvement of our academic work with its growth and development. The process is rooted in shared governance and fulfills the requirements of the UW Tacoma By-Laws. The content of academic programs is determined by the faculty, with approval of administrative leaders both in Tacoma and Seattle. An initial, limited academic planning process, undertaken in 2017/18-2018/19, allowed us to pilot the process and helped determine the framework for this policy.

Academic Plan Steering Committee

The steering committee will consist of the Faculty Assembly Chair and Vice Chair, the EVCAA and the Chair of the Council of Deans/Directors. These four people will guide the planning process in each one-year planning process. The EVCAA will lead the planning process ensuring timely meetings, collaboration with faculty, the VCFA and Deans/Directors as well as due process.

Scope

The scope of each academic planning process is the entire academic enterprise of the campus. It includes all academic offerings, including: majors, minors, certificates, fee-based programs, and broad scholarly initiatives.

An academic planning process will occur every four years and last for one year (see timeline below.) Campus-wide plans for new and substantive changes (see below for definition of substantive changes) to academic offerings will be based on Proposed Notice of Intent, or PNOI, submitted by each unit during winter quarter of the planning year.

The academic planning process is separate from the program approval process. The academic planning review process occurs prior to the approval process, and inclusion in the academic plan is required to progress through the program approval process. A flowchart showing how the two processes are integrated is attached in Appendix 1.

Decision Authority

The UW Tacoma Academic Policy and Curriculum Committee, APCC¹, will review all new preliminary proposals (pages 1 and 2 of PNOIs). The Faculty Assembly Executive Council (EC) will review and disseminate the recommendations from APCC. The APCC deliberations will be informed by campus budget projections provided by the VCFA office and will consider resource impact during their review process. EC will revise the academic plan to incorporate any process or policy changes based on faculty feedback. EC will vote and approve the academic plan. Programs that have been reviewed and categorized in the planning process can then move forward to the program approval process. The priority determined in the academic planning stage will be used as an input to decision making in the program approval stage. Further approvals of the proposals will occur as established in the curriculum development process.

Workload

During planning years, the campus faculty, staff and administration, and especially APCC, EC, the EVCAA, and the planning team members will have added responsibilities relative to non-planning years. Unit faculty should be aware of the added work for their representatives and leaders in those years, and are requested to reduce other expectations of those representatives to prioritize academic planning.

Monitoring of Academic Plan

An annual review of the academic plan will be conducted by the EVCAA to monitor and adjust to changing circumstances within and outside of our campus. Proposals for adding a new program (degrees, minors, and certificates) outside the proposed cycle of academic planning should provide justification explaining how a delay would negatively affect the success of the program. These will be reviewed annually by the EVCAA and EC.

Criteria for New Program Assessment

To assess new program PNOI's, APCC will use the four, unranked criteria developed during Plan 1, or those added, deleted or changed through Class B legislation in Executive Council. The four criteria are:

- Alignment with Strategic Plan
- Campus-wide Balance of Academic Disciplines and Programs
- Community/Student/Market demand and impact
- Resource Impact

Note that the criteria are unranked but the preliminary proposals will be ranked.

Program Changes

¹ The rationale behind APCC being the committee to review proposals are two fold: APCC is a faculty driven committee consisting of representations across all academic units on campus; APCC is charged with “matters of policy relating to the academic affairs”.

Substantive program change proposals will also be considered in every planning cycle, along with new program proposals. The resource requests will also be forwarded to the Executive Budget Committee.

"Substantive program changes" are as defined by UW Seattle:

- **“Substantive program changes and examples**
 - Changes in prerequisites that would significantly increase or decrease the number of students admitted to the major, minor, or option. For example, requiring more credits for admission to a program, or adding minimum grade requirements.
 - Changes in graduation requirements that would significantly increase or decrease the number of students completing the major, minor, or option. For example, changing the number of credits required for a major, minor, or option, or adding a continuation policy.
 - Program changes on one campus that could significantly alter enrollments in specific programs on one of the other two campuses. For example, changing the program format to distance learning or fee-based learning.
- **Non-substantive program changes and examples**
 - Changes that do not significantly alter existing admission or graduation requirements, but do require changes to the general catalog.
 - Examples include:
 - Course prefix and/or number changes.
 - Addition and/or removal of courses that do not alter the total credits for existing admission or graduation requirements.
 - Changing credit distribution (such as for core courses and electives) without altering the total credits for existing graduation requirements.
 - Changing electives listed in the general catalog to stating, “See website for approved list of electives.”

Unit Faculty Responsibilities:

Faculty in each unit will be responsible for the program reviews within their unit and submitting the documents on time, including the PNOI's for new programs and program changes. Specific submission dates in winter quarter, for the Academic Planning process review will be determined and posted by the beginning of Autumn quarter in each planning year.

Unit Faculty/Dean/Director Accountability:

Units are accountable for the operation of their academic programs once launched or substantively changed. Management of student enrollment and faculty numbers is the responsibility of the unit and a one-page progress report will be submitted at the winter PNOI proposal review date in the next planning cycle. These progress reports should include the projected numbers of faculty and student enrollment, the actual numbers, reasons for departures from projections, and planned steps to address them. A qualitative assessment of the program may also be included in the report if unit faculty wish to include it.

Plan Schedule:

The Academic Planning process will occur over four years, with one year for planning and a three-year implementation period. (See Table 1 below.) Planning for the next cycle will occur in the last year of the previous cycle. In particular, the EVCAA office will inform academic units in the last year of the previous cycle to encourage discussions and prioritization of proposals to be submitted for the upcoming academic planning process.

Policy/Process Changes

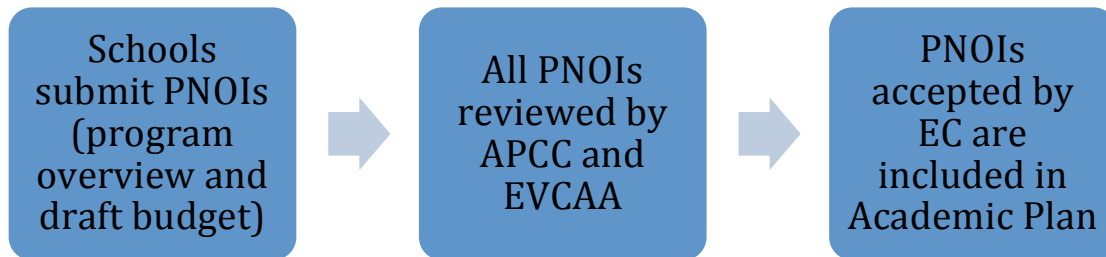
This policy can be changed using the rules for Class B legislation as stated in the UW Tacoma By-Laws.

Table 1. – Timeline for UW Tacoma academic planning cycles.

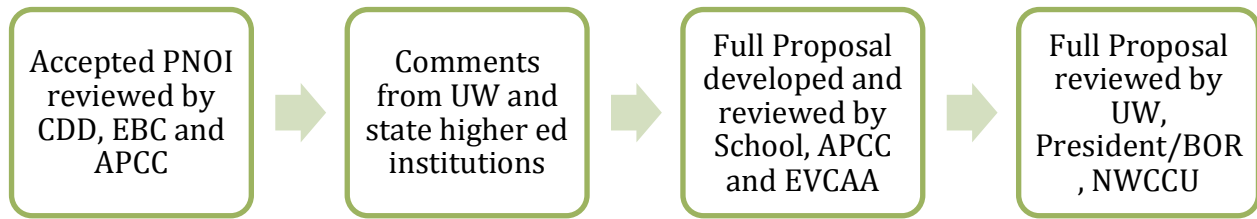
'18-19	'19-20	'20-21	'21-22	'22-23	'23-24	'24-25	'25-26	'26-27	27-28
Plan 1	-----	-----	-----	-----					
				Plan 2	-----	-----	-----	-----	
								Plan 3	-----

Appendix 1

ACADEMIC PLANNING PROCESS (one year planning stage)



PROGRAM APPROVAL PROCESS* (four year implementation stage)



PNOI = Planning Notice of Intent

APCC = Academic Policy and Curriculum Committee of UW Tacoma Faculty Assembly

EVCAA = Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

CDD = Council of Deans and Directors

EBC = Executive Budget Committee

BOR = Board of Regents

NWCCU = Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (accrediting body for UW)

*Details of the Program Approval Process can be found at <http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/faculty-assembly/curriculum-development>