

## **Formalized Process for Review of New Graduate Degree Proposals by the New Mexico Council of Graduate Deans**

This document outlines a process and calendar for consideration of new graduate degree proposals by the New Mexico Council of Graduate Deans (NMCGD).

### **A. Prior to Consideration**

Each of the representatives of the NMCGD is expected to notify the Council as early as possible about programs preparing proposals at their institutions. This information can be communicated at meetings of the NMCGD, but formal notification should be given to the chair of the NMCGD at the same time that the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) Educational Program Review staff is notified, per 5 NMAC 5.5.2.10 B.

**Rationale** – early notice will facilitate efficient processing of proposals, hastening final approval.

### **B. Timing of Submission to the NM Higher Education Department and NMCGD**

“Advance notice to the NMHED staff of the intent to submit a proposal for a new graduate program is required, as it will assist in planning and will create a more efficient review process. A proposal should be submitted to the NMHED and the council of graduate deans at least nine months prior to the anticipated date of implementation of the program, in order to allow sufficient time for review by the council of graduate deans, the academic council, the NMHED review board and the New Mexico state board of finance prior to implementation. Programs cannot be included in institutional catalogs until they have been approved (5 NMAC 5.5.2.10 B).” To maximize chances for approval for the following Fall semester, proposals for new graduate programs should be submitted to the NMCGD and NMHED staff no later than November 1.

**Rationale** – Approval processes following upon institutional approval includes in order: the NMCGD, Academic Council, NMHED, and the Board of Finance. Few, if any, of these entities meet more frequently than monthly and some on a longer period.

### **C. Materials for Submission to the NMCGD**

Before submission for approval by the NMCGD, the proposing school must have signature approval from all entities required in their internal approval process. The original approval form must be submitted to the chair of the NMCGD with the proposal. While the detailed financial documentation intended for NMHED staff will not be reviewed in detail by the NMCGD, absence of financial information may delay approval of the proposal if the economic impact of the program is in doubt. It is highly recommended that the chair of the NMCGD review materials prior to final distribution to avoid confusion regarding completeness. In addition to the requirements set forth in 5

NMAC, all proposals should include six years of projected, enrollments, revenues and costs.

**Rationale** – These are the documents used to address the specified areas of concern articulated in 5 NMAC 5.2. Without these items, a judgment regarding conformance cannot be made by the NMCGD.

#### **D. Nature of the Submitted Materials**

When approvals are complete, digital copies of the complete proposal (approval forms, body, and all supporting documents) along with the original approval form must be submitted to the chair of the NMCGD. Electronic files (including all of the materials referred to in “C” above) are to be submitted in PDF format. The chair of the NMCGD will arrange to have the proposal posted for download by NMCGD members and participating faculty at their universities.

**Rationale** – Each of the graduate degree granting institutions are to play a role in assessing duplication and integration of resources, determining need and academic rigor. Ready access to the proposal and supporting materials provides quick response and hastens approval.

#### **E. Scheduling of NMCGD Meeting to Consider Proposals**

As soon as possible after the chair of the NMCGD has determined that the submitted materials meet the requirements of the Council, the chair will schedule a meeting to consider the proposal. To provide sufficient time for member universities to review and provide feedback to their Council representatives, the meeting will normally be scheduled for a time at least 30 days after the required materials become available for review. This interval is based on the assumption that faculty and staff are in residence to provide reviews; a longer interval may be provided if universities are on semester break.

**Rationale** - The goal of the NMCGD is to provide a thorough and defensible review representing the widest possible variety of academic perspectives, while impeding the progress of the proposal as little as possible. Given the constraints of dissemination and collection of information, 30 days is judged to be a reasonable review period during the Fall and Spring semesters of the academic year.

#### **F. Quorum**

A minimum of five of the six Council members must be present, available remotely or represented by written proxy to act on a proposal for a new graduate program. Council members may designate a representative for their university if they are unable to attend.

**Rationale** – the goal of this quorum is to ensure adequate participation in this process by all universities, while recognizing that a meeting should not be cancelled, causing a delay

in the approval process, because the schedule for individual Council members may not permit participation in every instance.

### **G. Conduct of the Approval Meeting**

Departmental representatives from the proposing institution, including members of the team preparing the proposal, are to make a **brief** presentation of their proposal to Council members, after which they will be asked to respond to questions posed by the Council. Meetings of the NMCGD may be attended by the public, however, it is not anticipated that individuals other than Council members and departmental representatives will actively participate in the meeting. Supporting statements from other individuals and organizations are to be in written form. Supporting and critical reviews from other New Mexico institutions are to be communicated by the Council member from that university.

**Rationale** – The goal of this section is to focus the deliberative process on the proposal, the proposing department and the Council by adopting a philosophy that requires that individual Council members serve as spokespersons for their constituencies – rather than having individuals providing input at a meeting.

### **H. Recommendations Based on Deliberations**

**For Approval:** A majority of Council members voting in person, remotely or by proxy are required for approval of proposed graduate programs. A majority of the Council may find a proposed program acceptable, but withhold final approval pending clarification of issues raised at the approval meeting. At the time that qualified approval is given, the Council shall outline a schedule for receiving clarification and indicate the method by which final approval shall be made (at a meeting of the NMCGD or by correspondence).

**Against Approval:** The failure of a proposal to obtain a majority of Council member support for approval or qualified approval will mean that the proposal was not approved.

### **No Action -**

**Rationale** – Proposals brought before the NMCGD will be approved or disapproved. Experience has shown that proposals may arrive for consideration by the NMCGD with flaws that make them unacceptable as presented, but still sufficiently meritorious to be moved forward without a complete resubmission and consideration of the proposal. This section provides for inclusion of missing materials or clarification of minor issues without need for a rehearing at a subsequent meeting.

### **I. Report of the NMCGD**

The Chair of the NMCGD is responsible for providing timely written notification to the Academic Council and to the NMHED, recording the vote and detailing the findings and recommendations of the NMCGD. In particular, the Council must address their assessment of need, duplication and integration of state resources, availability and

commitment of institutional resources, academic merit, and the likely effectiveness of the proposed program. The original approval document provided by the university will be endorsed by the chair of the NMCGD and forwarded to the chair of the Academic Council.