Executing Curricular Change: from Minor Revisions to Curriculum Redesign

2023-2024 Program Innovation Workshop Series
March 28, 2024

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Program Innovation Hub

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Facilitated by:
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Program Innovation Hub & Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning
The University of Calgary, located in the heart of Southern Alberta, both acknowledges and pays tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6).
Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop, attendees will understand:

1. Key factors that motivate curricular change at UCalgary;
2. The governance process for various types of curricular changes, including what constitutes ministerial approval and why;
3. What kinds of information are included in proposals for curricular changes—from full curricular redesign to minor changes; and
4. What resources are available to support your unit as you explore and seek approval for curricular changes in your program(s).
What motivates curricular change?

- Changes to government or institutional priorities or regulations
- Changes in the discipline/profession
- Changes to student needs or student demand
- Labour Market, accreditation, or industry demand
- Scaling up (for enrolment expansions, teaching load, etc.)
- Advances in teaching and learning or curriculum design (e.g., spiral curriculum, changing competencies)
- Curriculum Review or Unit Review
Curricular Changes at UCalgary

The Path to Approval
Terminology

- Calendar
  - The University of Calgary’s Academic Calendar

- PAPRS
  - The Ministry of Advanced Education’s Provider and Program Registry System
  - All UCalgary degree programs (Degree + Area of Study) are recorded in PAPRS

- Load change
  - Change in the number of units per term, per year, or in total in a program (as recorded by the Ministry of Advanced Education’s PAPRS system)

- Block-loaded
  - Most thesis-based programs’ course load is entered into PAPRS as total units per year
  - As long as the overall units per year do not exceed what is in PAPRS, then there is no change to the load in PAPRS

- Degree
  - Undergraduate or graduate
  - E.g., BSc, MA, Master of Public Policy, PhD
Terminology

• Sub-degree nomenclature
  • Area of Study (Graduate): Highlights the area within the teaching faculty when the area is not evident in the degree title. E.g. Master of Science in Chemistry – the area of study is Chemistry.
  • Major (Undergraduate): Normally 42–48 units completed within the number of units required for a bachelor’s degree. Some degree programs do not have a major listed (e.g., Bachelor of Nursing).

• Internal approvals
  • Governance process within the University of Calgary that complies with the Post Secondary Learning Act
  • Program changes approved by the General Faculties Council’s designated Committees and Subcommittees
    • Membership and Terms of Reference can be found on the Secretariat’s Office website

• Government approvals
  • The Ministry of Advanced Education needs to approve certain types of program changes – such as Load Changes
  • The Provost’s Office submits the proposals to the Ministry on behalf of the faculty
Curricular Changes

• Curricular changes may be small, medium, or large
Calendar Revisions (Smaller Changes)

• Smaller changes to programs may be considered Calendar changes

• Calendar changes may include:
  • Replacing a small number of current required or elective courses with the same number of new required or elective courses (keeping the units required the same)
  • Addition of a new elective course
  • Change to the course list for a designated Field of Study
  • Recognition of laddering credit

• Examples:
  • Existing course-based master’s degree wants to allow students who complete a graduate certificate program to receive laddering credit towards the master’s program.
  • A department wants to create three new, 3-unit courses to replace three existing, 3-unit courses required in an undergraduate major.
Calendar Revisions – Approvals Process (Undergraduate)

- Undergraduate Course Changes
- Undergraduate Admission Changes
- Undergraduate Program Changes
- Minor Editorial Changes

Reviewed by the CCS Working Group

Once approved, the CCS Working Group will recommend to CCS to endorse the changes. Then onto APPC for approval.

Implemented by the Calendar Editor

If refused, the proponent may resubmit if time permits.
Calendar Revisions – Approvals Process (Graduate)

The GAPS Working Group will recommend to GAPS to approve the changes.
Calendar Revisions (Smaller Changes)

• Considerations
  • Calendar changes require a rationale
  • Most departments and faculties have a designated Calendar Coordinator who works with the Calendar editors
  • The Office of the Registrar has resources and information for Calendar requirements:
    • Calendar process
    • Types of Changes
    • Guidelines for Submissions

• Deadlines:
  • Calendar changes need to be submitted to GAPS Working Group and CCS Working Group by **October 15th** for publication in the following year’s Calendar.
  • Calendar published in late Winter Term
Medium Program Revisions (Substantive Changes)

• Medium-sized revisions (substantive changes) to programs can include many types of changes and require a program proposal

• Program proposals are written on templates
  • Templates are provided by the Program Innovation Hub

• Examples of medium program revisions include:

  - Changing course requirements in a program (without changing load)
  - Adding a course-based stream to a thesis-based program
  - Creating a new concentration or specialization
Example: Change in Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSc (thesis-based) in Chemistry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Course Requirements</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Core Courses** | • 6 units of Chemistry courses at the 500- or 600-level | • CHEM 654 (1 unit): Teaching and Mentorship in Chemistry  
• 3 units of Chemistry courses at the 500- or 600-level |
| **Elective courses** | • 3 units at the 500- or 600-level course (either in Chemistry courses or in another Faculty/Department) | • 3 units at the 500- or 600-level (either in Chemistry or in another Faculty/Department) |
| **Total units of coursework** | 9 units | 7 units |

• Changes units of coursework required in the program
• No load change
  • Program block loaded in PAPRS
• Accompanied by some other Calendar changes to graduate courses in Chemistry including:
  • Creation of new 1 unit core course (Teaching and Mentorship in Chemistry)
  • Creation of ~20 1-unit modular courses that will be offered on a scheduled rotation
Medium Program Revisions (Substantive Changes)

- Medium program revisions (substantive changes) need to go through the UCalgary governance process, culminating with approval from the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC).

- APPC Terms of Reference - Review and approve proposals for:
  - the creation, alteration or termination of degree programs;
  - the creation, alteration or termination of credit Certificate and Diploma programs;
  - the creation or alteration of non-credit professional and continuing education Certificate and Diploma programs
UCalgary Approvals Process

- Faculty Council
- Decision Support Team (DST)
- Faculty of Graduate Studies Council – Executive Committee
- Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS)
- Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC)
- Academic Program Subcommittee (APS)
- Undergraduate Programs
- Graduate Programs

Internal Approvals Process
4 – 8 months
Major Program Revisions

• Major revisions include load changes and major program changes (curricular redesigns) that do not result in a change in load

• Major revisions require a proposal
  • Curricular redesign without load change: UCalgary proposal template
  • Load change proposal: Ministry of Advanced Education template

• Approvals process
  • Major Program Change (without load change): requires UCalgary internal approvals (up to APPC)
  • Load Change: require UCalgary internal approvals (up to APPC) and approval from the Ministry of Advanced Education
## Example: Load Change

- Reducing the course requirements in the Master of Public Policy Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Curriculum</th>
<th>New Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Public Policy 601 (3 units)</td>
<td>• Public Policy 600 (3 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public Policy 603 (3 units)</td>
<td>• Public Policy 602 (4 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public Policy 600 (3 units)</td>
<td>• Public Policy 604 (2 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public Policy 605 (3 units)</td>
<td>• Public Policy 607 (3 units)</td>
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<td>• Public Policy 607 (3 units)</td>
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<td>• Public Policy 617 (3 units)</td>
<td>• Public Policy 619 (3 units)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Public Policy 619 (3 units)</td>
<td>• Public Policy 623 (3 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public Policy 621 (3 units)</td>
<td>• Electives (6 units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public Policy 623 (3 units)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Electives (6 units)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** | **39 units** | **33 units**
Timeline

- Time from ideation to implementation varies considerably and depends on:
  - Institutional and government priorities
  - Number and extent of consultations needed
  - Capacity/time proponents have to dedicate to the proposal
  - Whether or not the proposal requires government approval
  - If the approvals process is impacted by the summer break (no committee meetings in July/August)
Sample Timeline: New Undergraduate Concentration

**Proposal Development**
- Consultations
- Research
- Proposal writing

**Applications**
- Students select or apply to the concentration in their Student Centre

**Implementation**
- Students begin in the concentration

- January – March 2025
- March – June 2025
- Fall 2025 – Winter 2026
- Winter – Spring 2026
- Fall 2026

**Approvals Process**
- Includes Faculty Council, Decision Support Team, APS, and APPC

**Admission**
- Students are accepted into the concentration
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Calendar Changes (Smaller Program Changes)</th>
<th>Medium &amp; Major Program Changes (no change to load)</th>
<th>Major Changes – Load Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Swap a small number of current required or elective courses for the same number (units) of new courses</td>
<td>• Substantive change to course requirements (add/subtract/swap) within existing program*</td>
<td>• Change to program’s load</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Government Approval Required | ![X] | ![X] | ![✓] |
| APPC Approval Required | ![X] | ![✓] | ![✓] |
| GAPS or APS Recommendation or Approval Required | ![✓] | ![✓] | ![✓] |
| Program Proposal Required | ![X] | ![✓] | ![✓] |

*There may be exceptions when a major curriculum redesign that does not change the load of the program requires government approval. The Program Innovation Hub provides advice to proponents who are undertaking a major curriculum redesign.
Curricular Redesign: Important Considerations
Key Questions

• What resources are needed to develop and/or implement this change?
• Who needs to be involved in developing this change?
  • Who does this change impact?
• Why is this change being developed or proposed now?
• How does this change align with the university's strategic priorities and commitments?
  • e.g., Ahead of Tomorrow, Presidential Taskforce on EDIA, ii' taa'poh'to'p.
• What is the goal of this change?
  • Will the proposed change help achieve these goals?
  • Are there expectations around timelines and/or processes?
Key Consideration: Resources

• Types of resources required for curricular changes:
  o Budgetary and financial resources (e.g., hiring).
  o Time (e.g., projected timelines for implementation, course development, governance).
  o Capacity (e.g., faculty or curricular "champions" to lead change).
  o Knowledge (e.g., available or external disciplinary expertise).
  o Space (e.g., use of existing or new spaces on or off-campus).

• Smaller changes generally require fewer resources but can still impact multiple areas.
• Substantive changes require in-depth consideration of existing and potential resources (in the faculty and institutionally).
Key Consideration: Consultation

- Types of consultation that may occur during curricular changes:
  - Focus groups
  - Surveys
  - Workshops
  - Department meetings (e.g., department council, committee meetings)
  - Meetings with experts or area leads (e.g., Taylor Institute, Program Innovation Hub, faculty EDI leads)

- Who may need to be consulted:
  - Students (current students and/or alumni)
  - Faculty and staff
  - Accrediting bodies
  - Program or subject matter experts
  - University offices (e.g., Office of Indigenous Engagement)
Key Considerations: Processes

• Types of processes to consider during curricular changes:
  o Department processes (e.g., internal governance structures, consultations).
  o Institutional processes (e.g., university governance committees, operational updates).
  o Ministry processes (e.g., Ministry approval, Campus Alberta Quality Council).
  o External or third-party processes (e.g., employer or stakeholder consultations, accrediting bodies).

• The number and type(s) of processes required as part of the change will influence implementation and development timelines.
Questions
• Each proposal has an assigned liaison

• Liaisons:
  • are the first point-of-contact for proponents
  • provide advice and guidance
  • offer various levels of support to each proposal – as agreed upon between the liaison and the proponents
  • connect proponents to relevant units across campus for feedback at the right time in the development process
  • help proponents navigate the governance process and attend every committee meeting with the proponents
Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning

• For support with program learning outcomes, curriculum mapping, and general program development:
  o Jaclyn Carter, Educational Development Consultant (Curricular Innovation & Renewal)
  o Dr. Patti Dyjur, Educational Development Consultant
  o Dr. Kim Grant, Educational Development Consultant

• For support with learning technologies and instructional design:
  o Patrick Kelly, Manager, Learning and Instructional Design
  o D’Arcy Norman, Associate Director, Learning Technologies & Design

• For support with strategic alignment:
  o Dr. Christine Martineau, Educational Development Consultant (Indigenous Ways of Knowing)
  o Dr. Fouzia Usman, Educational Development Consultant (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)

• For support with work-integrated and experiential learning:
  o Erin Kaipainen, Director, Experiential & Work-Integrated Learning
Upcoming Workshops:

**Building a Program Proposal Budget: Key Considerations**
April 30th, 2024, 1:00pm
Featuring: Colleen Jacobsen, Associate Director, Finance Services, UCalgary

**Indigenous Ways of Knowing & Program Design**
May 30th, 2024, 1:00pm
Featuring: Dr. Christine Martineau, Educational Development Consultant (Indigenous Ways of Knowing), Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning