

5. THE PROTOCOL FOR MAJOR MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING PROGRAMS

5.1 Initial Institutional Process

The approval process for major modifications of undergraduate and graduate degree programs follows the Protocol for Major Modifications set out below.

Prior to the development of a proposal, proponents will normally submit a Notice of Intention, signed by the Deans or Principals of the relevant Faculties, providing a brief statement about the proposal, a summary of new or reallocated resources, and details about preliminary consultations undertaken.

The purpose of this required step is to allow the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic to:

- a) Provide input and ensure consultation with other Associate Vice-Presidents and the Vice-Provost Students as needed
- b) Consult with the Dean of Graduate Studies as needed
- c) Facilitate consultations among interested parties at the earliest opportunity
- d) Ensure alignment with academic plans.

The Vice-Provost Academic will, if appropriate, authorize the proponents to proceed with the development of a Proposal Brief.

The Office of the Vice-Provost Academic will determine whether a change falls under the protocol for major modification or another process not governed by the YUQAP.

The Notice of Intent form is available on the YUQAP website.

5.2 Definition

Major modifications involve changes to existing programs due to curricular renewal to keep a program current, the restructuring of a program, a merger of existing programs, and proposals for new certificates. Other drivers of program modifications include significant changes to essential resources that enhance or impair the delivery of an approved program. Examples include changes to faculty resources, staff resources, or physical space.

Major modifications typically include one or more of the following features:

- a) Substantive changes to learning outcomes and/or approved requirements that comprise up to approximately one-third of the program serve as a guideline for inclusion under the major modification guideline.
- b) Major changes to courses comprising a significant proportion of the program and making an important contribution to meeting program learning outcomes (approximately one-third of courses).
- c) The addition of a new major (undergraduate) where a similar major exists.
- d) A new specialization at the graduate level.
- e) Addition or deletion of streams.
- f) The addition of a new option (e.g., location or part-time/full-time) within an existing program.
- g) Establishment of undergraduate certificates.
- h) The merger of two or more programs.
- i) Establishment of a minor program or option.
- j) The offering of an existing program substantially online where it had previously been offered in face-to-face mode, or vice versa.

- k) At the master's level, the introduction or deletion of a major research paper or thesis, course-only, co-op placement, internship, or practicum option.
- l) The introduction or deletion of a field in a graduate program.
- m) The creation of a collaborative specialization at the graduate level.
- n) The creation of combined degrees (existing programs), either undergraduate, graduate, or undergraduate/graduate.
- o) Any change to the requirements for graduate program candidacy examinations or residence requirements.

Major modifications to existing programs do not require submission of a Proposal Brief to the Quality Council.

The University may request that the Quality Council review a major modification proposal, and normally that will occur through the expedited approval process.

5.2.1 Closure

Closure of a program (majors, certificate, degrees). The Closure template is posted on the YUQAP website.

5.2.2 Other Modifications

Other changes may also come forward through Faculty Councils to the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy (ASCP). Examples include changes to degree or admission requirements.

Minor modifications require divisional approval by the respective Faculty Council(s) and include, for example, the revision of a field in a graduate program, the creation of a new course, the substitution of a course requirement, or edits to a list of courses from which students are required to take one or more courses.

These modifications are forwarded to ASCP and Senate for either information or approval as appropriate.

5.3 Proposal Brief

The Proposal Brief for a major modification includes the following along with any additional requirements that a Faculty may choose to apply. The Major Modifications template is posted on the YUQAP website.

- a) A description of the proposed changes and the rationale, including alignment with University and Faculty academic plans.
- b) An outline of the changes to requirements, including how the proposed requirements will support the achievement of program learning outcomes.
- c) An overview of the consultation undertaken with relevant academic units and an assessment of the impact of the major modifications on other programs (where and as appropriate, the proposal must include statements from the relevant program(s) confirming consultation/support).
- d) A summary of any resource implications and how they are being addressed. Attention should be paid to whether the proposed changes will be supported by a reallocation of existing resources or if new/additional resources are required. A letter from the relevant Dean or Principal is required if new resources are required.
- e) The application of any other relevant criteria as outlined in Section 3.3 to the proposed changes.
- f) A summary of how students currently enrolled in the program will be accommodated.

- g) Other information as required by Senate and/or its committees (for example, a side-by-side comparison of the existing and proposed program requirements as they will appear in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendar).

5.4 Institutional Approval Process

Upon approval by the Faculty Council subcommittee on curriculum, the proposal proceeds to Faculty Council, and, once approved, proceeds to the Senate ASCP for approval. Upon approval by the ASCP, proposals are forwarded to the Senate.

5.5 Annual Report to the Quality Council

The Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic files an Annual Report with the Quality Council which provides a summary of major program modifications that were approved through the University's internal approval process in the past year.