

Academic Program and Course Changes - Courses of Study Faculty Guidance

This document guides faculty in the Graduate School of Education (GSE) in the process of submitting proposals for academic changes or new academic programs. This is a lengthy process. Faculty are encouraged to begin this process several months in advance of any target date for an anticipated change. New proposals should be planned more than a year in advance.

I. Initiating a Program Change, New Program, New Course, or Course Change

Faculty wishing to make a change to an existing program or to create a new program should notify their Department Chair and the GSE Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (ADAA) via email to schedule a brief meeting to discuss the proposal and consider it in relationship to other existing or proposed programs or courses at the GSE. This is meant to ensure that faculty are not duplicating efforts and are making the best use of existing resources. The meeting with the Chair and ADAA will also inform faculty of the next steps necessary in the process.

II. Planning Prior to Completing Proposal Forms

Prior to submitting forms to Courses of Study, the Department Chair and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will help faculty determine what other things they will need to consider; steps needed; and whether pre-approval from the Chancellor-Provost's Office is required.

For example, it may be necessary to:

- Search for similar programs outside of Rutgers and/or with our peers or AAUP competitors;
- Identify Potential Conflicts. Prior to submitting a course or program proposal to COS, faculty must conduct a search for courses/programs that could potentially conflict with the course/program being proposed and, thus, could be flagged for discussion at the University level. GSE faculty may need to document how they engaged this process in the course/program proposal form;
- Gain NJDOE approval for certain changes in programs leading to professional certification;
- Consider changes to course numbers and course and program names within a larger context of GSE planning;
- Schedule meetings with Dr. Darren Clarke and/or Amy Wollock.

III. Preliminary Approval at the Chancellor's Level

In general, the following types of changes require pre-approval at the Chancellor's level:

- All new programs (degree or certificate) will require a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the campus before Departmental and/or Courses of Study consideration.
- Certain modifications to existing programs (see checklist below)

Additional information can be accessed here:

- [Program Checklist](#)
- [Pre-Approval Process](#)
- [Letter of Intent \(LOI\) Form](#)

If a Letter of Intent is required, the GSE representative to the PGDC (Darren Clarke) and/or ULEC (Amy Wollock) will facilitate the submission and track its progress. These GSE representatives will ensure that your form is complete (including that it has the appropriate signatures using DocuSign), maintain a copy of the unsigned and signed LOI submission, track the submission progress, and notify you (and the Department Chair and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs) when it has cleared the first level of approval.

IV. Accessing the Appropriate COS Form

GSE faculty must complete the appropriate Courses of Study (COS) form (for proposals requiring the LOI; this can be done while the LOI is under consideration). All COS forms can be accessed via the Qualtrics links below.¹ Depending on the change being proposed, faculty should use one of the following five forms:

[Minor Modifications Proposal Form](#). This form is used to propose minor modifications to an existing course or program. Examples of minor modifications include changing the course name, scheduling, instructional delivery format, or prerequisites.

[New Course Proposal Form](#). This form is appropriate for proposing a new course. All course syllabi should be formatted using the GSE Syllabus template.

[Course Change Proposal Form](#). This form is appropriate for proposing significant or multiple changes to an existing course.

[New Program Proposal Form](#). This form is appropriate for proposing new programs.

[Program Change Proposal Form](#). This form is appropriate for proposing significant or multiple changes to an existing program.

¹ NOTE: These forms are for 05 and 15 courses only. Changes to 16 courses must be submitted to the *School of Graduate Studies Academic Cluster Committee for Social Science*. These proposals should first be brought to the Department Chair and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and then moved forward by the GSE Faculty Director of the Ph.D.

When completing the forms above, faculty should consider that all materials will be reviewed at the university level by staff and faculty from a range of schools and units. Thus, the tone should be cordial, and any references to other units should be respectful. In addition, faculty should be mindful of the GSE strategic plan to enhance “diversity, equity and social justice” and consider how new and revised courses and programs meet these GSE aims.

Faculty are advised to strategically position their narratives and other explanatory details to present the proposed GSE course/program as independent of or complementary to existing courses/programs elsewhere at the university, and NOT parallel, overlapping, or competitive in any manner. GSE faculty should stress pedagogy, theory, and practice-related issues when describing courses/programs to distinguish proposed GSE offerings from content intensive courses/programs offered elsewhere in the university.

How to Write a Good Catalog Description. Course and program descriptions should be written in the present tense and use active voice. Students are the target audience. Begin with the focus of the course/program. Next, describe the pedagogy. End with the benefits of the course/program for students. Sample course description:

This course introduces a wide variety of contexts for adult education nationally and internationally and examines how culture and diversity influence learning and teaching. Through student research, analysis of current readings, and grounded discussions, students develop foundational knowledge, ability to frame issues, and expertise in addressing problems of practice. At the completion of this course, students will have a deeper understanding of current issues in the field, including factors inhibiting or promoting success.

V. **Review Process (This takes significant time)**

The review process includes multiple steps.

1. Chancellor-Provost’s Office. As described above, some programs must receive pre-approval prior to being reviewed at the department/program/GSE level.
2. Department or Program Review and Vote. All completed COS Qualtrics Forms will be automatically sent to the COS Chair. However, the faculty member completing the form will receive a Qualtrics-generated email after they submit the form. The email should be automatic, so if you do not see it in your inbox, check your spam/junk folder. **The proposing faculty member MUST immediately forward this Qualtrics-generated email to the Department Chair or Teacher Education Program Director (depending on whether initial internal approval is departmental or within the Teacher Education Committee).** This email will include a .pdf of the proposal as well as a DocuSign link for the Department or Program Chair to sign once the department or program faculty approves the change.

3. *Courses of Study Committee Review and Vote.* Once the Department or Program Chair completes the DocuSign link (see step 2), the COS committee chair will receive the DocuSign document. This notifies the COS committee that the proposal has passed Departmental or Program review and is ready for COS consideration. The COS Committee includes a faculty representative from each department and three ex-officio members: Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Senior Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management & Academic Affairs, and the Senior Director of Strategic Alliances & Online Programs. The COS committee meets monthly and reviews proposals on a rolling basis. As part of the review process, the submitting faculty members may be asked to provide additional information or to revise the proposal.
4. *GSE Faculty Review and Vote.* Once the COS committee approves the proposal, the forms and supporting materials are distributed to the full GSE faculty at least four days prior to the GSE faculty meeting for consideration and vote. Once the full GSE faculty approves the change, the COS Chair will sign the DocuSign, and the proposal will be forwarded as necessary.
5. *Chancellor-Level Approval AFTER GSE Approval.* All new courses, programs, foci, tracks, certification programs, degree programs, and non-degree programs must be reviewed by the university-level “conflict committee” and the provost’s office once they are approved by the GSE faculty. The GSE representative to the PGDC (Darren Clarke) and/or ULEC (Amy Wollock) will facilitate this submission and track the progress. These GSE representatives will ensure that forms are complete (including that it has the appropriate signatures using DocuSign) and submit the appropriate signed forms to the Chancellor-level committees. The PGDC and UELC reps will track these submissions and notify you, the COS Chair, the Department Chair, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs when it has cleared the PGDC/UELC committees.
6. *President’s Level Approval.* Some proposals may require review and approval by the Rutgers Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVPAA or Academic Planning) and, subsequently the Rutgers Board of Governors. If the change that you proposed requires such approval, additional forms will be required. The GSE representative of the PGDC (Darren Clarke) and/or ULEC (Amy Wollock) will provide you with these forms to complete. Once complete, they will ensure that these forms are signed by all appropriate parties via DocuSign; facilitate the submission of these forms (ensuring all appropriate signatures have been processed using DocuSign). The PGDC/UELC reps will maintain copies of all submitted forms; track these submissions; and notify you, the COS Committee Chair, the Department Chair, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at each level of approval.
7. *The NJ Department of Education.* If the change that you propose also requires approval at the NJDOE, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will provide you with the required documents for this submission and facilitate the submission for the nearest possible NJDOE review window. The NJDOE review windows open on March 1, July 1, and November 1 each year. NJDOE approval takes several months and can be processed concurrently with the Rutgers approvals.



Obtain Review/ Approval by Department or Program.	Submit Approved/signed documents (DocuSign) 1 full week prior to COS committee meeting	Courses of Study Committee Meeting Schedule	Faculty Meeting Schedule
N/A	Monday, 9/29/2025	Monday, 10/06/2025	Friday, 10/17/2025
L&T, Ed Psych, & ETPA Meeting - 10/03/25 TEC Meeting – 10/10/25 APCC Meeting – 10/17/25	Monday, 10/27/2025	Monday, 11/03/2025	Friday, 11/14/2025
L&T & ETPA Meeting - 10/31/25 Ed Psych 11/07/2025 TEC Meeting – 11/14/25 APCC Meeting – 11/21/25	Monday, 11/17/2025* Two weeks before due to the Thanksgiving holiday	Monday, 12/01/2025	Friday, 12/12/2025
N/A	Monday, 01/26/2026	Monday, 02/02/2026	Friday, 02/13/2026
L&T & ETPA Meeting - 01/30/2026 Ed Psych 2/06/2026 TEC Meeting – 01/30/26 APCC Meeting – 2/13/2026	Monday, 02/23/2026	Monday, 03/02/2026	Friday, 03/13/2026



L&T Meeting – 03/27/2026 ETPA – 03/25/2026 Ed Psych 3/06/2026 TEC Meeting – 2/27/26 APCC Meeting – 3/13/2026	Monday, 03/30/2026	Monday, 04/06/2026	Friday, 04/17/2026
L&T Meeting – 03/27/2026 ETPA – 04/24/2026 Ed Psych 04/03/2026 TEC Meeting – 04/ APCC Meeting – 04/	Monday, 04/27/2026	Monday, 05/04/2026	Friday, 05/08/2026