

Guide to Preparing Academic Program Proposals

I.	Cover Sheet Instructions and Template	2
II.	Proposal Instructions – Common Actions	4
	A. Change an existing academic program (degrees, certificates, minors).....	4
	o Modify the curriculum	
	o Add or remove an “informal” area of specialization, track or field	
	o Add or remove a “formal” Area of Concentration	
	o Rename a program	
	o Split or merge a program	
	B. Create, Suspend, or Delete Programs	
	Create a new academic program (degree program or certificate).....	6
	Create a new Master of Professional Studies or Certificate in Professional Studies	10
	Create a new minor	11
	Suspend or delete an existing academic program	12
III.	Reference	13
	College/School PCC contacts	13
	Requirements for Academic Awards	14
	Glossary	17

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301-405-5626

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM PROPOSAL**

DIRECTIONS

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST FOR COLLEGE OFFICE PERSONNEL:

- Signatures on the cover sheet should be accompanied by printed names for identification.
- Hard copies of proposals are submitted to Mike Colson, Academic Planning & Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building.

In addition to the hard copy, submit an electronic copy in Microsoft Word of the proposal to: pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

PLEASE NOTE:

A separate proposal cover sheet is required for *each different kind* of action, because each action may be considered by different committees. Separate coversheets will facilitate the approval process, although in most cases, only one proposal narrative is necessary. Please contact Academic Planning & Programs for assistance:

Prof. Betsy Beise, Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs
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301-405-6836

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM/UNIT PROPOSAL**

PCC LOG NO.

College/School:

College/School FRS unit code-7 digits:

Department/Program:

Department/Program FRS unit code-7 digits:

Type of Action (choose one):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum change (including informal specializations) | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>New academic degree/award program</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Renaming of program or formal Area of Concentration</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> New Professional Studies award iteration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Addition/deletion of formal Area of Concentration</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> New Minor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Suspend/delete program</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Italics indicate that the proposed program action must be presented to the full University Senate for consideration.

Summary of Proposed Action:

=====

APPROVAL SIGNATURES - Please print name, sign, and date. Use additional lines for multi-unit programs.

1. Department Committee Chair _____
Department Committee Chair _____
2. Department Chair _____
Department Chair _____
3. College/School PCC Chair _____
College/School PCC Chair _____
4. Dean _____
Dean _____
5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required) _____
6. Chair, Senate PCC _____
7. University Senate Chair (if required) _____
8. Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost _____

Changes to an Existing Degree Program

Changes to an existing academic degree program can include:

- Modifications to the curriculum, such as updating course requirements, reorganizing course sequences, etc.
- Changing graduate exams, candidacy, or dissertation requirements
- Adding, removing, or reorganizing formal Areas of Concentration or informal areas of specialization/tracks/fields
- Renaming the program
- Creating an Honors option to an bachelor's program

Making changes to an existing degree program requires the preparation of a PCC coversheet and a proposal. There is no single required proposal format, but change proposals are usually best structured using a one- or two-paragraph summation/abstract of the proposed changes, a chart or bullet points describing the specific changes, and a brief explanation of the impact that the changes will have on resources, related programs, and other relevant contexts.

- Be concise, and write for a general university audience. The proposal will be reviewed by members of the faculty, students and staff from across campus.
- Use tables and bullet points. The clearest way to present most curriculum changes is to use a two-column table, with the old curriculum in the left column and the new curriculum in the right.
- Please put the changes in context. Identify the impact that the proposed changes will have on related programs, on general education, and new resources, if needed. In some cases, it may be helpful to include a letter of support from the chair or dean of the sponsoring unit(s) confirming that faculty, course, and facilities resources are adequate to accommodate the proposed changes.
- If the proposed curriculum relies on courses offered by other departments or colleges, please attach a letter of support from the appropriate unit(s), preferably specifying the number of seats available and the duration of the proposed arrangement.
- Proposed changes that establish a significant new direction for the program (e.g., a new Area of Concentration) may also require a Library resource assessment. Please contact your departmental/programmatic library liaison or the Dean of the Libraries, Patricia A. Steele (pastele@umd.edu) to request a library assessment. A member of the Libraries' staff will conduct an assessment and prepare a letter describing the collection needs.
- If a new description in the catalog will be required as a result of the changes, include the revised description in the proposal.
- Be specific and careful in your use of terminology. Please make sure you identify your program accurately by name and degree type, and use the correct nomenclature for Areas of Concentration or informal areas of specialization. (See Glossary.)
- If you are making multiple changes to a program, contact Academic Planning & Programs to verify how the proposals and coversheets should be arranged. Different kinds of actions may necessitate more than one proposal cover sheet.
- Wait until proposed changes to academic programs are approved before changing individual courses.

Please contact Academic Planning & Programs for more information if you are planning to split or merge academic degree programs. These are complicated actions and cooperative planning can be very helpful.

Approval route for ordinary curriculum updates or for the addition/subtraction of informal areas of specialization:

- Department/Program PCC
- Department Chair or Program Director
- College PCC
- Dean (or representative)
- Academic Planning & Programs initial review
- (If graduate) Graduate Dean, based upon:
 - Recommendations provided by the Graduate Council PCC
- Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula & Courses (Senate PCC)
- Provost (or designee- Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs) final approval

Approval route for renaming academic programs and for the renaming/addition/subtraction of formal Areas of Concentration:

- Department/Program PCC
- Department Chair or Program Director
- College PCC
- Dean (or representative)
- Academic Planning & Programs initial review
- Academic Planning Advisory Committee (APAC)
- (If graduate) Dean of the Graduate School, based upon:
 - Recommendations provided by the Graduate Council PCC, with email notification to the full Graduate Council.
 - If the Graduate Council has substantial questions, the proposal will come before a regularly scheduled Council meeting.
- Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula & Courses (Senate PCC)
- University Senate
- President
- Chancellor
- Notification to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)
- Provost (or designee -Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs) final verification

Creating a new academic degree or certificate program

A PCC action is necessary to establish a new academic award, even if the curriculum already exists as a specialization or Area of Concentration within another degree.

The proposal will consist of the PCC coversheet and the proposal document. The basic format for new degree proposals is specified by the University System of Maryland and the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Though additional information may be added, please keep to the following basic structure:

I. Mission and Purpose: How does the proposed program support the Mission and Strategic Goals of the University? Why is it necessary? This section also should identify all related programs currently offered in the State of Maryland and explain how the proposed program differs in curriculum or otherwise addresses constituencies not currently served. Evidence of State need or market demand for graduates is helpful, as is evidence of student interest in the program. (**Tip:** See the Maryland Higher Education Commission website to search for related degree programs in Maryland.

<http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/HEPrograms.asp>)

II. Characteristics of the Proposed Program

- Educational objectives of the program
- Brief catalog description
- General requirements for degree, including the total number of credits and their distribution
- List of courses by title and number (including prerequisites)
- Identification of areas of specialization or formal Areas of Concentration, if applicable
- Description of thesis and/or non-thesis options for graduate programs
- Expected student learning outcomes
- Program faculty and their credentials
- Student audience to be served by program, and enrollment estimates
- Impact on students' technology fluency
- New or updated facilities and equipment required, if applicable
- Description of the proposed means of offering the program. Will any or all components of this program be offered (a) off-campus or at another instructional site (b) online or through distance learning, (c) in cooperation with another institution or (d) through a non-traditional schedule (weekends, intensive course offerings)?
- Will the curriculum of this program rely upon courses provided through other academic units? If so, please list both required courses and/or pre-requisites from other units, and include letters from the chairs and/or deans of the appropriate units committing the necessary seats in support of the program.
- Library resources required, to be determined in cooperation with the Libraries. Please contact your departmental/programmatic library liaison or the Interim Dean of the Libraries, Patricia A. Steele (pasteele@umd.edu) to request a library assessment. A member of the Libraries' staff will conduct an assessment and prepare a letter describing the collection needs.

III. Finance: The Maryland Higher Education Commission requires Resource and Expenditure tables to demonstrate that the University is prepared to commit the resources required for the new program. Please complete the tables to show how the University as a whole will provide the necessary resources, and provide whatever additional detail is necessary to explain how resources will be reallocated within the department and college.

MHEC TABLE 1: RESOURCES					
Resources Categories	(Year 1)	(Year 2)	(Year 3)	(Year 4)	(Year 5)
1.Reallocated Funds ¹					
2. Tuition/Fee Revenue ² (c+g below)					
a. #F.T Students					
b. Annual Tuition/Fee Rate					
c. Annual Full Time Revenue (a x b)					
d. # Part Time Students					
e. Credit Hour Rate					
f. Annual Credit Hours					
g. Total Part Time Revenue (d x e x f)					
3. Grants, Contracts, & Other External Sources ³					
4. Other Sources					
TOTAL (Add 1 - 4)					

¹ Whenever reallocated funds are included among the resources available to new programs, the following information must be provided in a footnote: origin(s) of reallocated funds, impact of the reallocation on the existing academic program(s), and manner in which the reallocation is consistent with the institution's strategic plan.

² This figure should be a realistic percentage of tuition and fees which will be used to support the new program. Factors such as indirect costs linked to new students and the impact of enrolling continuing students in the new program should be considered when determining the percentage.

³ Whenever external funds are included among the resources, the following information must be provided in a footnote: source of the funding and alternative methods of funding the program after the cessation of external funding.

MHEC TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES

Expenditure Categories	(Year 1)	(Year 2)	(Year 3)	(Year 4)	(Year 5)
1. Total Faculty Expenses (b + c below)					
a. # FTE					
b. Total Salary					
c. Total Benefits					
2. Total Administrative Staff Expenses (b + c below)					
a. # FTE					
b. Total Salary					
c. Total Benefits					
3. Total Support Staff Expenses (b + c below)					
a. # FTE					
b. Total Salary					
c. Total Benefits					
4. Equipment					
5. Library					
6. New or Renovated Space					
7. Other Expenses					
TOTAL (Add 1 - 7)					

- Be concise, and write for a general university audience. The proposal will be reviewed by members of the faculty, students and staff from across campus. Academic Planning and Programs will work with proposers to prepare an abridged version of the proposal for submission to the Board of Regents and MHEC.
- Verify that your proposed curriculum meets basic requirements. (See Requirements for Academic Awards.)
- Be specific and careful in your use of terminology. Make sure you identify your program accurately by name and degree type, and use the correct nomenclature for Areas of Concentration or informal areas of specialization. (See Glossary.)

The approval route for new academic programs is:

- Department/Program PCC
- Department Chair or Program Director
- College PCC
- Dean (or representative)
- Academic Planning & Programs initial review
- Academic Planning Advisory Committee (APAC)
- (If graduate) Dean of the Graduate School, based upon:
 - Recommendations provided by the Graduate Council PCC, with email notification to the full Graduate Council.
 - If the Graduate Council has substantial questions, the proposal will come before a regularly scheduled Council meeting.
- Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula & Courses (Senate PCC)
- University Senate
- President
- Board of Regents (Education Policy Committee and Full Board)_
- Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) – Following an administrative review, MHEC sends program proposals (degrees, certificates, and Areas of Concentration) out in the State for comment by all Maryland higher education institutions. Institutions have an initial 30-day window to review and respond to programs that are believed to be outside of the scope of the proposing institution’s mission or to programs that are believed to be unreasonably duplicative.
- Provost (or designee- Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs) final verification

Developing a new Masters of Professional Studies and the Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies

The University has an established means of developing “professional” certificates and master’s degrees intended as credit-bearing awards for professionals seeking additional training. The Master of Professional Studies and the Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies were created to foster mutually beneficial partnerships between the University and important external constituencies in business, government, and non-profit organizations. The Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies and the Master of Professional Studies frameworks have academic oversight by the Graduate School and administrative oversight in the Office of Extended Studies. These professional awards allow the University to respond quickly to opportunities to offer customized programming without modifying or compromising the integrity of existing graduate research degrees. They are self-support programs, meaning that tuition and/or other revenue must cover all expenses. Courses for these programs may not be taught by faculty as a part of their regular teaching or work load. The Master of Professional Studies and the Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies must conform to all University admissions and degree requirements for master’s degrees and post-baccalaureate certificates, respectively, and all faculty who teach courses must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Because the Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies and the Master of Professional Studies have already been approved as academic awards, it is not necessary to complete the full proposal for a new academic degree or certificate program. Proposals for new iterations of these awards should include a PCC coversheet and the following:

- A justification for the program, including evidence of student interest.
- A catalog-type description.
- A full listing of courses required for the program. Please note that these programs were intended to facilitate study in multi-disciplinary areas in which the University does not already offer degrees. The Master of Professional Studies and the Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies should not replicate existing degree programs. The inclusion of courses other than those from the initiating unit(s) requires evidence of support from the appropriate Chair and/or Dean.
- A listing of faculty who will teach in the program, including their professional rank/title.
- A listing of members of the program’s oversight committee. The committee should be composed of a regular member of the graduate faculty from the “core” area who will serve as the Graduate Director, a second member of the graduate faculty, a representative from the Graduate School, and an administrative manager. Both the Graduate Director and second faculty member must have the approval of their respective department chairs. This committee will provide the academic and administrative oversight for the duration of the degree or certificate program.

Approval route for new iterations of the Master of Professional Studies and the Graduate Certificate:

- Department Chair(s) or Program Director(s)
- Dean(s)
- Graduate PCC and Dean of the Graduate School
- Senate PCC
- Chancellor of the University System of Maryland
- Provost (or designee – Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs) verification

Creating a New Minor

Proposals to establish new undergraduate minors should consist of a PCC coversheet and a proposal document. The document should include the following items:

- Justification for the minor as a coherent field of study.
- Catalog description.
- A complete list of courses (including prerequisites) and other requirements. (See Requirements for Academic Awards.)
- If the curriculum of this program will rely upon courses provided through other academic units, please list both required courses and/or pre-requisites from other units, and include letters of support from the chairs and/or deans of the appropriate units committing the necessary seats in support of the program. It may be helpful to specify the number of seats and the expected duration of the arrangement.
- A complete list of faculty overseeing the minor, and the advising structure. In situations where administrative staff will provide essential support, a faculty oversight structure must be in place at proposal stage and continue for the duration of the minor.
- Anticipated number of students to be served by the minor at steady state. It may be helpful to include a letter of support from the chair or dean of the sponsoring unit(s) confirming that faculty, course, and facilities resources are adequate to accommodate the proposed minor.
- Procedures by which student can declare or be admitted into the minor.

Approval route to create a new minor:

- Department/Program PCC
- Department Chair or Program Director
- College PCC
- Dean (or representative)
- Academic Planning & Programs initial review
- Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula & Courses (Senate PCC)
- Provost (or designee – Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs) final approval

Suspending or Discontinuing a Degree

In the event that a program has become obsolete through lack of student interest or changes in the field, a unit may request that the program be suspended for a maximum of two years to determine its future direction (during which time no new students are accepted into the program) or that the program be completely discontinued.

Either request requires a PCC proposal, consisting of a coversheet and brief justification explaining why the program should be suspended or discontinued. The proposal should also specify what will happen with students currently enrolled in the program.

Proposals to suspend programs are approved administratively.

Approval route to discontinue a program:

- Department/Program PCC
- Department Chair or Program Director
- College PCC
- Dean (or representative)
- Academic Planning & Programs initial review
- Academic Planning Advisory Committee (APAC)
- (If graduate) Dean of the Graduate School, based upon:
 - Recommendations provided by the Graduate Council PCC, with email notification to the full Graduate Council.
 - If the Graduate Council has substantial questions, the proposal will come before a regularly scheduled meeting.
- Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula & Courses (Senate PCC)
- University Senate
- President
- Chancellor
- Notification to Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)
- Provost (or designee- Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs) verification

PCC Contacts for Colleges and Schools

Because all PCC proposals must first pass through College PCC Committees before coming to Academic Affairs, it is usually helpful to call your College PCC contact to discuss the proposal in advance.

Please note: The Graduate School oversees the Master of Professional Studies and the Graduate Certificate of Professional Studies, and the Graduate School representative serves as the college PCC contact for these programs, regardless of the department proposing to offer them.

College	Name	Telephone	Email
AGNR	Leon Slaughter	301-405-2078	lslaugh@umd.edu
ARCH	Carl Bovill	301-405-6305	bovill@umd.edu
ARHU	Elizabeth Bergmann Loizeaux	301-405-5646	ebl@umd.edu
BGMT	Brian Horick (undergraduate)	301-405-2293	bhorick@rhsmith.umd.edu
	Michael Marcellino (graduate)	301-405-0010	mmarcell@umd.edu
BSOS	Katherine Pedro Beardsley	301-405-1692	kbeardsley@bsos.umd.edu
CLFS	Robert Infantino	301-405-2908	infantino@umd.edu
CLIS	Diane Barlow	301-405-2042	dbarlow@umd.edu
CMPS	James Purtilo	301-405-2327	purtilo@cs.umd.edu
EDUC	Stephen Koziol	301-405-8416	skoziol@umd.edu
ENGR	Gary Pertmer	301-405-3936	pertmer@umd.edu
SPHL	Coke Farmer	301-405-2517	cfarmer@umd.edu
JOUR	Marchelle Payne- Gassaway	301 405 2399	mpayne@umd.edu
PUAF	William Powers	301-405-6336	wpowers@umd.edu
GRAD	Thomas Castonguay	301-405-8236	twc@umd.edu
UGST	Jim Dietz	301-314-8282	jmdietz@umd.edu

Requirements for Academic Awards

Minor

- Minors ordinarily have between 15-24 credits, with at least 9 credits at the upper level.
- No more than 6 credits may be “double counted” with a student’s major. Courses may not be used to fulfill requirements of two minors.
- No more than 6 of the required credits (or 2 courses) may be taken at another institution, and at least 6 upper-division credits applied to the minor must be taken at UMCP.
- See also: [Policy on Minors](#)

Upper-division Certificate

- An upper-division certificate requires a minimum of 21 credit hours of coursework, with a core of at least 12 credit hours chosen from a limited list.
- Non-core courses must be chosen from a specific list of acceptable electives.
- No more than 9 credit hours may be “double counted” with the major.
- At least 12 credit hours must be taken in upper-division courses.
- No more than 3 credit hours may be taken in “Special Topics” or “Selected Topics” courses.
- No more than 9 credit hours may be taken at other institutions.
- See also: [Policy on Certificates](#)

Bachelor’s Degree

- Bachelor’s degrees require a minimum of 120 credit hours.
- A minimum 2.0 GPA is required for the award of a bachelor’s degree.
- The final 30 credit hours ordinarily must be taken at UMCP.
- The program of study must include CORE General Education Requirements and a major field of study. CORE requirements include:
 - Fundamental studies in introductory writing (3 credits), mathematics (3 credits), and professional writing (3 credits).
 - Distributive studies (28 credits) with 3 courses each in Humanities and the Arts; the Sciences and Mathematics; and Social Sciences and History, with an option for a course in Interdisciplinary and Emerging Issues.
 - Two Advanced Studies courses (300 level or above outside the major).
 - One course in Human Cultural Diversity.
- Colleges and schools may impose additional requirements.
- Other expectations include:
 - More than 120 required credit hours will require justification
 - Reasonable course loads, especially for first year students
 - A reasonable number of free electives (12 credits) or justification
- See also:
 - [Undergraduate Catalog](#)
 - [Code of Maryland Regulations](#)
 - [CORE General Education](#)

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate

- Minimum admissions requirements must be consistent with those of the Graduate School, and all students must be admitted to the Graduate School.
- Certificates require 12 credit hours of graduate-level work, with a minimum of 9 credit hours chosen from a limited list.
- Non-core courses must be chosen from a specific list of acceptable options.
- At least 9 credit hours must be earned at the 600 level or above. For a 12-credit certificate program, 3 credits may be earned at the 400 level; certificates requiring more than 12 credits may allow up to 6 credits at the 400 level.
- All coursework must be completed at UMCP.
- A minimum 3.0 G.P.A. is required for the award of a graduate certificate.
- All requirements for the graduate certificate must be completed within five years.
- See also:
 - [Policy on Certificates](#)
 - [Code of Maryland Regulations](#)

Master's Degree

- Minimum admissions requirements must be consistent with those of the Graduate School, and all students must be admitted to the Graduate School.
- Master's degrees require a minimum of 30 credit hours.
- At least 12 hours of course work is required at the 600 level or higher, and at least 12 credit hours must be earned in the major field.
- M.A. and M.S. degrees require a thesis unless the program has an approved non-thesis option. With the thesis option, six of the 30 credit hours must be master's thesis research credits (799). For the master's degree with the non-thesis option, a minimum of 18 credit hours in courses numbered 600 and above is required, as well as one or more scholarly papers, some portion of which must be written.
- Other types of master's degrees may have additional requirements.
- See also:
 - [Graduate School requirements for master's degrees](#)
 - [Code of Maryland Regulations](#)

Doctoral Degree

- Minimum admissions requirements must be consistent with those of the Graduate School, and all students must be admitted to the Graduate School.
- There are no fixed total minimum credit hour requirements for the degree as a whole, but Ph.D. and D.M.A. programs require at least 12 semester hours of dissertation credits and Ed.D. programs require 6 dissertation credits. The number of research and other credit hours required in the program varies with the degree and program in question.
- See also:
 - [Graduate School requirements for doctoral degrees](#)
 - [Code of Maryland Regulations](#)

Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies

- Minimum admissions requirements must be consistent with those of the Graduate School, and all students must be admitted to the Graduate School.
- The Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies must require at least 12 credits.
- The Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies was intended to provide a means of adapting existing graduate programs for a specific purpose and professional audience. There should be a core of at least two courses drawn from a master's core component, with at least two additional courses to form a coherent graduate certificate program.
- The Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies must meet all other requirements for graduate certificates.
 - Certificates require 12 credit hours of graduate-level work, with a minimum of 9 credit hours chosen from a limited list
 - Non-core courses must be chosen from a specific list of acceptable options
 - At least 9 credit hours must be earned at the 600 level or above. For a 12-credit certificate program, 3 credits may be earned at the 400 level; certificates requiring more than 12 credits may allow up to 6 credits at the 400 level.
 - All coursework must be completed at the University of Maryland, College Park.
 - A minimum 3.0 G.P.A. is required for the award of a graduate certificate.
 - All requirements for the graduate certificate must be completed within five years.
- See also:
 - [Policy on Certificates](#)
 - [Master of Professional Studies and Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies program shell](#)

Master of Professional Studies

- Minimum admissions requirements must be consistent with those of the Graduate School, and all students must be admitted to the Graduate School.
- The Master of Professional Studies degree requires a minimum of 30 credits.
- The Master of Professional Studies degree was intended to provide a means of adapting existing graduate programs for a specific purpose and professional audience. There should be a core of at least four courses usually drawn from a current master's degree program, with areas of specialization and electives drawn from a variety of academic unit course offerings to create a coherent, multidisciplinary master's degree program.
- The Master of Professional Studies must meet all other requirements for non-thesis master's degrees:
 - At least 18 credit hours in courses numbered 600 and above is required, as well as one or more scholarly papers, some portion of which must be written.
 - At least 12 credit hours must be earned in the major field.
- See also:
 - [Graduate School requirements for master's degrees](#)
 - [Master of Professional Studies and Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies program shell](#)

Glossary

Academic college: An administrative unit that oversees one or more academic departments. It provides leadership and administrative and material support for the instructional, scholarly, advising, and outreach functions of its academic constituents. The College is the unit that awards undergraduate degrees.

Academic college/school and department: A unit, such as a non-departmentalized College or School that serves the dual functions of Academic College and Department.

Academic degree program: A curriculum leading to the award of a particular academic degree (e.g., B.S. in Aerospace Engineering.) Please note the distinction between the formal definition of the term and the casual use to refer to a topical area that may or may not reflect a formal academic degree program (e.g., “the environmental studies program”).

Academic department: A unit that houses a faculty, and that ordinarily offers academic courses and academic programs within a single discipline or a small number of related disciplines.

Academic program home: A unit that administers an academic program but that has not been formally established as an Academic Department. An academic program is a defined curriculum leading to an award recognized by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and listed on its roster of approved programs. This includes bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, as well as both undergraduate and graduate certificates. These units normally do not serve as tenure homes for faculty.

Area of Concentration (Formal): A formal curricular area within a degree program. An Area of Concentration (AOC) is defined by the Code of Maryland Regulations as “a sequential arrangement of courses within a program which at the (a) undergraduate level exceeds 24 semester credit hours; (b) master’s level exceeds 12 semester credit hours; and (c) Doctorate level exceeds 18 semester credit hours.” A proposal for a formal AOC must go to the Chancellor and MHEC for approval, and the emphasis is noted on the student’s transcript. Approved Areas of Concentration are listed on the MHEC program inventory.

Area of specialization (Informal): An informal curricular area within a degree program. An informal area of specialization has no fixed requirements mandated by the Code of Maryland Regulations. Areas of specialization can be a particular number of credits in a designated field, a topical area, or some combination. Informal areas of specialization are approved at the campus level only and do not appear on the MHEC program inventory for the University.

Academic award: A term that specifies the awards granted at the conclusion of academic programs approved by the Board of Regents and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Academic awards include degrees (baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral) and certificates (lower-division, upper-division, and post-baccalaureate).

Combined degree program: An articulated degree program that permits an academically talented student to begin coursework for the master’s degree while still an undergraduate, and to “double count” up to nine (or more, if certain conditions are satisfied) credits in both the bachelor’s and the master’s program. Combined degree programs may be developed individually for exceptional students, or a unit may establish a structured combined degree program. See also the UMCP policy on combined bachelor’s/master’s programs at <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii220a.html>.

Discontinuance (Termination): Discontinuance is the permanent termination of an academic degree program. Currently enrolled students are still permitted to complete degree requirements.

Dual degree program: An articulated program that allows students to complete two related degree programs (such as the Master of Architecture and Master of Historic Preservation degrees) in a slightly accelerated fashion, usually by “double counting” a modest number of elective credits. Students receive two separate degrees upon successful completion of the dual degree program curriculum.

Executive degree programs: See entry on professional degree programs

First professional degree: See entry on professional degree programs

Joint degree: A single degree offered cooperatively by two units (or two institutions).

PCC: Programs, Curricula & Courses committee. PCC committees exist at the departmental and college levels, as well as for the Graduate Council and the Senate.

Professional degree programs: The term “professional” is used in several distinct ways:

- **Professional or executive degree/award program:** Professional or executive degree/award programs have different functions than those of first professional or traditional professional academic degrees. These terminal degree programs result in academic awards, but are focused on providing additional career-specific training to working professionals, rather than to prepare graduate students for further study. Executive degree programs include the executive track of the M.B.A., the executive Master of Public Management (M.P.M.), and the Master of Professional Studies and the Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies. Executive or professional degree/award programs are entrepreneurial and are not the primary educational focus of a academic units.
- **First professional degree:** A traditional academic degree program that prepares students for licensure or certification in a particular profession, often regulated or accredited by a governmental or government-approved body. First professional degree programs are the primary educational focus of certain units on campus. Examples of first professional degrees include the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (B.L.A.), the Master of Architecture (M.Arch.), the Master of Public Policy (M.P.P.), the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.), etc.
- **“Professional” academic degree:** Historically, the term “professional” has been used to refer to advanced degrees preparing students for professions in law, medicine, or business, to imply an emphasis on the application of knowledge rather than new theoretical research. The term also is sometimes used to differentiate among traditional academic degree programs within a given field, e.g., to distinguish between the application-focused M.Ed. and the research-focused M.A. within some fields in education. “Professional” academic degrees are the primary educational focus of some academic units.

Suspension: An academic program may be suspended for up to two years in order to determine its future directions. During the suspension, no new students may be admitted, but currently enrolled students must be allowed to satisfy degree requirements.

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