

ITEM: 5  
Policy #: 2.006  
FKA: 2.42

**Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees**  
**June 19, 2007**

**SUBJECT:** Policies Pertaining to Academic Programs

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

*Approved as presented*

Approve the following policies pertaining to academic programs:

- Academic Learning Compacts
- Academic Program Authorization
- Academic Program Review
- Professional Certificate Programs
- Programs Offered Outside FGCU's Five-County Service Area
- Suspension and Discontinuance of Academic Programs

*BACKGROUND INFORMATION*

On January 25, 2007, the Board of Governors (BOG) issued public notice of intent to promulgate several regulations pertaining to academic programs. Subsequently, on March 29, 2007, the BOG adopted regulations dealing with the following topics: program authorization, program termination, limited access, hours to degree, program review, and student learning outcomes. These regulations are available on the BOG website [http://www.flbog.org/BOG\\_regs/](http://www.flbog.org/BOG_regs/)

The regulations codified many existing practices and brought together numerous policies relating to the above topics that had previously existed in statutes, regulations, resolutions, and policy memoranda. The regulations also clarified authority and responsibility of the BOG and the university boards of trustees, which was vague in statute. In addition, the regulations called for university boards of trustees to adopt policies in specified areas.

The attached policies presented to the FGCU Board of Trustees for review and approval respond to this mandate. The proposed policies are described in the attached executive summary. Relevant University procedures are also included as supporting documentation.

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**Supporting Documentation Included:**

1. Executive Summary
2. Academic Learning Compacts Policy
  - Academic Learning Compacts Development and Review Procedures
3. Academic Program Authorization Policy
  - Curriculum Development Procedures
4. Academic Program Review Policy
  - Program Review Procedures
5. Professional Certificate Programs Policy
6. Programs Offered Outside FGCU's Five-County Service Area Policy
7. Suspension and Discontinuance of Academic Programs Policy

**Prepared by:** Associate Vice President for Planning and Institutional Performance Paul Snyder, and Director of Program Development and Curriculum Cathy Duff

**Legal Review by:** General Counsel Wendy Morris

**Submitted by:** Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Bonnie Yegidis

**Executive Summary**  
**Proposed Policies Pertaining to Academic Programs**  
**May 23, 2007**

ACADEMIC PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION

In July 2006, the BOG Office of Academic Affairs hosted a two-day Academic Affairs Conference attended by state university academic affairs staff to discuss various topics including program authorization. Subsequent to this meeting, the Office of Academic Affairs developed draft regulations and provided those regulations to university staff for review and comment. Public notice of intent to promulgate a new Board of Governors regulation on Academic Program Authorization was given on January 25, 2007.

The resulting Regulation 6C-8.011 Academic Program Authorization, approved March 29, 2007, by the BOG codified into one source program authorization policies that previously existed in various statutes, regulations, resolutions, and policy memoranda. In brief, the new BOG regulation includes:

- Definitions for key terms.
- Revised BOG New Degree Program Approval Criteria.
- Authority and process for approval of degree programs at all levels.
- Authority and process for approval of other types of academic program offerings (clarifies university boards of trustees and BOG authority that was vague in statute).
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The regulation also requires university boards of trustees to adopt policy. The proposed FGCU BOT policy entitled Academic Program Authorization addresses requirements of the BOG regulation and include:

- Definitions for the following terms used by FGCU: degree program, program major, minor, concentration, and academic certificate.
- A formal process for the exploration of new degree programs and program majors for implementation.
- A formal process for approving new degree programs and program majors, which includes a formal written review of each professional and doctoral program proposal by a qualified external consultant prior to consideration by the Board of Trustees.
- The adoption of the common State University System new degree program proposal format developed by BOG staff in collaboration with university academic affairs officers.
- The delegation of other academic program approval and revision to appropriate university administrative units and faculty teams.



**FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**POLICY TITLE**

Academic Program Authorization

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Florida Board of Governors (BOG) has determined that each State University System (SUS) institution must adopt policies that address academic program planning and approval consistent with BOG Regulation 6C-8.011 New Academic Program Authorization. These policies must include the following:

- (a) A formal process for determining degree programs that the university will explore for implementation over the period covered by the university strategic plan and Board of Governors' SUS Strategic Plan;
- (b) A formal process for review and approval of proposed programs by the appropriate curriculum, financial, and administrative entities of the university;
- (c) A formal written review of all professional and doctoral program proposals by a qualified external consultant prior to consideration of the proposal by the Board of Trustees; and
- (d) The adoption of a common state university system new degree proposal format developed by BOG staff in collaboration with university academic affairs officers, which is available from the Chancellor.

Academic programs addressed in this policy include: (a) degree program, (b) program major, (c) minor, (d) concentration, and (e) academic certificate.

A *degree program* is an organized curriculum leading to a college degree in an area of study recognized as an academic discipline by the higher education community, as demonstrated by assignment of a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code by the National Center for Educational Statistics, or as demonstrated by similar programs existing at other colleges and universities, and having designated faculty and instructional resources. Approved degree programs are listed on the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

A *program major* is an organized curriculum in an area of study that is part of an existing or proposed degree program and does not constitute sufficient distinct coursework, faculty, and instructional resources to be considered a separate degree program. A program major shares common core or prerequisite courses with the degree program under which it is offered and other majors within the same degree. Program majors are not assigned CIP codes and are not included in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory. Students enrolled in a program major are reported under the CIP code of the degree program under which the major is offered.

A *concentration* is an organized curriculum that is offered as part of an individual student's degree plan and enhances or complements the degree to be awarded in a manner that leads to specific educational or occupational goals. Concentrations are not assigned CIP codes and are not included in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

A *minor* is an organized curriculum that is offered as part of an individual student's degree plan and enhances or complements the degree to be awarded in a manner that leads to specific educational or occupational goals. Minors are not assigned CIP codes and are not included in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

An *academic certificate*, also referred to as a college credit certificate program, is an organized curriculum of college credit courses offered as a distinct area of study that leads to specific educational or occupational goals, and for which the university awards a certificate or diploma. Completion of an academic certificate is noted on the student's official transcript. FGCU academic certificates are offered at the post-baccalaureate level or above. Academic certificates are not assigned CIP codes and are not included in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory. (See FGCU Board of Trustees policy on Professional Certificate Programs for processes relating to certificates that include non-college-credit experiences.)

**RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE**

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICE**

Office of Curriculum and Instruction

**WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY**

All faculty and administrators charged with planning and approving FGCU academic programs.

**PROCEDURES**

Exploration of New Degree Programs and New Program Majors

The exploration of new degree programs and program majors for implementation is coordinated by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, which is located in the Office of the Provost, in consultation with the President, the Provost, the Deans Council, the

Long-Range Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee (LRPIEC), the Office of Planning and Institutional Performance, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

The Office of Curriculum and Instruction creates a list of degree programs and program majors to be explored for implementation over the period covered by the FGCU Strategic Plan and Board of Governors' SUS Strategic Plan. This list is reviewed and updated annually by the Deans Council and approved by the Provost.

Faculty and academic units proposing new degree programs and new program majors complete a Request for Approval to Plan that describes the proposed curriculum and addresses need, demand, resources, and fit with the University's mission. Proposed new degree programs and program majors must support the goals and initiatives described in the current FGCU Strategic Plan and the current BOG SUS Strategic Plan.

The completed Request for Approval to Plan is reviewed by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, the Office of Planning and Institutional Performance, and the Provost. If approval to plan is granted by the Provost, the faculty and academic unit complete a Request to Offer a New Degree Program or a Request to Offer a New Program Major.

#### Approval of New Degree Programs and New Program Majors

Approval of new degree programs and program majors is coordinated by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, which is located in the Office of the Provost, in consultation with the President; the Provost; the Undergraduate Curriculum Team and the Graduate Curriculum Team, standing teams of the FGCU Faculty Senate; the college deans; the Office of Planning and Institutional Performance; and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Faculty and academic units who have been granted approval to plan by the Provost complete the common proposal format entitled Request to Offer a New Degree Program or Request to Offer a New Program Major. Completed proposals and supporting documents are reviewed and approved by the relevant college/school curriculum team, the college dean, the Undergraduate Curriculum Team or Graduate Curriculum Team, the Provost, and the President prior to submission to the Chair of the Academic/Student/Faculty Affairs Committee of the FGCU Board of Trustees. A qualified external consultant reviews professional and doctoral level proposals prior to consideration by the FGCU Board of Trustees.

New degree program proposals that have been approved by the FGCU Board of Trustees are forwarded to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs, Board of Governors, for assignment of a CIP and inclusion in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

The Office of Academic and Student Affairs, Board of Governors, is notified of new program majors approved by the FGCU Board of Trustees; however, no CIP code is assigned and the majors are not listed on the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

Additional details regarding planning and approval of new degree programs and new programs majors are contained in the document Curriculum Development Procedures.

Other Academic Program Approval and Revision

Development, approval, and revision processes for other academic programs (concentrations, majors, and academic certificates) and processes for revision of existing degree programs and program majors are described in the document Curriculum Development Procedures.

*History: This is the first policy to address this subject matter*