



NEW GRADUATE DEGREE OPTION PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

A proposal for a new program option to be offered within an existing graduate degree must include the items below and be submitted with a cover sheet and required appendices. Units must submit a draft proposal to the Office of Academic Affairs at progprop@uw.edu for review and comment. Prior to final submission, the proposal must be reviewed and approved by program faculty and endorsed by the Dean. UW Bothell and UW Tacoma proposals also require endorsement by the Chancellor/Vice Chancellor.

> Contact the [Office of Academic Affairs](#) in the Graduate School at progprop@uw.edu with any questions you may have about the guidelines.

Cover Sheet

Include the cover sheet available on the [Academic Affairs website](#) for draft and final submission. Signatures required for final submission only.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

(Limit 1 page)

Overview

Provide a summary description of the proposed new program option, including rationale for the program and how it responds to student demand or current trends in the field. State the program's administrative location, i.e. where it is academically housed, and the proposed degree option title as it should appear on the student transcript.

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SECTION II: PROGRAM STRUCTURE

(Limit 4 pages)

This section outlines the essential components of the proposed degree option—its curriculum, admissions criteria, student experience, commitment to inclusive excellence, faculty resources, and administrative framework—providing a clear picture of how the program will operate and support student success. The curriculum section should be completed in full. The remaining sections should only be completed in those cases where the option will differ from the existing program.

Curriculum

Provide the required curriculum (which must adhere to the requirements in [Policy 1.1](#) and [1.3](#)) in the following outline format. Provide full course descriptions and learning objectives in Appendix I.

Curricular Outline: Outline all coursework with course number, title, and credits only (no course descriptions). This outline will be used for creating a degree audit and catalog copy. Please list all degree option requirements under subheadings in the following order:

- Required/core coursework
- Electives (it is acceptable to provide only the number of credits required and indicate that an elective course list is maintained internally by the unit in the degree audit)
- Culminating experience or integrated experience across the curriculum. Examples of culminating experiences include a thesis, dissertation, other creative work, capstone project, comprehensive examination, or supervised field experience. Integrated learning experiences connect concepts and experiences across the curriculum to form a meaningful whole. If included as part of the degree requirements, a program may offer multiple culminating experience options, provided the overall level of achievement for the degree remains the same.
- Additional non-credit requirements (e.g. prerequisites, competency requirements, etc.)
- Total credits

In addition to required coursework, proposals must address the following:

- For master's degrees, note whether it is a thesis or non-thesis program
- Describe expected student learning goals and outcomes of the program (i.e., what are the students expected to learn? What are the students expected to be able to do as a result of the education provided?), how they will be measured and results used. Indicate how the curriculum will introduce students to questions and considerations of ethics that are relevant to the field of study.
- Indicate when the program will be offered (day/evening/weekend), where the program will be offered (campus location(s) and/or distance learning), and the delivery mechanism (in-person classroom, online, hybrid, other distance), including the type of technology to be used. Describe whether students will be able to enroll full-time.
- State that program requirements meet or exceed Graduate School minimum degree requirements, or describe in detail any areas where they do not align with Graduate School policies.

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Admission

Identify the requirements for admission to the program and describe the unit's admission process. If the degree option has different admissions criteria from the parent program, clearly identify the differences between criteria.

Students

Describe the student population to be served. Include information on scholarships or other financial support available to students. Describe the plan to advertise and recruit students to the program.

Inclusive excellence and program assessment

If the proposed option differs significantly from the parent program in terms of advancing inclusive excellence and assessing how well program objectives will be met, describe these differences in an appendix. If the program shares the same plan for inclusive excellence and program assessment with the parent program, no additional information is required.

Accreditation

Indicate whether the academic unit will seek specialized program accreditation. If so, discuss plans for accreditation and identify the appropriate accrediting body.

Faculty and administration

Describe the faculty and staffing plan for teaching, administrative, and support services for the program including who will act as GPA and GPC. If additional faculty and/or staff are required, describe these requirements in an appendix.

SECTION III: PROGRAM VALUE AND INVESTMENT

(Limit 2 pages)

This section explains how the proposed program option aligns with the university's mission and priorities, demonstrates its strategic value, and provides evidence of demand and a sustainable financial plan to justify the investment. In each section, only a description of the value provided by the proposed option is required, not the entire existing program.

Relationship to the institutional role, mission, and academic unit priorities

Describe how the proposed degree option supports the academic unit's priorities and [the role and mission of the University of Washington](#).

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Questions to consider (Units should work with their dean or EVCAA to determine which questions are most relevant for their unit/college/school or if additional questions should be addressed):

- How does this program advance the university's reputation or competitiveness?
- What societal or workforce needs does it address?
- How will it contribute to student success beyond employment outcomes (e.g., leadership, global perspectives)?
- What partnerships (industry, government, nonprofit) will strengthen the program?
- How does this program create opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration or research synergies within the university?

Program demand

Briefly describe the state/regional/national demand for the program option, including available data demonstrating student and employer demand. Describe unique aspects of the proposed program that differentiate it from similar programs offered at the UW, in the state, the region, or nationally and how these unique aspects work to meet the demand.^[1]

Questions to consider (Units should work with their dean or EVCAA to determine which questions are most relevant for their unit/college/school or if additional questions should be addressed):

- Who is the intended student audience for this program (e.g., geographic reach, prior academic preparation, professional experience)?
- What specific job roles, industries, or sectors will graduates of this program be qualified for?
- What do current relevant reports (such as labor market forecasts or industry reports) indicate about demand for professionals in this field?
- Especially if reliable demand data is unavailable, what trends or indicators suggest the field is growing or becoming more relevant?
- What evidence of student interest exists for similar programs at peer institutions (e.g., application volume, enrollment trends, degrees awarded)?
- How does this program compare to similar offerings at peer institutions regarding cost, credit requirements, delivery format, duration, and other distinguishing factors?

^[1] **Demand Analysis Resources:** The following resources may be useful for units to consult as they gauge demand for the proposed program. Units should work with their dean or EVCAA to determine additional or alternative resources for analyzing program demand.

- [UW Continuum College](#): Units may choose to work with the UW Continuum College to create an in-depth market analysis for the proposed program in lieu of completing the Demand for Program section.
- [U.S. Department of Education Data](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard](#)
- [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment Projections Databases](#)

Program budget

Describe the impact of the new degree option on overall resources within the academic unit. If significantly more resources are required to operate the degree option in addition to resources already used to operate the parent program, include full budget information in an appendix.

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APPENDIX I

COURSE LIST

For each core course and any electives being developed for this program, provide course numbers, titles, credits, a brief description, and summary of course learning objectives. All pre-existing courses that will serve as electives should also be listed but do not require descriptions. This may be a full list of elective courses, or if electives must be chosen from a specific unit/department, indicate the required course level (i.e. 400 or 500) and unit/department.