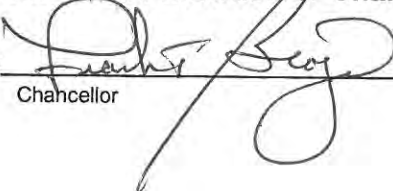


**Office of the Chancellor
Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education
Procedures and Standards for University Operations**

**Procedure/Standard Number 2016-23
Requirements for Initiation or Change of a Credit-Based Academic Program**

Approved by:  Date: 3/24/16
Chancellor

History:

Revised :

Additional History:

Related Policies, Procedures, or Standards: [Board of Governors' Policy 1985-01-A: Requirements for Initiation or Change of Credit-Based Academic Programs](#); [Board of Governors' Policy 1990-06-A: Academic Degrees](#)

Additional References: The Procedure and Standard was reviewed and supported by the Chief Academic Officers (November 19, 2015), Statewide Meet and Discuss (December 16, 2015), and Council of Presidents (January 28, 2016).

I. **Introduction**

The purpose of this procedure is to communicate the instructions, processes, and standards regarding the establishment of new academic programs or revisions to existing programs within Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (as outlined in Section C of Board of Governors' Policy 1985-01-A: *Requirements for Initiation or Change of Credit-Based Academic Programs*).

This procedure will ensure all new academic degree programs undergo a consistent, fair, and timely process to determine the need and appropriateness for the State System. Additionally, this procedure will ensure the accuracy of the State System's Academic Program Inventory as it relates to changes in both degree and non-degree programs.

This procedure does not reflect on the processes that occur at each university. It is understood that each university does have local processes and procedures that are undertaken prior to the processes established in this procedure.

II. **Definitions**

- A. **Academic Program Inventory (API):** Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education's official inventory of all active and non-active academic programs. Included in the inventory are all degree programs, associated concentrations, tracks, specializations, minors, certificates, and teacher certifications.

The API is not designed to store all historical information (e.g., past CIP code or program name) related to every program, rather its design and intent is to maintain an official and accurate listing of all current and historical programmatic offerings.

- B. **Letter of Intent:** A form and associated business process designed to provide notification to the Office of the Chancellor of a university's intention to create a new academic degree program and to provide the university with peer reviewed feedback.
- C. **Full Program Proposal:** A form and associated business processes for each credential level designed to ensure all proposed new academic degree programs:
 - 1. are consistent and appropriate to the mission of the department, college, university, and State System's Strategic Plan;
 - 2. provide evidence of student demand and Commonwealth need;
 - 3. are consistent with the quality and academic integrity of the State System to include a continuous assessment plan;
 - 4. benefit from opportunities for coordination and collaboration within the State System and/or beyond;
 - 5. plan for the appropriate periodic assessment oversight to ensure relevancy and academic integrity; and
 - 6. plan for the appropriate resources to successfully meet the identified demand.

III. **Procedure/Standard**

A. **General**

- 1. Academic and Student Affairs shall maintain an academic program initiation and change website to provide business processes, procedures, and forms in accordance with BOG Policy 1985-01-A: *Requirements for Initiation or Change of Credit-Based Academic Programs*.
- 2. Processes and resources associated with the academic program initiation and change, as well as new program review committee websites will be reviewed with the university's Chief Academic Officers and updated as needed.
- 3. The website and associated resources shall be maintained on the Academic Programs section of the Academic and Student Affairs intranet site. The Academic Program intranet site is available to all State System personnel with an active System account (username and password).

B. **New Degree Program Initiation**

- 1. Universities submitting a Letter of Intent or Full Program Proposal must follow the established processes and use the forms provided by Academic and Student Affairs.
- 2. Academic and Student Affairs shall maintain an expedited new degree program review and approval process for limited use when prior approval is given by Academic and Student Affairs.
- 3. For doctoral programs, a specific process and procedures related to institutional and programmatic readiness is maintained on the Academic Programs page of the Academic and Student Affairs intranet site.
- 4. To assist Academic and Student Affairs, a committee comprised of a cross-section of university academic administrators and faculty from a variety of disciplines will provide peer reviewed feedback.

Academic and Student Affairs shall maintain a website to provide the committee and Chief Academic Officers with the processes, procedures, and forms for this peer review.

C. Changes to Existing Programs

1. Universities that have added a new concentration, track, specialization, minor, certificate, letter of completion, or teacher certification must use the associated notification form and ensure completeness for the change to be reflected in the State System's Academic Program Inventory.
2. Notification of changes to a program's delivery method (i.e., offering an existing program online) must be submitted on the Notification of Change of Delivery form for the change to be reflected in the State System's Academic Program Inventory.
3. Universities seeking approval to reorganize an existing degree program (active or in moratorium) must use the associated reorganization form and receive approval prior to the implementation of the changes.
4. Universities reorganizing an existing non-degree program (minor, certificate, concentration, or teacher certificate) must notify Academic and Student Affairs using the appropriate form.
5. Universities requesting to reactivate a degree program currently in moratorium must use the associated reactivation form and receive approval prior to advertising or marketing the program. The reactivation form should not be used for programs that will be reorganized and reactivated. The reorganization form should be used for these actions. Programs that have been discontinued cannot be reactivated.
6. Notifying Academic and Student Affairs of a program to be placed in moratorium or discontinued should be done via email or in writing and include the program name, award, and CIP code.

IV. Attachments

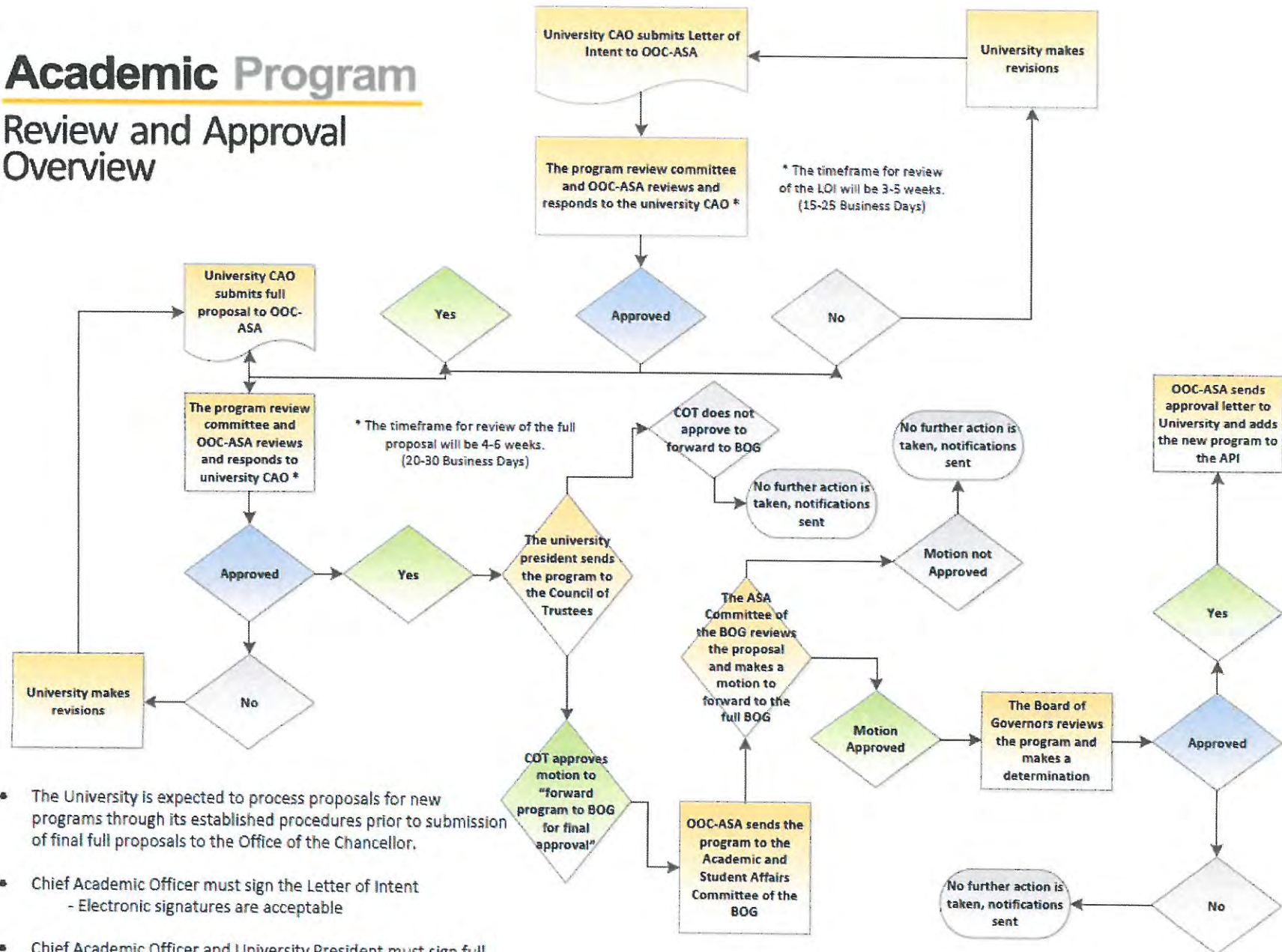
- A. New degree program review and approval process flowchart.
- B. Expedited new degree program review and approval process flowchart

V. Implementation: Immediately

Appendix A – New Academic Degree Program Flowchart

Academic Program

Review and Approval Overview

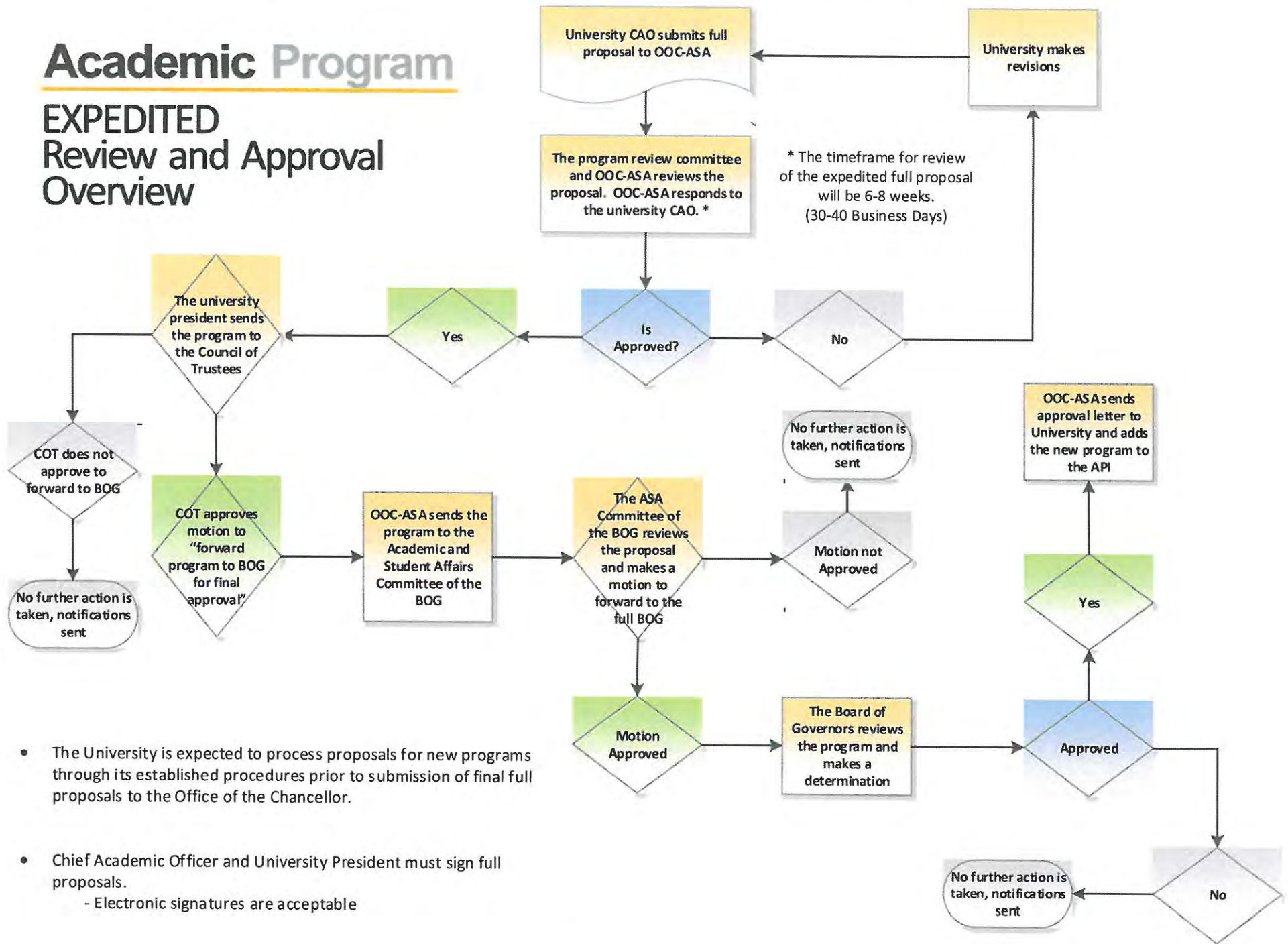


- The University is expected to process proposals for new programs through its established procedures prior to submission of final full proposals to the Office of the Chancellor.
- Chief Academic Officer must sign the Letter of Intent
- Electronic signatures are acceptable
- Chief Academic Officer and University President must sign full proposals.
- Electronic signatures are acceptable

Appendix B – New Academic Degree Program Flowchart

Academic Program

EXPEDITED Review and Approval Overview



- The University is expected to process proposals for new programs through its established procedures prior to submission of final full proposals to the Office of the Chancellor.
- Chief Academic Officer and University President must sign full proposals.
 - Electronic signatures are acceptable