

Tips on Submitting Program Proposals that Sail Through the Review Process

[Program Proposal Form](#)

Resources and Deadlines. The [DUEAP Lab](#) site collects resources about courses, programs, articulation, the bulletin, and assessment. Dates and deadlines and links to the sites to propose or revise courses and programs can be found in the QuickLinks panel. The University Curriculum Coordinator, Claude Bartholomew (claudio@sfsu.edu), is available to assist with the curricular proposal process, from providing guidance on completing templates to assistance in completing the program forms in CourseLeaf.

Why does it take so long to get a proposal reviewed? The curricular review process, from department submission to senate approval, takes 10 – 12 weeks, on average (see attached figure) for proposals submitted during the academic year. The length of time reflects: review by multiple committees that meet every other week, the volume of proposals submitted, and the number of proposals that need to be revised before they can start the campus review process. After senate approval, full campus approval is attained once the provost and president approve the proposals, which can take another 2 – 6 weeks. Depending on the type of proposal, additional review by WSCUC and the Chancellor's office may be required. That review can take anywhere from weeks to months.

Why are the deadlines so early? New degree programs and revisions to existing programs impact students who will be admitted in the next academic year. Those students are making their decisions in April. For that reason, the next year's bulletin is available in April, so that prospective students can check out the degree they are interested in as part of their decision to come to SF State. We want revisions to be ready to be published in the bulletin by April, but it is only after the proposal has been fully approved on campus (for all proposals) and by WSCUC and the Chancellor's Office (if required) that it can be published in the bulletin. We also want to have the new or revised programs programmed in the DPR in time for new student orientations in June. This work can't begin until programs are fully approved at all required levels.

We can't do much to speed up the campus review process, nor can we do anything to speed up the review by WSCUC and the Chancellor's Office. The tips below are designed to minimize the need for revisions to proposals so that they are ready to start the campus review process as quickly as possible.

Technical Review: Is the proposal complete?

Within 2 weeks of a proposal being submitted by a department or school, Academic Planning will do a technical review to make sure the proposal is complete. Feedback will be sent to request any missing information with a 1-week deadline for revisions to keep the review process on track. Once complete, the proposal is moved forward for college review and approval.

How to pass the technical review. Make sure all questions are answered and all consultations, templates and roadmaps are attached.

- **Questions in the Courseleaf proposal form have to be answered in a meaningful way.** Answers do not have to be long, but the questions do need to be answered within the context

of the proposed curriculum or curricular change. If information is in an attached template, it's ok to direct to the attachment.

- **Provide PLOs.** By now, most programs have PLOs in the courseleaf program form that you will see when you start working in the form. All new programs require PLOs. Enter one PLO per line.
- **Provide an assessment plan.** The assessment plan does not need to be elaborate, but it must at minimum indicate the course where each PLO will be assessed (preferably a course required for all students taken near graduation), the type of assignment that might be used (presentation, research paper, reflection, project, portfolio) and the frequency of assessment (every other year, or every three years, for example). If revisions involve the courses in the assessment plan, revise the assessment plan accordingly.
- **Attach consultations.** If the program is adding or removing courses taught in other departments or schools, then consultation with other department or school is required. This consultation can be informal, such as an email exchange asking if a course can be added to the program or notification that a course will be removed from a program. It is helpful to define the role of the course in the program (elective, required) and the expected number of students in the program, to allow the other program to understand the impact on their own course offerings and/or faculty workload. If the program is new and needs additional library resources, consultation with the library is required to define the resources and how those might be provided.
- **Attach required templates.** Request for new programs or concentrations, including minors and certificates, as well as name changes and distance education authorizations require more information than is captured in the CourseLeaf form. Proposal templates must be completed and attached to the form in CourseLeaf. Please contact Claude Bartholomew (claudio@sfsu.edu) for templates.
- **Provide roadmaps for degree.** A roadmap for the degree that includes courses in the major as well as general education and other university requirements must be provided. Roadmaps for existing programs can be found in the current bulletin and adapted for the revisions. If you need assistance putting together a roadmap for a new program, contact Claude Bartholomew (claudio@sfsu.edu). Roadmaps for minors and certificates do not need to include all university requirements, but should show the expected sequence of courses.

Academic Planning Review: Does the proposal make sense?

After Technical Review, the proposal goes to the college for college review, and then to Academic Planning for review for clarity and to make sure the curriculum aligns with campus, CSU and WSCUC policies. Revisions will be requested within 2 weeks after the college submits the proposal. Programs will be asked to submit revisions in 2 weeks to keep the review process on track.

How to pass the Academic Planning review. Here are some common reasons why proposals are returned for revisions after the review by Academic Planning:

- **Inconsistencies with program requirements.** Make sure the units required in a given curricular area and the number of courses or description of requirements are aligned. For example:

- The units of electives are changed from 12 to 9, but the description says take four courses. Should it be 12 units, or take three courses?
 - The header for a section says 9 units, but there are 12 units of courses under the header. Should the header say 12 units or should one course be removed?
 - The units for the major and the units for each curricular area described don't add up.
- **Descriptions about program requirements are outdated.** Review all descriptions in the program requirements area in the CourseLeaf form and make sure they are current and consistent with the proposed curriculum and/or with current practice in the department.
 - **Inconsistencies with program requirements in CourseLeaf form and attached templates.** Make sure that the requirements described in any proposal template and in the program requirement area of the CourseLeaf form match.
 - **The attached templates are not complete.** The prompts in the templates describe what is needed to answer the question. Be sure that answers address all requested information. Reach out to Claude with any questions about how to answer the questions.
 - **Additional information requested as part of the template is not provided.** Be sure to include budgets, course syllabi, and/or letters of support as identified in the templates.
 - **Problems with course prerequisites.** The prerequisites on courses and the proposed curricula do not align. Common mismatches include:
 - A course is removed from the program that is a prerequisite for other courses that remain in the program. *Solution: change the prerequisite on the courses that remain.*
 - A course from another department is added to a program but that course is restricted to that other department's majors. *Solution: as part of the consultation to add the course, ask about adding a prerequisite to the course so that it will be available to students in the program.*
 - A course is added to the program that has a prerequisite that is not in the program. *Solution: add the prerequisite course to the program or change the prerequisite on the course.*

Try to evaluate a student's path through the program and eliminate prerequisite issues that will prevent access to courses. Changes to courses can be made in parallel ([Course Proposal Form](#)) while the program is going through review, but will have to be completed before the program can be implemented.

- **Roadmaps do not reflect proposed curricula.** Review the roadmaps against the proposed curricula to make sure they are consistent with the courses, with the prerequisites on those courses, and with the frequency of offerings. For example, don't place a course in the fall semester if it's only offered in the spring semester. Don't put a course and its prerequisite in the same semester. For areas where students might have a choice of courses, the roadmap can have a generic entry, like "major elective".

The roadmap should be a single ideal example of how to complete the program. It does not have to include all possible routes. The ideal roadmap is where the planner will start, but that will be modified by students and their advisors for a more dynamic and student-specific roadmap as the student moves through the program.

Campus Review of New and Revised Programs

Go to the [CourseLeaf Programs site](#) to revise existing programs or create the record for new programs. This is the official record of the curriculum and is what is captured in the bulletin, DPR and degree planner.

