

# **Program Form**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

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### **1. When does a department need to complete and/or revise a CIM program form?**

Generally, a department will need to create or revise a CIM program form whenever the department is proposing a new program (e.g., a new major, minor, certificate, or graduate program) or making changes to the requirements of an existing program (e.g., credits required, courses required).

A department does not need to complete the CIM program form if the department is updating elements of a current course requirement in a manner that will not have an effect on the program requirements themselves (e.g., revising course titles and descriptions or student learning outcomes).

Similarly, a department does not need to complete the CIM program form if the department is simply proposing a new elective course. Instead, there is a place on the CIM course form for the department to specify the elective category in which the course should be included.

### **2. What should I do if I am adding or changing courses within a CIM program form?**

A department adding a required course to a program should complete the CIM program form. The change in the CIM program form should reflect the placement of this new course and the department should consider what impact, if any, this addition will have on other requirements in the program (e.g., increasing the credits of the program versus reducing or removing other requirements to accommodate this new course).

A department changing a course that is part of a program should only complete the CIM program form if the course changes involve alterations that will have an effect on the completion of program requirements (e.g., a change in the number of course credits or revised prerequisites that may alter the sequencing of courses in the program). For other course changes, like revised titles and descriptions or course offering patterns, the department does not need to complete the CIM program form.

### **3. Should course changes and program changes be approved together, or does the department need to get the CIM program form approved first?**

Whenever possible, departments are encouraged to bring forward course changes and their associated program changes at the same time. This can help the curriculum committees review and evaluate the proposed changes in their entirety. If a department is proposing a large number of course and program changes, or if these changes will need to be staggered for other reasons, it is helpful if the department can provide a document that outlines the scope of changes and the timeframe for completing the changes.

### **4. When will my change be applied to the catalog? Or, how I learned to stop worrying and just picked an “effective term” for my changes.**

The effective term determines when a change will be visible in the schedule of classes and the next catalog. Which term to use depends upon the type of change and the scheduling and catalog deadlines. The next terms' schedules come out twice a year. The current catalog is viewable at <http://catalog.uwlax.edu/> and is published once a year.

For new courses, the effective term indicates when the department expects the course to be approved by the governance process. The department may offer the course for the first time any time after that. (link to course form FAQ question #1)

For both new and edited programs, a department wishing to make sure their CIM program form changes appear in the next year's catalog should choose the next “Summer” effective term. If the next “Fall” effective term is chosen, the changes may not show up when the catalog (i.e., <http://catalog.uwlax.edu/>) is updated. In the middle of the year, the "Spring" term may be chosen if the department wants their changes effective to current students immediately, but the change will still not appear in the catalog until the next year's version is published.

No matter what term is chosen, the change will appear in the Advisement Report in WINGS beginning with the chosen term, once the approved change has been fully processed by the Records Office. Summer or Spring terms work best for these proposals.

When in doubt, please contact Records & Registration to ask for their advice on picking the best effective date for the changes.

## **5. What are the important considerations when deciding if a change applies to the “next catalog” versus “all catalogs” (and how can I get help knowing that)?**

Perhaps the single most important consideration for a department should be how this change will impact the students currently enrolled in the program.

Generally, a department may wish to apply changes to the “next catalog” if the changes represent new or revised program requirements that could disadvantage students already in the program. For example, adding a new introductory–or intermediate–level required course may disadvantage a student who has nearly completed the program requirements.

Conversely, a department may wish to apply changes to “all catalogs” if the changes represent new or revised program requirements that could advantage students already in the program. For example, replacing a single, required course with a requirement to complete one course from a list of courses may provide a student already in the program with additional flexibility.

There may be circumstances where a department wants to specify limited retroactive application (e.g., some but not all students are impacted by a program change) and in such instances, the department should consider “other” and contact Records & Registration to discuss the scope of the changes. The department should decide how it will advise current students to navigate these changes. A department should be prepared to describe this advising process to the curriculum committees.

## **6. When is it important to consult with another department?**

A department must consult with other departments on any changes that may have a direct impact on the programs and/or courses offered by these other departments. This can take many forms, for example:

- Department A would like to create a new program that will only include its own courses; however, there is the potential for it to compete with a program offered by Department B.
- Department A is the curricular home for an interdisciplinary program that includes program requirements and/or course requirements from other departments and would now like to make changes to those requirements.
- Department A has previously included elective courses from Department B within its own programs and would now like to make changes to those elective requirements.
- Department A would like to create a new interdisciplinary program that combines some of its courses with those of other departments.

- Department A would like to create a new course which includes a substantial amount of similarly-focused content that might also be expected to be addressed in a course taught by Department B.

These consultations should be approached in the spirit of cooperation and transparency. Consulting with another department should not be construed as giving that other department de facto approval over the proposed changes to and/or creation of a program.