Towson University New Academic Program Review (NAPR) Guidelines
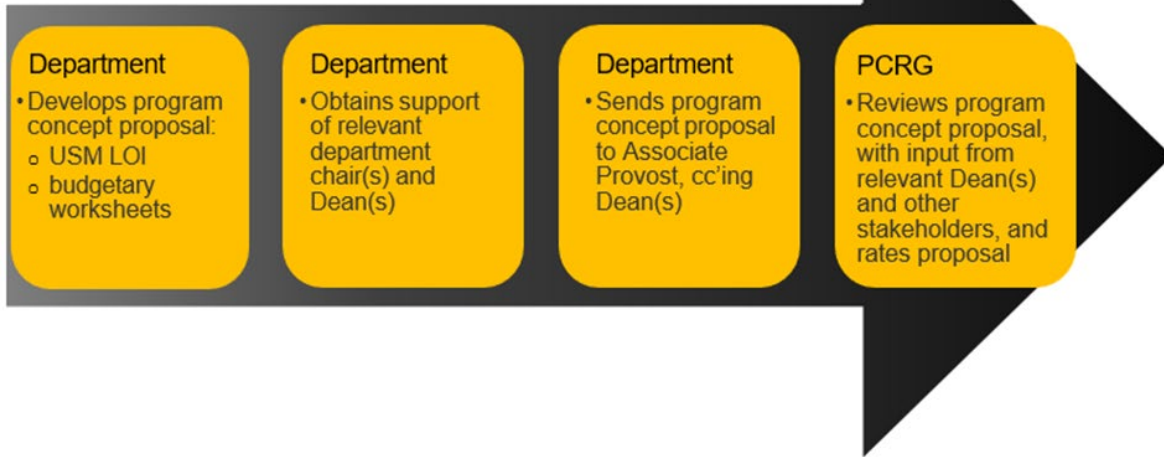
The development of a new academic program should involve the input of numerous stakeholders (both internal and external), including faculty, department chairs, Associate Deans, Deans, Office of the Provost staff, students, alumni, advisory boards, professional organizations, practicing professionals in the field, etc. New academic programs should: (1) meet a market need, (2) be financially viable, and (3) align with TU's mission and strategic plan.

1) **PROGRAM CONCEPT NOTE**: Faculty with an idea for a new academic program should first discuss the concept with their department chair (or equivalent academic unit head) and college Dean. If the department and college leadership is supportive of the program concept, the Dean should submit a brief one-page Program Concept Note (see p.5 for template) to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and the Assistant Provost for Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance, who will review and schedule a meeting with the Dean to discuss the program concept. Following this review, the Office of the Provost and the Dean shall determine whether to move forward with the program idea, and, if supportive of it, will outline the NAPR process/timeline and workload expectations.

2) **PROGRAM CONCEPT PROPOSAL**: Following approval of the program concept, the department/program faculty should complete: (1) the USM LOI, limited to two-pages (plus cover sheet), and (2) internal budgetary worksheets using the templates provided. Once completed, the department chair/unit head submits these documents to the Associate Provost and Assistant Provost, cc'ing the college Dean and the Dean of Graduate Studies (if the program proposal is for a graduate program).

3) **PROGRAM CONCEPT PROPOSAL REVIEW**: The Program Concept Review Group (PCRG),[1] joined by the relevant Dean(s) and any invited guests,[2] meets to review the USM LOI and budgetary worksheets. The PCRG determines whether the program proposal should: (1) proceed, (2) be revised and resubmitted for further consideration, or (3) not move forward. The PCRG communicates its decision to the relevant department chair/unit head, program director and Dean(s). If the PCRG approves the program proposal (in the form of the LOI), the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs submits the LOI to the USM Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for circulation to all USM institutions for review. There is a 21-business-day review period for USM institutions to provide feedback on the proposal, which can include an objection or request for further information.
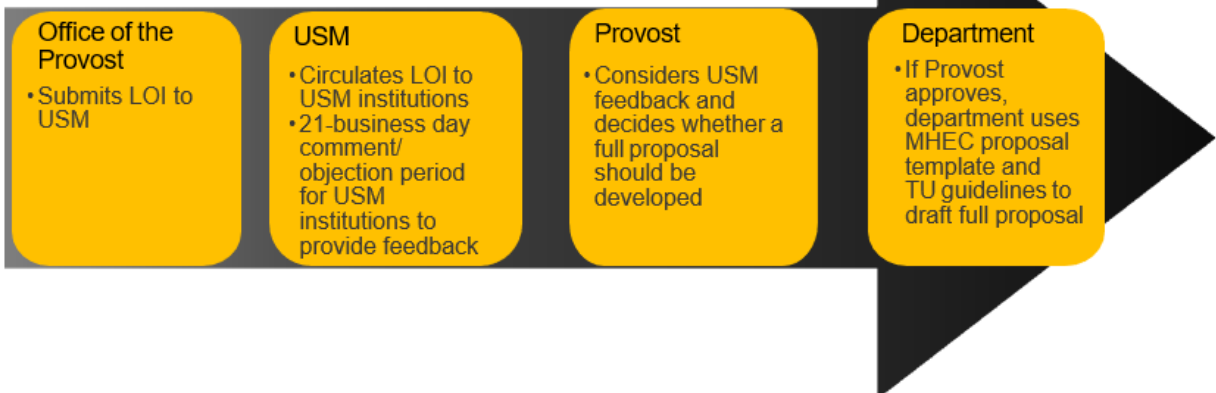
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[1] PCRG members: Provost, Vice Provost, Vice President for Enrollment Management; Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Associate Provost for Administration and Finance, Assistant Provost for Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance.
[2] Program director, department chair/unit head, other key faculty/stakeholders.

Program Concept Proposal

Department
- Develops program concept proposal:
  - USM LOI
  - budgetary worksheets

Department
- Obtains support of relevant department chair(s) and Dean(s)

Department
- Sends program concept proposal to Associate Provost, cc'ing Dean(s)

PCRG
- Reviews program concept proposal, with input from relevant Dean(s) and other stakeholders, and rates proposal

Letter of Intent Circulation to USM

Office of the Provost
- Submits LOI to USM

USM
- Circulates LOI to USM institutions
- 21-business day comment/ objection period for USM institutions to provide feedback

Provost
- Considers USM feedback and decides whether a full proposal should be developed

Department
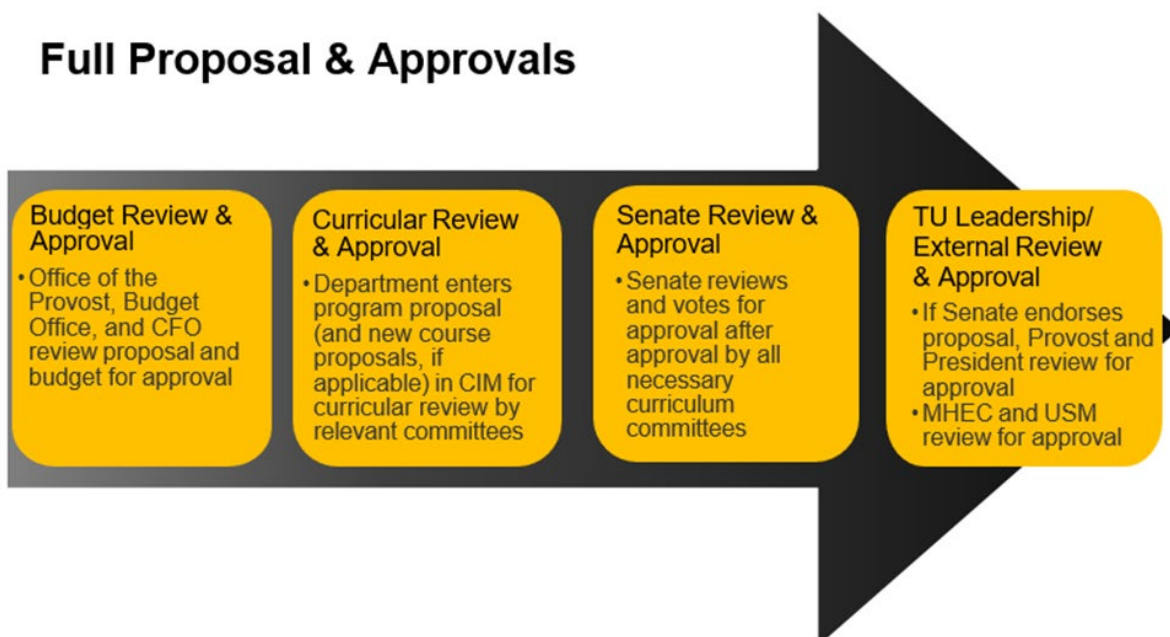- If Provost approves, department uses MHEC proposal template and TU guidelines to draft full proposal

4) **INTERNAL APPROVAL OF FULL PROPOSAL & BUDGET REVIEW:** If there are no USM objections to the LOI, the department/program faculty will draft a full proposal using the MHEC template. Upon completion of the full draft proposal, the Assistant Provost for Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance reviews the proposal to assure compliance with TU, USM, and MHEC guidelines. Once the Assistant Provost approves the draft proposal, it is formally submitted to the Office of the Provost for review. As necessary, the Office of the Provost shall discuss the proposal with relevant members of the President's Cabinet during this stage of the review process.

5) **CURRICULAR REVIEW & APPROVAL:** After review and approval by the Office of the Provost, the Assistant Provost for Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance notifies the department to submit the proposal through TU's curricular review and approval process (college curriculum committee; University Curriculum Committee or Graduate Studies Committee) via the course inventory management system (CIM).

The college Associate Dean is responsible for approving the program's assessment plan. Guidelines for assessment are available from the Office of Assessment. The college-approved program assessment plan should be uploaded in CIM as part of the program proposal documentation prior to the Senate's review.
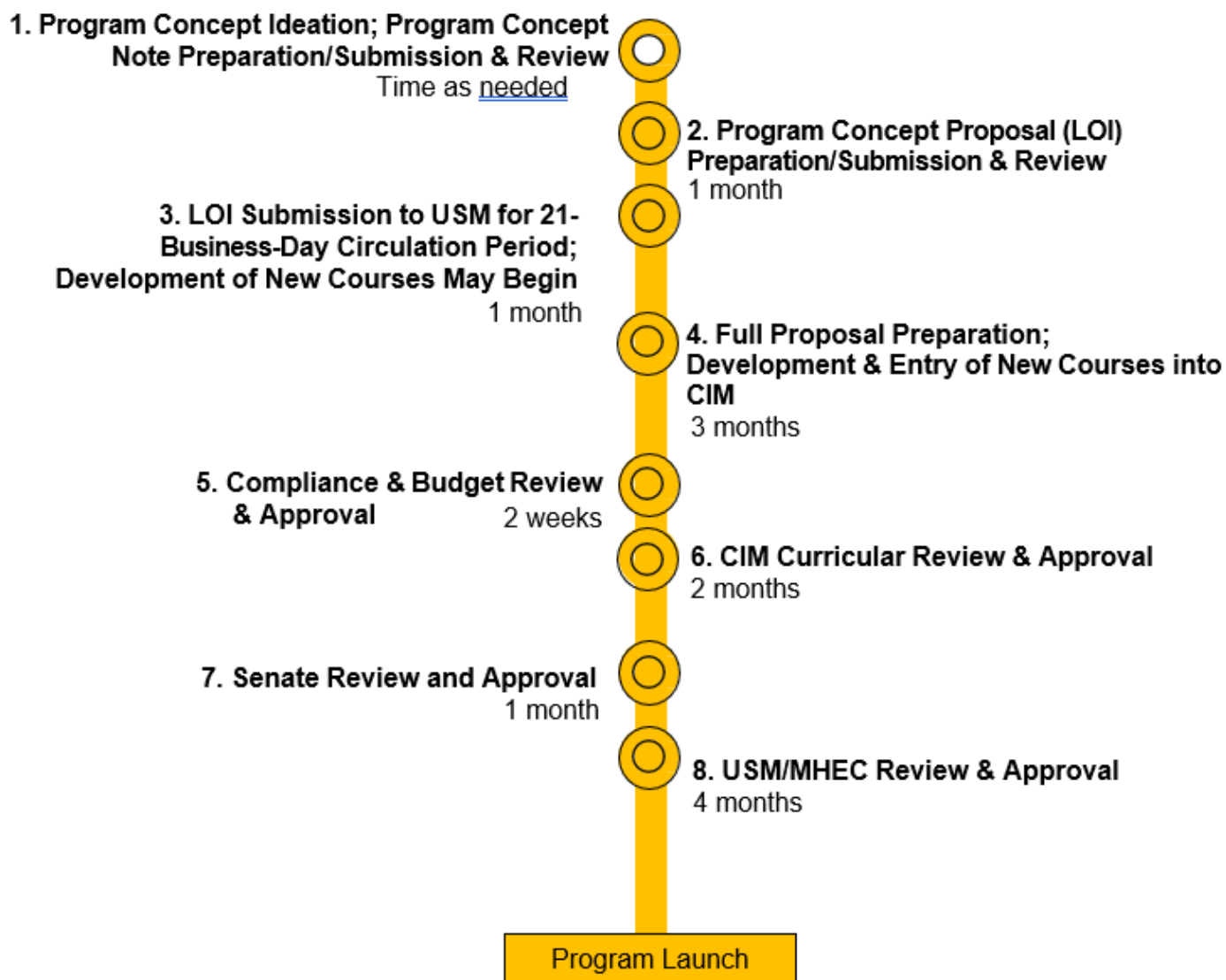
6) **SENATE REVIEW & APPROVAL**: Once the relevant curriculum committees review and approve the proposal via CIM, it proceeds to the Academic Senate for consideration.

7) **OFFICIAL REVIEW & APPROVAL**: If the Senate approves the proposal, the Provost reviews it. If the Provost recommends the proposal, it is sent to the University President for review. If the President approves it, the Assistant Provost for Assessment, Accreditation and Compliance submits the completed proposal to USM and MHEC for review. The Office of the Provost informs the relevant department chair/unit head and college Dean of the proposal's submission, and ultimately of the decisions of USM and MHEC.

Full Proposal & Approvals

Budget Review & Approval
- Office of the Provost, Budget Office, and CFO review proposal and budget for approval

Curricular Review & Approval
- Department enters program proposal (and new course proposals, if applicable) in CIM for curricular review by relevant committees

Senate Review & Approval
- Senate reviews and votes for approval after approval by all necessary curriculum committees

TU Leadership/ External Review & Approval
- If Senate endorses proposal, Provost and President review for approval
- MHEC and USM review for approval

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TIMELINE

Estimated New Academic Program Proposal Development Timeline at TU

1. Program Concept Ideation; Program Concept Note Preparation/Submission & Review
Time as needed

2. Program Concept Proposal (LOI) Preparation/Submission & Review
1 month

3. LOI Submission to USM for 21-Business-Day Circulation Period; Development of New Courses May Begin
1 month

4. Full Proposal Preparation; Development & Entry of New Courses into CIM
3 months

5. Compliance & Budget Review & Approval
2 weeks

6. CIM Curricular Review & Approval
2 months

7. Senate Review and Approval
1 month

8. USM/MHEC Review & Approval
4 months

Program Launch

Program Concept Proposal (LOI) Review through USM/MHEC Review and Approval
Takes Approximately 12 Months Minimum

For a program launch in the fall of any given year, submission for MHEC and USM approval by early in the previous Spring (at the latest) is recommended.[3]

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[3] The latest date within each academic year to submit a new program proposal to USM for consideration is mid-April. Therefore, to meet this USM deadline, proposals must receive TU Senate approval by the first Monday in April at the latest. Note that MHEC accepts new academic programs proposals for review on the 1st and 15th of every month throughout the year.

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PROGRAM CONCEPT NOTE

(*limit to one page*)

1. **Proposed Degree/Certificate Award:**
   (e.g., B.A., B.S., M.A., M.S., Ph.D., PBC, etc.)

2. **Proposed Program Title:**

3. **Proposed Credit/Unit Weighting:**

4. **Proposed Instructional Mode:**
   (Face-to-Face; Hybrid; Fully Online; Both Face-to-Face & Fully Online)

5. **Brief Summary of Proposed Program:**

6. **Need for Proposed Program:**