

## **Determining the Level of Involvement by the Board of Regents**

Two factors determine the level to which the Board of Regents becomes directly and formally involved in the process of approving or denying the development, implementation, suspension, and/or elimination of academic and research programs: (1) the degree to which the proposed program "fits" with an institution's approved mission, and (2) the relationship between (a) the resources needed, (b) the resources available to implement and sustain the program fully, and (c) the projected benefit of the program to the socio-economic welfare of the State and its citizens. Two levels define these factors:

### **Level I Proposals (Approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education or Designee)**

Level I Proposals are those that may be approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education or the Commissioner's designee. The approval of such proposals will be conveyed to the Board of Regents at the next regular meeting of the board. The institution must file the request with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education by means of a memo to the Deputy Commissioner

Level I proposals include campus initiatives typically characterized by (a) minimal costs; (b) clear adherence to approved campus mission; and (c) the absence of significant programmatic impact on other institutions within the Montana University System and community colleges. Examples include:

1. Re-titling existing majors, minors, options and certificates (e.g. from B.S. in Mechanized Agriculture to B.S. in Agricultural Operation Technology);
2. Eliminating existing majors, minors, options and certificates via a Program Termination Checklist;
3. Adding new minors or certificates where there is a major;
4. Departmental mergers and name changes;
5. Program revisions; and
6. Distance delivery of previously authorized degree programs.

Further, with Level II documentation circulated to all campus chief academic officers in advance, the Commissioner or designee may propose additional items for inclusion in the Level I process. For these items to move forward, the Commissioner or designee must reach consensus with the chief academic officers. When consensus is not achieved, the Commissioner or designee will move the item to the Level II review process.

Examples of Level I proposals of this type include:

1. options within an existing major or degree;
2. eliminating organizational units within larger institutions such as departments, divisions and colleges or schools *with the exception of the five Colleges of Technology where changes require Board action*;
3. consolidating existing programs and/or degrees.

Certificate or Associate of Applied Science Degree Programs may be submitted as Level I proposals, with memo and backup documentation, when they are offered in cooperation with and/or at the request of private or public sector partners and the decision point to offer the program is not consistent with the regular Board of Regents program approval process. Level I approval for programs under this provision will be limited to two years. Continuation of a program beyond the two years will require the normal program approval process as Level II Proposals. All other Certificate or Associate Degree programs may be placed on submission at any Board of Regents meeting. They will be placed on action agendas at subsequent meetings. All campuses agree to insure that all other campuses receive program information well in advance of submission.

## **Level II Proposals (Approved by the Board of Regents)**

Level II proposals require approval by the Board of Regents. These proposals entail more substantive additions to, alterations in, or termination of programs, structures, or administrative or academic entities typically characterized by the (a) addition, reassignment, or elimination of personnel, facilities, or courses of instruction; (b) rearrangement of budgets, cost centers, funding sources; and (c) changes which by implication could impact other campuses within the Montana University System and community colleges. Board policy 303.1 indicates the curricular proposals in this category:

1. Change names of degrees (e.g. from B.A. to B.F.A.)
2. Implement a new minor or certificate where there is no major;
3. Establish new degrees and add majors to existing degrees;
4. Expand/extend approved mission; and
5. Any other changes in governance and organization as described in Board of Regents' Policy 218, such as formation, elimination or consolidation of a college, division, school, department, institute, bureau, center, station, laboratory, or similar unit.