

Overview

Proposals for new graduate programs begin with a consultation with the Graduate School to discuss the concept, receive information about the steps involved and connect to planning resources. As the concept develops, a Program Summary is prepared and reviewed by the College. Once approved, the Summary is developed into a detailed Program Proposal for University curricular, programmatic and funding review.



Step 1. Consultation

Schedule a consultation with the Graduate School to discuss the planning process, curricular and administrative timelines, and options for designing and resourcing new programs. Outreach and Continuing Education (OCE), University Advancement and other groups are also often consulted during this formative stage.

Step 2. Program Summary

A summary of the program is prepared for approval by the College(s) involved. Review at this stage considers the academic foundations of the program and is intended to identify early on any barriers or limitations that would need to be addressed before further work is warranted. The Program Summary includes—

- **Rationale for the program**, including how it supports Department, College and University missions and the students the program is intended to serve.
- **Educational and scholarly goals** and a preliminary description of the proposed curriculum.
- **Information on similar programs** in the region and how the program would be distinctive.
- **A preliminary resource estimate** (faculty, staff, operating and space).

Step 3. Program Proposal

Following College approval, the Summary is developed into a detailed Program Proposal whose purpose is to advance the concept to the point where it is ready to be fully assessed. Proposals should include an independent market research projection, multi-year enrollment model and budget. A Graduate School Planning Grant may be applied for to help cover these development costs. The Program Proposal includes—

- **Market Analysis.** Market analysis is the first step in developing the Program Proposal as it helps inform other planning. Upon the conclusion of the market analysis, the proposers meet with the College Dean(s), Dean of the Graduate School, Vice Provost of OCE, University Marketing, and Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management to review the results. Guidance on moving forward with the budget and marketing plans is provided.
- **Marketing and Recruitment Plans.** Describe the intended audience and how students will be reached.
- **Budget and Operating Plan.** Develop program budget, start-up and operating plans, identify new faculty and staff positions, define roles and responsibilities, timelines and milestones.
- **Diversity and Inclusion Plan.** Describe how the program will further Western's diversity and inclusion goals and support student success.
- **Curriculum.** Prepare the curriculum for review.

Step 4. Start-Up Funding

Based on the Program Proposal, the campus will make a decision on whether to commit or pursue the resources needed to establish the new program. Potential funding sources: State budget request, University, College, Department, Graduate School, OCE, Philanthropy, Corporate Partnership.

Step 5. Curricular Approval

Obtain approval to offer the new program from College, University and Graduate School curricular committees.

