Undergraduate/ Graduate Program Approval Guidelines

The Office of the University Registrar has prepared this reference guide to assist faculty in preparing proposal packages for new, revised, and discontinued programs. Our goal is to move proposals as quickly as possible through the approval process while adhering to applicable University policies and standards. The guidelines provided apply to both undergraduate and graduate programs unless otherwise stated.

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Overview of Approval Process for New/Revised Program Proposals

Determining < 20% Administrative Review vs. > 20% Governance Review

Items permitted for submission under < 20% Administrative Review:

1. When the change is less than 20% -and-
2. Does not involve one of the listed items below that always requires governance.

For Undergraduate Checksheets: To calculate the percentage of the amount of change:

- Compare the proposed checksheet to the latest approved checksheet
- Notate all changes
- Count the total number of requirements* that changed on the degree requirements checksheet
- Count the total number of requirements* on the degree requirements checksheet
- \[
\frac{\text{# of total changes}}{\text{# of total requirements}} \times 100
\]

*Requirements are defined as:

- Minimum hours required for the degree
- Minimum overall GPA required for the degree
- Minimum in-major GPA required for the degree
- Courses used to calculate in-major GPA
- Language Study requirement needed for the degree
- CLE areas or Pathways General Education concepts 1-7 are considered 7 requirements
- Major requirements needed for the degree; this number will vary between majors

Items Always Requiring > 20% Governance Approval

- New degrees#/majors/concentrations/options/minors/graduate certificates#
- Discontinuation of degrees#/majors/concentrations/options/minors/graduate certificates#
- Undergraduate checksheets or graduate programs with changes > 20%
- Changes to overall/in-major/minor GPA requirements (or adding such GPA requirements)
- Changes to the minimum hours required for the degree#
- Changes to required minimum grades for courses
- Restricted major/minor
- Creation or changes to satisfactory progress statements that go beyond those in PPM 91
- Significant changes to SCHEV common degree core*
- Checksheets that have not been reviewed within the previous 5 years*
- Degree Name Change*
- Departmental Name Change*
- Other concerns*

*Consultation required as determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Complete SCHEV documentation in parallel with the University Governance process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).
**Program Approval Process**

**Administrative Review (< 20% Revision/Non-Governance)**

- After the program proposal is approved by the respective College Curriculum Committee (CCC), the proposal package is uploaded into JIRA as a < 20% administrative revision. Each proposal package should be a separate JIRA ticket (“CM”).

- The proposal package is screened by the Analysis & Services Unit in the Office of the University Registrar to ensure the revision qualifies as < 20% revision and is then approved, encoded, tested, and posted.
  - If deemed > 20% or includes one of the required Governance items, notification is returned to college for review through governance.

- For < 20% review related questions or to check the status of a proposal moving through the administrative review process, please contact Office of the University Registrar Analysis & Services Unit at 231-5091.

**Requires Governance Review (New, > 20% Revision, Discontinuation)**

- After the program proposal (new, > 20% revised, or discontinued) is approved by the respective CCC, the proposal package is uploaded into JIRA by the college Curriculum Coordinator and is available for 15-Day Review. 15-Day Review is the review period in which the University community can access CCC approved proposals. It begins on the first day of the second week of classes in Fall and Spring terms and only occurs when classes are in session (not during exams, holidays, etc.).

- During 15-Day Review, suggestions and comments on the proposal may be directed to the initiating college by the University faculty, staff and/or Office of the University Registrar Academic Governance staff to address comments, recommendations, and/or compliance with University standards and policies.

- Responses to concerns and/or objections to the proposal during the 15-Day Review period should be uploaded into JIRA in the form of a comment on the CM, an email, letter, or memo and directed to the initiating college and the Office of the University Registrar Academic Governance staff. Any disputes must be resolved by the involved academic units before the proposal may proceed.

- It is assumed that "no response" from the University community during the 15-Day Review period represents consent.

- After completion of the 15-Day Review recommendations, the proposal is forwarded to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) for undergraduate items or the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) for graduate items.

- Following approval by UCC or GCC, final approval is granted by either the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies (CUSP) or the Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies (CGPSP) via approval of the committee report for certain actions. Other actions require a Resolution through CUSP/CGPSP to University Council and to the President. Additionally, some actions also require a parallel path of approval and/or notification to SCHEV.

- For governance related questions or to check the status of a proposal moving through the governance process, please contact Office of the University Registrar Academic Governance Staff at acadgov@vt.edu.
Makeup of a Complete Program Proposal Package

Each program proposal package must include the following items:

1. Completed, signed, and dated “Coversheet – Proposal for New, Revised, and/or Discontinued Program” (Form).
2. Documentation (depending on proposal type as outlined below).
   - **New** program
     - *Need for program:* Educational value, program requirements/credit hours required, market analysis, other relevant information.
     - *Whom program will serve:* Number of students anticipated to enroll, demographics of students, benefit to students, benefit to Virginia Tech, career opportunities in the field, other relevant information.
     - *Resource needs:* Funding, faculty, facilities, other department resources, library resources, other relevant information.
     - *Administration:* Administrative department/college for program, first term and year to enroll, first term and year to graduate, any applicable transition plan, applicable grants, other relevant information.

   - **Revised** program
     - Documentation summarizing revisions/changes.
     - How these changes will be communicated to students.
     - Include previously approved/stamped undergraduate checksheet or graduate program requirements.

   - **Discontinued** program
     - Documentation to justify discontinuation of program.
     - Include previously approved/stamped undergraduate checksheet or graduate program requirements.
     - Transition/teach-out plan including below content, as applicable.
       - Number of students currently enrolled in the program.
       - Lead time with the effective term/year in support of program completion (Per PPM 148, students currently enrolled in a program should be given a minimum of 2 years to complete the program).
       - How discontinuation of program will be communicated to students, faculty, and staff.
       - Consideration given to “stop-outs” – both voluntary and non-voluntary.
       - Transitioning returning students to different program upon return.
       - Any other considerations determined by college/departments, as applicable.

*Note:* For a new degree, complete SCHEV documentation in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

*Notes:* For a revised degree - change in total program credit hours or common degree core - complete SCHEV documentation in parallel with the University Governance process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

A program revision determined to be < 20% should be uploaded into JIRA to the Office of the University Registrar for Administrative review/approval.
Note: For the discontinuation of a degree – complete SCHEV documentation in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

3. Letter(s) of support.
   - Include letter of support from Department Head or Designee presenting whether the offering or continued offering of the program will require or generate the need for additional departmental and/or University resources (e.g., faculty, library, space, and/or technical support).
   - Include letter/e-mail of support to use another department’s course to satisfy a program requirement.
     - If a revised program, letter of support for any additional non-departmental course added.

4. Checksheet (Undergraduate proposals only) or Graduate Program Requirements as applicable (Graduate proposals only).

Note: Each version of the program proposal package uploaded into JIRA should be viewed as a stand-alone document and include each of the required proposal package items.
Guidelines for Preparing Undergraduate and Graduate Program Proposals

Preparing “Coversheet – Proposal for New, Revised, and/or Discontinued Program”

General Information
Proposal Date
College/Department
Degree/Major/Major Concentration (Option)/Minor* or Graduate Certificate Name

Proposal Action
  • New – Undergraduate or Graduate Program.
  • Revised – Undergraduate or Graduate Program (indicate whether revision is > 20% or < 20%).
  • Discontinued – Undergraduate or Graduate Program.

Complete the following, as applicable

A: Attach letter of support from Department Head or Designee presenting whether the offering or continued offering of the program will require or generate the need for additional departmental and/or University resources (e.g., faculty, library, space, and/or technical support).

B: Attach letters/emails of support from Departments and/or Colleges for any non-department courses listed to satisfy a new or revised program requirement.

Effective Graduation Calendar Year

Check applicable box acknowledging that required documentation was included in proposal package:

New – Documentation to establish new program.
  Note: For a new Degree – complete SCHEV documentation in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

Revised – Summary of revision changes and previously approved/stamped Undergraduate checksheet or Graduate program requirements.
  Notes:
  ▪ For a program revision determined to be 20% or less revision – uploaded into JIRA to the Office of the University Registrar for Administrative review/approval (i.e., does not require 15-Day Review, UCC, or CUSP review/approval).
  ▪ For revised Degree (change in total program credit hours or common degree core) – complete SCHEV documentation in parallel with the University Governance process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

Discontinued – Documentation to justify program discontinuation, teach-out plan, and previously approved program requirements.
**Note:** For discontinued degree – complete SCHEV documentation in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

**Approval Signatures**
- All signatures required for initial submission.
- If Coversheet needs to be revised during governance review process, add a revised Coversheet to proposal package, placing on top of original Coversheet, and stating “See attached Coversheet for signatures” in “Approval Signature” section of the revised Coversheet.
Undergraduate Program Information

Checksheet Definition

Official graduation "checksheets" are the primary means of communicating graduation requirements to students, advisors, faculty, and administrators for degrees, majors, major concentrations/options, and minors. These checksheets, which are encoded into the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS), are used by students and advisors to plan undergraduate programs of study and to determine progress toward the degree or program requirements. Checksheets are also used by the Office of the University Registrar to determine each student's successful completion of degree or program requirements. Checksheets are posted online at the Office of the University Registrar website.

Note: The diploma presents degree and major, whereas, the transcript presents degree, major, major concentration/option.

Checksheet Deadlines

- Presidential Policy Memorandum 148, Graduation Requirements Policy, states that proposed graduation checksheets must be approved through the curricula governance structure two years prior to their effective graduation date.
- All checksheets must be submitted to the Office of the University Registrar (< 20% administrative revision) or posted for 15-Day Review (new or > 20% revision through governance) no later than the end of the fourth week of the Spring semester two years prior to the beginning of the calendar year in which they will apply to graduating students.
- Proposed checksheets must be approved in their final form no later than Spring Commencement two years prior to the beginning of the calendar year in which they will apply to graduating students.
- Unless otherwise directed by college, departments having no changes to degree programs may choose not to submit updated checksheets. The previously approved checksheet on file in the Office of the University Registrar will continue to be used.

Required Elements of a Checksheet

Header
The checksheet header identifies the home of the checksheet, the specific degree program to which it applies, and the calendar year. This header should include the college name, school/department, the degree or program specific information, and calendar year of the requirements listed. In cases where a degree program has several major concentrations/options, there must be separate checksheets for each major concentration.

The calendar year on graduation checksheets indicates the annual time to which the checksheet applies. This is always presented as a single year, as opposed to a date range, and may not be appended by phrases such as "and thereafter" or "and beyond." Once approved, checksheets will remain in effect until they are superseded by an approved (administrative < 20% or governance > 20%) revision.

Two examples below:

College of Architecture and Urban Studies
School of Architecture + Design
Bachelor of Architecture
For students graduating in calendar year 20xx
University Graduation Requirements
Checksheets must indicate all requirements necessary for students to fulfill their degree program. The various requirements that are included on checksheets are shown in the following sections.

Language Study Requirements
In order to graduate, students must meet a language study requirement. The minimum requirement may be met in high school by completing two units of a single foreign or classical language or American Sign Language. Students who do not satisfy the requirement in high school may do so by taking six credits of college-level foreign or classical language or American Sign Language. Checksheets must reference this requirement and indicate that the six credits used to meet this requirement may not be used to satisfy the minimum number of credits required by the degree program. Those departments having an additional language study requirement must clearly define their additional requirement(s) on the checksheet.

Curriculum for Liberal Education (Pathways General Education beginning calendar year 2022) Requirements
Students must complete the Curriculum for Liberal Education (CLE) or Pathways General Education (effective Fall 2018 for incoming freshmen and including Summer II Academy students) requirements from all seven areas/concepts that are in effect when they enter the University. Although some departments allow students to freely select courses from the CLE Guide or Pathways General Education, others use specific courses from the various areas of the CLE or Pathways General Education to complement their major requirements. Graduation checksheets must indicate the acceptable courses that students must complete in order to satisfy CLE requirements or Pathways General Education. Only those courses that have been approved for inclusion in the CLE or Pathways General Education may be included on departmental checksheets. Unless otherwise indicated, all courses taken to satisfy CLE or Pathways General Education must be taken on an A-F basis.

Common Degree Core
Common degree core requirement for all majors under a BA/BS:

\[ \text{[Total degree credit hours} - \text{CLE}] \times 25\% = \text{Common Degree Core} \]
\( (\text{Example } [120 - 36] \times 25\% = 21 \text{ minimum common degree core}) \)

Regarding the transition from CLE to Pathways General Education on checksheets, the common degree core for a 120 credit hour program will change to 19 credit hour minimum.

\( (\text{Example } [120 - 45] \times 25\% = 18.75\ldots \text{rounded to 19 minimum common degree core}) \)

- Courses used to satisfy general education requirements may not be double counted to also satisfy common degree core requirements, however, courses used to satisfy general education requirements may be double counted to satisfy other program area credit hour requirements (i.e., major, major concentration/option, track/emphasis, restricted elective, and/or elective requirements).
- If a degree has multiple majors, each major checksheet should include the common degree core requirements and a list of courses that define the major. Major requirements may have courses in common, but must include courses that define and distinguish each major from other majors under that degree.
• If a major has multiple major concentrations/options, each checksheet should include the common degree core, major requirements, and a minimum of 15 credit hours that defines major concentration/option. Major concentrations/options may have courses in common, but must include courses that define and distinguish each major concentration/option from other major concentrations/options under that major.

• An outline of degree/major credit hour distribution sections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checksheet Section</th>
<th>Min. Section Credit Hours (Where Applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLE/Pathways</td>
<td>36/45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Degree Core</td>
<td>21/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Concentration/Option (if applicable)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracks/Emphasis (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Electives (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Electives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**College Requirements**

In addition to University and major requirements, some colleges may require all majors to complete specific courses, often referred to as the "college core." Any special requirements specific to a college must be included on the checksheet. Students are held responsible for those college requirements that are in effect when the student graduates.

**Major Requirements**

In addition to University and college requirements, degree candidates must also complete those departmental requirements that define their major program of study.

Major requirements typically include in-major GPA and course requirements. Additionally, some departments require specific grades in certain courses. In cases where courses require specific grades, it is crucial to separate major requirements from satisfactory progress requirements (see Satisfactory Progress below).

All courses on the proposed checksheet must be approved by the UCC and the CUSP before the checksheet may be submitted for approval. When listing major courses, include the department abbreviation, course number, course title, credit hours, and cross-listing, if applicable. Course ranges should be indicated by providing the department abbreviation and the beginning and ending numbers of the range. The checksheet must include the subtitle of any "umbrella courses" such as special study courses, independent study courses, topics courses, etc. Unless otherwise indicated, all major courses must be taken on an A-F basis. Departments must indicate any major courses that are offered on a Pass/Fail only basis.

The major courses for which the degree candidates are accountable for are those in effect at the time of graduation. However, as previously discussed, proposed checksheets must be approved two years in advance of their intended use. The courses which are used in the in-major GPA calculation must be clearly indicated on the checksheet. The minimum GPA needed to graduate must also be stated. This GPA may not be less
than 2.0, however some departments may require an in-major GPA in excess of 2.0. Any changes to in-major GPA requirements must be approved by the UCC and the CUSP.

**Technical, Restricted, or Professional Electives**
Some departments require their students to select a portion of their electives from specific lists. Listings of courses, such as technical electives, professional electives, and restricted electives are an integral part of the checksheet and must be submitted as part of the program proposal package. Any changes to these lists are considered when determining if the proposed checksheet can be approved under < 20% administrative revision.

**Free Electives**
Degree requirements may include a range of hours not controlled by specified University, college, and/or major requirements, referred to as "free electives." The number of free elective hours needed to satisfy the minimum credit hours requirement must be stated on the checksheet. This may be stated as a range of credit hours.

**Total Credit Hours Required**
Indicate the total number of hours required for the degree program. This number should reconcile with the number of credit hours required by University, college, and major requirements.

**Overall GPA**
Indicate the minimum overall Grade Point Average (GPA) required for the degree. Per *University Policy 6815, Undergraduate Graduation Policy*, this must be at least 2.0.

**Satisfactory Progress**
Majors that wish to enforce *Presidential Policy Memorandum 91, Eligibility for Continued Enrollment*, need to include the satisfactory progress rules on their checksheets. Any college or department may adopt satisfactory progress rules that are in addition to those published in PPM 91 with the approval of the CUSP.

The checksheet must clearly distinguish satisfactory progress rules from degree requirements. For example, if a department requires a grade of B- in a major course, this must be indicated on the checksheet as a graduation requirement. This should not be listed as part of the satisfactory progress statement. This does not preclude this same course from being part of the satisfactory rules for that department.

Checksheets must distinguish graduation requirements from satisfactory progress statements and clearly indicate how the rules apply in either or both cases. It is the responsibility of colleges and/or departments to monitor their own satisfactory progress rules. Graduation requirements are encoded into the DARS. Satisfactory Progress rules are not.

**Courses Not Allowed**
Some departments and/or colleges do not allow credit for specific courses to be used to fulfill degree requirements. Departments must identify any such courses on their graduation checksheets.

**Prerequisites**
Checksheets must be devised to alert students of any prerequisites to their degree courses. This is especially true for those degrees that have few free electives. Checksheets should be devised in such a way as to not cause students to exceed the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree. Prerequisites can be identified by either listing the prerequisites for each course (Pre: 2564) or by using a special character beside courses which have prerequisites (*, #, or 1) and including a footnote, such as:

*Some courses listed on this checksheet may have prerequisites; please consult the University Course Catalog or check with your advisor.*
Checksheet Format Information/Guidelines

Required Elements of a Checksheet
- Header
- University Graduation Requirements
- Language Study Requirement
- CLE/Pathways General Education Requirements
- Common Degree Core
- College Requirements
- Major Requirements
- Technical, Restricted, or Professional Electives
- Free Electives
- Total Credit Hours Required
- Overall GPA
- In-major GPA
- Satisfactory Progress (PPM 91 Eligibility for Continued Enrollment)
- Courses Not Allowed
- Prerequisites/corequisites

To assist in the governance review process, please consider the following when structuring an Undergraduate degree program checksheet to clearly identify applicable sections making up program requirements:

- For clarity, the courses required to satisfy various areas of the program (i.e., common degree core, major, major concentrations/options, CLE, restricted electives, electives, as applicable) should be distinguishable on the checksheet (e.g., use of program format or semester-by-semester using super- or sub-scripts with footnotes; different fonts, color coded, header).

- Identify BS/BA common degree core using one of the following methods:
  o Header “_____ Common Degree Core.”
  o Using course superscript or color-coding along with footnote.
  o Provide list of courses making up the common degree core in a footnote.

- Identify Major requirements:
  o Header “_____ Major Requirements.”
  o Using course superscript or color-coding along with footnote.
  o Provide list of courses making up the major requirements in a footnote.
**Checksheet Format Examples:**

Example – Undergraduate Checksheet Program Format

College …..
Department of …..
Degree …..
Major …..
Major Concentration/Option ….

For students graduating in calendar year 20XX

__ Common Degree Core Requirements (For a 120 credit hour program, minimum 21 credit hours for CLE, minimum 19 credit hours for Pathways).

**Note:** 21 is the minimum, but may be more. A good question to ask when defining the common degree core, “If additional majors were added under the degree, what would be the foundational courses shared/required for each major under the degree?”

__ Major Requirements ( __ credit hours)

__ Major Concentration/Option Requirements (minimum 15 credit hours)

Technical, Restricted, or Professional Electives (as applicable) ( __ credit hours)

Curriculum for Liberal Education Requirements (36 credit hours)
Area 1: Writing and Discourse (6 credit hours)
Area 2: Ideas, Cultural Traditions, and Values (6 credit hours)
Area 3: Society and Human Behavior (6 credit hours)
Area 4: Scientific Reasoning and Discovery (6 or 8 credit hours)
Area 5: Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning (6 credit hours)
Area 6: Creativity and Aesthetic Experience (1 or 3 credit hours)
Area 7: Critical Issues in a Global Context (3 credit hours)

Or

Pathways General Education (45 Credit Hours)
Concept 1: Discourse (9 credit hours = 6 foundational + 3 advanced/applied writing and/or speaking courses)
Concept 2: Critical Thinking in the Humanities (6 credit hours)
Concept 3: Reasoning in the Social Science (6 credit hours)
Concept 4: Reasoning in the Natural Sciences (6 credit hours, with an additional 2 lab credits for students in some majors)
Concept 5: Quantitative and Computational Thinking (9 credit hours= 6 foundational + 3 advanced/applied)
Concept 6: Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts (6 credit hours= 3 design + 3 arts, or 6 integrated design and arts)
Concept 7: Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the United States (3 credit hours)

Free Electives ( __ Credit hours)

**Note:** Remaining credit hours required to complete 120 credit hours required for the degree, as applicable.

Include a “Note” section that includes the following:
- Total Hours Required - GPA requirements
- A satisfactory progress or PPM 91 statement - Language Study Requirement
- Course Prerequisites Statement - Departments may include a minimum grade on a course
- Any courses not allowed to satisfy program requirement, if applicable
Example – Undergraduate Program Semester-by-Semester Format

College of …..  
Department of …..  
Degree …..  
Major …..  
Major Concentration/Option ….  
For students graduating in calendar year 20XX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Semester Freshman 20XX</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring Semester Freshman 20XX</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: . Co: )</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Semester Sophomore 20XX</td>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Spring Semester Sophomore 20XX</td>
<td>Credits</td>
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<td>Fall Semester Junior 20XX</td>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Spring Semester Junior 20XX</td>
<td>Credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Semester Senior 20XX</td>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Spring Semester Senior 20XX</td>
<td>Credits</td>
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</table>

Footnote: Ledger using superscripts and/or color-coding to identify program course requirements for each of the following on the Semester-by-Semester formatted checksheet, as applicable:
1 Common Degree Core Requirements (For a 120 credit hour program, minimum 21 credit hours for CLE, minimum 19 credit hours for Pathways)
2 Major Requirements (___credit hours)
3 Major Concentration/Option Requirements (minimum 15 credit hours)
4 CLE Requirements (36 credits) or Pathways General Education (45 credit hours)

Include a “Note” section that includes the following:
- Total Hours Required - GPA requirements
- A satisfactory progress or PPM 91 statement - Language Study Requirement
- Course Prerequisites Statement - Departments may include a minimum grade on a course
- Any courses not allowed to satisfy program requirement, if applicable
**Overview for Undergraduate Minor Checksheet:**
Format minor checksheet to include header, minimum of 18 credit hours, minimum of 6 credit hours at 3XXX and/or 4XXX level, listing of any required courses, and list of courses from which remaining credit can be selected.

**Example 1 – Minor Checksheet Format**

![Example Checksheet Format](image)

**Include a “Note” section that includes the following:**
- Minimum GPA
- Prerequisite Statement
- If it is possible to complete the minor by not meeting the 6 credit hour requirement, please add a note to checksheet stating, "A minimum of 6 credit hours must be completed at the 3000 or 4000 academic level."
Example 2 – Pathways Minor Checksheet Format

College of …..
Department of …..
Minor: …
For students graduating in calendar year 20XX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section I – Introductory/Foundation Experience Required Courses ( # Credit Hours)</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: Co:) (Pathway Outcome/Concept)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: Co:) (Pathway Outcome/Concept)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section I – Total # of Credits #

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section II – Mid-level Experience Required Courses Electives (# Credit Hours)</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: Co:) (Pathway Outcome/Concept)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: Co:) (Pathway Outcome/Concept)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: Co:) (Pathway Outcome/Concept)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: Co:) (Pathway Outcome/Concept)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section II – Total # of Credits #

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section III – Capstone Experience Required Course (# Credit Hours)</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ XXXX Catalog or ADP title (Pre: Co:) (Pathway Outcome/Concept)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section II – Total # of Credits #

Minor Total # of Credits 18

Key to Pathways Learning Core Outcomes:
1f = Foundational Discourse  
1a = Advanced/ Applied Discourse  
2 = Critical Thinking in the Humanities 3 = Reasoning in the Social Sciences  
4 = Reasoning in the Natural Sciences  
5f = Foundational Quantitative and Computational Thinking  
5a = Advanced/Applied Quantitative and Computational Thinking  
6 = Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts  
7 = Critical Analysis of Equity and Identity in the United States

Include a “Note” section that includes the following:
- Minimum GPA  
- Prerequisite Statement  
- If it is possible to complete the minor by not meeting the 6 credit hour requirement, please add a note to checksheet stating, "A minimum of 6 credit hours must be completed at the 3000 or 4000 academic level."
**Graduate Program Information**

The Graduate Catalog program descriptions and programs of study are the primary means of communicating graduation requirements to graduate students, advisors, faculty, and administrators. These are also used by the Graduate School to determine each student's successful completion of degree or program requirements.

**Graduate Degrees and Majors**

**New Degree**

Documentation to establish new Degree to include, as applicable:

- Header – Virginia Tech Degree Proposal, Degree Name, CIP number
- Type of degree action
- Program Description
- Curriculum Summary
- Degree Requirements
- Relevance to University Mission and Strategic Planning
- Justification for the Proposed Program
- Student Demand
- Market/Employment Demand
- Issues of Duplication
- Resource Needs/Savings

**Note:** For a new degree – SCHEV documentation should be completed in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

**New Major**

**New Major under Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Science (MS) Degree**

Documentation to establish new major under approved MA or MS Degree, as applicable:

- Header – College, Department, Degree, Major.
- *Justification for new major:* Educational value, program requirements/credit hours required, market analysis, other relevant information.
- *Whom new major will serve:* Number of students anticipated to enroll, demographics of students, benefit to students, benefit to Virginia Tech, career opportunities in the field, other relevant information.
- *Resource needs:* Funding, faculty, facilities, other department resources, library resources, and other relevant information.
- Graduation requirements, as applicable
  - MA/MS Degree Core Requirements
  - Major Requirements
  - Thesis and/or non-thesis requirements
  - Other Requirements (i.e., cognate courses, internship, project & report)
- Course Descriptions
- *Administration:* First term and year to enroll, first term and year to graduate, any applicable transition plan, applicable grants, other relevant information.
New Major under PhD

Documentation to establish new major under approved PhD degree to include, as applicable:

- Header – College, Department, Degree, Major
- Justification for new major: Educational value, program requirements/credit hours required, market analysis, other relevant information.
  - Whom new major will serve: Number of students anticipated to enroll, demographics of students, benefit to students, benefit to Virginia Tech, career opportunities in the field, other relevant information.
  - Resource needs: Funding, faculty, facilities, other department resources, library resources, and other relevant information.
  - Plan of Study, as applicable
    - Degree Core Requirements
    - Major Requirements
  - Specialization Area(s)
    - Thesis/Non-Thesis Options
    - Dissertation
    - Notes
  - Advisory Committee
  - Program of Study
  - Qualifying Exam
  - Preliminary Examination
  - Student Qualification Requirement
  - Written Preliminary Examination
  - Dissertation
  - Final Exam
  - Administration: First term and year to enroll, first term and year to graduate, any applicable transition plan, applicable grants, other relevant information.

> 20% Degree or Major Revision

Documentation outlining revisions made to previously approved degree or major:

- Summary and reason for revision.
- Table to include column presenting current program requirements and column presenting program requirements following revision.
- Paragraph to outline how revision to program requirements will be communicated.
- Effective calendar year for revised program.
- Any additional relevant information.

Note: For a revised degree (change in total program credit hours or degree core), SCHEV documentation should be completed in parallel with the University Governance process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).
Discontinue Degree or Major

Documentation to justify program discontinuation and teach-out plan to include below content, as applicable:

- Outcome of review to determine the number of students currently enrolled in program.
- Lead time, with the effective term/year, in support of completion of program.
- How discontinuation of program will be communicated to students, faculty, and staff.
- Consideration given to “stop-outs” – both voluntary and non-voluntary.
- If a student in discontinued program leaves and returns, consideration for helping student transition to a different program.
- Any other considerations determined by college/departments, as applicable.

**Note:** For the discontinuation of a degree – SCHEV documentation should be completed in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

Graduate Certificates

Overview of Graduate Certificate Requirements

- Minimum of 9 graduate credit hours.
- No 4000-level courses may be listed.
- No transfer credits may be used to satisfy certificate requirements.
- Special Study courses may not be listed on Graduate Certificate.
- If new course(s) is (are) being proposed in support of a new Graduate Certificate, proposal(s) for new courses must be submitted in advance of, or at least simultaneously with, submission of the certificate proposal.
- For interdisciplinary certificates, the responsible program and faculty member who will serve as the administrative home for the certificate should be indicated on the coversheet and proposal.
- At least two-thirds of the courses must be graded.
- All prerequisites must be listed as required certificate courses.
- Graduate certificate programs must have admission standards that are similar to related graduate degree programs.

New Graduate Certificate

Documentation to establish a new certificate to include, as applicable:

- SCHEV – Program Proposal Coversheet
  - Descriptive narrative of program to include: Name of certificate, CIP code, Initiation date, Description of certificate, Target audience, Time to complete, Admission criteria, Curriculum requirements, Faculty, Course delivery format, Resources, Gainful Employment, and Course descriptions…
    - Include a narrative to discuss the purpose and focus of the program. Indicate what graduates will be prepared to do.
    - Describe the specific individuals that will be targeted to enroll in the program.
    - Include a narrative to indicate the time to complete the program for fulltime and part-time students for both degree seeking and non-degree seeking students.
    - Describe the admission criteria for the program and indicate specific requirements for different populations. Include scores for all standardized tests.
o Provide a summary of the focus of the curriculum. Indicate the total number of credit hours required. Provide a list of all required courses (title designator and credit hour value), restricted electives, and electives. Describe sub areas, if applicable. Explain any requirements of the curriculum (e.g., project, internship, practicum) needed to address special requirements including requirements of a licensing or accrediting organization.

o Summarize faculty credentials and indicate availability and use of existing faculty. If using adjunct faculty, indicate the credentials and level of support that would be used to offer the program.

o Include a narrative to explain how the program will be delivered. If traditional, indicate space resources and if online, institutional resources (technology) to support online instruction. Indicate faculty training to teach online courses. Indicate the institution's ability and resources to support the delivery format.

o Explain resources to offer the certificate. Indicate additional resources or costs (e.g., administration, faculty), if needed. Indicate the institution's ability to support the certificate with existing resources.

o Indicate whether the certificate is a Gainful Employment program.

o Provide the course description for all required courses and restricted electives.

**Note:** For a new certificate – SCHEV documentation should be completed in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

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> **20% Graduate Certificate Revision**

Documentation outlining revisions made to previously approved certificate:

- Summary and reason for revision.
- Table to include column presenting current program requirements and column presenting program requirements following revision.
- Paragraph to outline how revision to program requirements will be communicated.
- Effective calendar year for the requested program revision, to include appropriate lead time so that no student currently enrolled in program will be disadvantaged.
- Any additional relevant information.

**Note:** For a revised certificate, reference SCHEV requirements to determine if documentation should be completed in parallel with the University Governance process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

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**Discontinue Graduate Certificate**

Documentation to justify program discontinuation and teach-out plan to include below content, as applicable:

- Outcome of review to determine the number of students currently enrolled in program.
- Lead time, with the effective term/year, in support of completion of program.
- How discontinuation of program will be communicated to students, faculty, and staff.
- Consideration given to “stop-outs” – both voluntary and non-voluntary.
- If a student in discontinued program leaves and returns, consideration for helping student transition to a different program.
- Any other considerations determined by college/departments, as applicable.
Note: For the discontinuation of a degree – SCHEV documentation should be completed in parallel with the University Governance review/approval process (contact Dr. Noel Byrd, Associate Vice Provost for Degree Innovation and SCHEV Compliance, cnbyrd@vt.edu).

<20% Graduate Program (PhD, MS/MA, Graduate Certificate) Revision

Documentation to outline change made by revision, as applicable:

- Summary and reason for <20% revision.
- Table to include column presenting current program requirements and column presenting program requirements following revision.
- Effective calendar year for the requested program revision to include appropriate lead time so that no student currently enrolled in program will be disadvantaged.
- Paragraph to outline how revision to certificate requirements will be communicated to students, faculty, and staff.
- Any additional relevant information.

<20% revision processing overview: Once approved by the CCC and uploaded as a <20% revision into JIRA by the college Curriculum Coordinator, the proposal is then routed to the Office of the University Registrar Governance Staff. Once any review comments from the Graduate School and/or Office of the University Registrar have been addressed, the Governance Staff will notify the college/department to work with the Graduate School to update the program requirements in the next available Graduate Catalog.
Helpful Hints

Frequently Encountered Problems with Program Proposals:

- Missing resource letter with program proposal submission
- Lack of support letters from other departments and/or colleges
- Missing effective term or effective term has already expired (lack of lead time)
- Incomplete approval signatures and dates
- Missing prerequisites/corequisites
- Missing the reference to cross-listed courses
- Course titles do not reflect approved catalog or ADP title
- Special Study listed as a program requirement

Specific to Undergraduate Programs

- Change in program “Common Degree Core” for one major under the degree without making the same changes to other majors under the same degree
- Change in major requirements for one major concentration/option under a major without making the same changes to additional major concentrations/options under the same major
- Courses used to satisfy various requirements of checksheet are not distinguishable (for example – common degree core, major, major concentration/option, general education requirements)
- Course listed to “double count” as both a general education and common degree core requirement
- Missing or incomplete information on checksheet, such as department, major, progress towards degree statement, etc.

Common Checksheet Findings During the 15-Day Review Process:

- Missing the reference to cross-listed courses
- Use of unapproved course titles

  Helpful Hints: Using catalog course titles (long course title) or ADP titles (< 30 character transcript title) is acceptable and either meets the intent. If it is noted that there appears to be an inconsistency in the checksheet title format (i.e., catalog, ADP, or creative hybrid of the two) during our 15-Day Review, our staff provides the course catalog title as feedback.

- Double counting course listed to satisfy common degree core requirements and CLE/Pathways General Education Requirements

  Helpful Hints: In accordance with SCHEV requirements, a course may not be double counted to satisfy both a common degree core and general education requirement. To alert students of this requirement, please include the following statement, “In accordance with SCHEV requirements, a course may not be used to satisfy both a common degree core and general education (i.e., CLE or Pathways General Education) requirement” in the notes section of the checksheet.

- Overlap/double counting of courses on major and minor

  Helpful Hints: The desired outcome of a minor is to provide the opportunity for non-majors to study and receive recognition for completing an area of study outside their major. When the required courses listed on a minor are also required courses for a major, there is a concern related to double-
counting course credit (double-dipping of course credit) to complete both the minor and major. In this context, a student completing the major should be advised that duplication of courses between the minor and major may not exceed 50% of the minor course credit requirements. To alert students of this concern, please add the following note, or words to this effect, at the bottom of the checksheet, “No more that 50% of the graded course credits required for Minor: ______ may be double-counted by a student also enrolled in Major: ________.”

- Requirements for a minor are not met

**Helpful Hints:** A minor should include a minimum of 18 credit hours (focus of study for non-majors) and a minimum of 6 credit hours at 3000/4000 level. If it is possible to complete the minor by not meeting this 6 credit hour requirement, please add a note to checksheet stating, "A minimum of 6 credit hours must be completed at the 3000 or 4000 academic level."

- Missing Prerequisite/Corequisite references or prerequisite statement

**Helpful Hints:** Checksheets must be devised to alert students of any prerequisites so that the student does not exceed the credit hours required for the program. Please identify courses having prerequisites by either:

  - Listing prerequisites and/or corequisites after course, or
  - Identify that the course has prerequisites by using a superscript that references the following statement, included in the checksheet footnotes “Some courses listed on this checksheet have prerequisites. Please consult the University Course Catalog or check with your advisor” or words to this effect.

**Example 1:** Listing prerequisites after course:

ENGL 3315 Playwriting (Pre: 1106 or 1204H or COMM 1016) (3) _____

**Example 2:** Using superscript with footnote:

ENGL 3315 Playwriting* (3) _____

_**Footnote:** "Some courses listed on this checksheet have prerequisites. Please consult the University Course Catalog or check with your advisor." or words to this effect._