



8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC
Strand Hall | 3100
Canada V5A 1S6

MEMORANDUM
ATTENTION Senate**DATE** October 15, 2024
FROM Peter Hall, Associate Vice-President, Academic
and Vice-Provost
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RE: New Ministry Program Proposal Criteria

Background

The [B.C. University Act](#) outlines the governance responsibilities of both the university and the Ministry of Post-Secondary and Future Skills to approve new degrees (section 48.2). The approval process requires SFU to submit a new program proposal with appendices, and a Ministry Stage One form for review by the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) and the Minister.

Update

In September 2024 the Ministry launched updated guidelines for the degree proposal process. The updated [Quality Assessment and Process Criteria](#) includes a full description of the Ministry's governance process (p. 7), and clearer language on degree-level standards (p. 41), nomenclature (p. 58), and a glossary of terms (p. 37).

The most significant changes have been made to the Stage One form, as follows:

1. The addition of questions specifically naming the targeted student population, including Indigenous and traditionally underserved and underrepresented students (p. 3).
 - What specific need is there for the proposed program and how will it benefit the targeted student population?
 - Will the proposed program provide specific benefits to Indigenous students in BC's post-secondary system and/or at your institution? If so, describe.
 - Will the proposed program specifically benefit those traditionally underserved and underrepresented students in BC's post-secondary system and/or at your institution? If so, describe.
2. Requirement for consultation with Indigenous Peoples (p. 4).
 - What is the institution's plan to incorporate Indigenous content in the program?
 - How did the institution work on this application with local First Nations on whose territory the institution is located, and with other First Nations or Indigenous groups or experts?

3. Greater transparency and reporting of consultation with other institutions including the name, position, mode of contact, and materials provided to those contacted (pg. 2-3).
4. Requirement for engagement with employers, community groups, and professional organizations (p. 5).
 - Describe the engagement process with relevant employers, community organizations, professional bodies, and program advisory committees. Summarize the materials used and the feedback received from these groups, and state how the proposed program changed in response to feedback. Provide documented evidence of engagement in an appendix.
5. Increased planning for resources, enrolment planning, and financial sustainability (p. 5).
 - Identify operation resources required to launch and maintain the program (e.g., faculty, staff, student services, capital equipment, classroom/laboratory space, learning resources), and explain how these needs will be met. Provide a budget.
 - Provide an enrolment plan for the program over the next four years, identifying projected number of students (full-time and part-time; domestic and international), minimum viable enrolment, and anticipated number of credentials to be awarded each year.

Questions relating to the degree approval process may be directed to the Director, University Curriculum and Institutional Liaison, Jill Sutherland, at ucildir@sfu.ca.

Stage 1 Review Template for BC Public Institutions

The purpose of Stage 1 is to determine the need for a new degree program and to evaluate how it complements other programs currently offered in the BC post-secondary education system. Stage 1 applies to all post-secondary institutions seeking authority to grant a new degree program in BC. It is a means to ensure that students are provided with high-quality education, and when developing new programs, that institutions avoid unnecessary duplication and consider government priorities for social and economic goods, such as principles of diversity and inclusion.

Stage 1 applications must be submitted using this template and **must not exceed 12 pages or 4,000 words**, excluding a three-page Program Overview and appendices. Please complete the following information.

Program Overview

Provide the following information (a to i) in no more than three pages. *(Shaded boxes will expand or contract to accommodate any length.)*

a) An overview of the organization's history, mission, and academic goals;

b) Proposed credential to be awarded, including the level and category of the degree and the specific discipline or field of study;

c) Location of where the proposed degree program will be offered;

d) Faculty or school(s) offering the proposed degree program;

e) Anticipated program start date;

f) Anticipated completion time in years and semesters;

g) Expected number of students at launch and at steady state;

h) A summary of the proposed program, including:

- Aims, goals, and/or objectives of the proposed program;

- Anticipated contribution of the proposed program to the mandate and strategic plan of the institution;

- Linkages between the learning outcomes and the curriculum design and whether a work- integrated learning experience is required for degree completion;

- Delivery methods (in-person, online, combination of in-person and online (provide ratio of each delivery method), or other (explain));

- Program strengths; and,

- Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code (minimum 4-digit; 6-digit preferred).

i) Name, title, phone number, and e-mail address of the institutional contact person if more information is required.

Standard 1 Benefits to Students

The institution must demonstrate that the proposed degree will provide benefits to students.

Criterion Question	Institution Response
Who is the targeted student population?	
What specific need is there for the proposed program and how will it benefit the targeted student population?	
Will the proposed program provide specific benefits to Indigenous students in BC's post-secondary system and/or at your institution? If so, describe.	
Will the proposed program specifically benefit those traditionally underserved and underrepresented students in BC's post-secondary system and/or at your institution? If so, describe.	
What specific opportunities are available to program graduates for further study, and at which institutions? If the expectation is that the degree is terminal, state that is the case. Provide evidence of discussions with other post-secondary institutions with regard to advanced degree opportunities in an appendix.	
What is the anticipated tuition fee for the program by year and by credit/unit? Include both proposed domestic and international tuition.	
What are the tuition fees for similar programs at this degree level at other post-secondary institutions in the province? If the tuition fee is higher than fees for similar programs in BC, what is the rationale for the higher rate and what actions will the institution take to mitigate student tuition costs?	

Standard 2 System Coordination and Program Duplication

The institution must establish that the proposed program fills a need within the post-secondary system and that there is no unnecessary duplication with existing programs.

A. System Context

Use the table below to list all similar degree programs at the same level at other private and public post-secondary institutions in BC. (Add as many lines as required.)

Institution offering similar program	Name of degree program	How the proposed program differs

B. Consultation with Other BC Post-Secondary Institutions

For each institution in the preceding list that offers a similar program at the same level, summarize the form of consultation that occurred with that institution and materials used, and briefly describe the institution's feedback. (Add as many lines as required.)

Name, position, and institution of person consulted	Method of consultation and materials used	Feedback and applicant's response

C. Rationale for Duplication

If programs with similar learning objectives are currently available in the region or online within the province, what is the specific rationale for establishing another program?

D. Collaboration

Describe how the institution will collaborate and/or share resources with other institutions offering related programs, including articulation and laddering agreements. Provide resource sharing agreements and articulating and laddering agreements in the appendix.

Standard 3 Social and Economic Benefits

The institution must demonstrate that the proposed program will serve the economic and social needs of British Columbians.

A. Social and Economic Benefits

Criterion Question	Institution Response
What social and economic benefits would the program offer the community, region, or province?	
Reference specific government and community initiatives, plans, and priorities that the proposed program supports.	
What occupations are students most likely to seek or advance in immediately after graduating (limit to 2-3 occupations)? In an appendix, provide written correspondence from a number of potential employers supporting the proposed degree program, stating their organization's total staff numbers and how many of their current staff positions could be filled by program graduates.	

B. Engagement with Indigenous Peoples

Criterion Question	Institution Response
What is the institution's plan to incorporate Indigenous content in the program?	
How did the institution work on this application with local First Nations on whose territory the institution is located, and with other First Nations or Indigenous groups or experts?	

C. Engagement with Employers, Community Groups, and Professional Organizations

Criterion Question	Institution Response
Describe the engagement process with relevant employers, community organizations, professional bodies, and program advisory committees. Summarize the materials used and the feedback received from these groups, and state how the proposed program changed in response to feedback. Provide documented evidence of engagement in an appendix.	

If the program is primarily relevant to public sector employment, describe the support the program has from government ministries or other public sector employers and explain how the proposed program changed in response to feedback. Provide documented evidence of engagement in an appendix.	
If the program relates to a regulated profession, summarize the feedback provided by the regulatory or licensing bodies and the responsible Ministry. Provide documented evidence of engagement in an appendix or state "Not Applicable".	

Standard 4 Institutional Resources

The institution must show it has access to sufficient resources to implement and sustain the program.

Criterion Question	Institution Response
Explain how the proposed program relates to the overall academic plan of the institution or advances the mandate of the institution.	
Briefly summarize how well program areas related to the proposed program performed over the last four years and describe how successful performance was defined and measured.	
If the proposed program builds on existing programs, how will the existing programs be affected?	
Identify operation resources required to launch and maintain the program (e.g., faculty, staff, student services, capital equipment, classroom/laboratory space, learning resources), and explain how these needs will be met. Provide a budget.	
Provide an enrolment plan for the program over the next four years, identifying projected number of students (full-time and part-time; domestic and international), minimum viable enrolment, and anticipated number of credentials to be awarded each year.	