

**CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS  
FOR NEW PROGRAMS OF INSTRUCTION**

The following are the main criteria that will be addressed in the evaluation of a new program proposal:

1. **Relevance of Institutional Role** – Is the proposed program within the Commission recognized role of the institution?
2. **Need for the Program** – Will the program satisfy a clearly documented need (institutional and societal) in an effective and efficient manner? If the program duplicates or closely resembles another program already offered in the State, can this duplication be justified? What characteristics of the identified need require that it be met by a new program rather than an existing program? (*Note: In explaining how the proposed program meets this criterion, an institution may refer to the criterion on collaboration and develop a response that addresses both criteria simultaneously.*) For purposes of this criterion, duplication is defined as the same or similar six-digit CIP code and award level in the Commission's academic program inventory. Institutions should consult with the Commission staff during the NISP phase of the proposal development to determine what existing programs are considered duplicative of the proposed program. For doctoral programs, regional and sometimes national need should be addressed.
3. **Collaboration** – If similar programs are available at other institutions in the state, will any type of program collaboration be utilized? Why or why not? What specific efforts have been made to collaborate with institutions to meet the need for this program? Address qualitative, cost, and access considerations of any collaboration that was considered.
4. **Program Objectives and Content** – Are the objectives precisely stated and appropriate to the program? Will the curriculum design, resource allocation and method of program delivery support the objectives? Are the objectives stated in a way that facilitates subsequent review and assessment?
5. **Student Availability and Demand** – Is there a documented demand by enough suitably qualified students to justify the program and sustain it over a reasonable period of time?
6. **Program Completion Requirements** – Are program completion requirements sufficiently rigorous to produce graduates who can compete in the market place?

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7. **Institutional Context** – How does this program relate other programs within the institution? Will it replace an existing program? Is it likely to decrease enrollment in another program?
8. **Program Administration** – Is the administration of the program clearly defined and workable?
9. **Accreditation** – Is there an accreditation agency recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the United States Department of Education (USDE) for the program? Will accreditation be pursued? Why or why not?
10. **Resources to Support the Program** – Will the level of existing and projected resources sufficiently provide for a program of high quality? Resources include faculty, staff, equipment, facilities, library materials, and other learning resources. What are the costs associated with these resources? Does the expected quality and utility of the program justify the costs?
11. **Financial Support** – Does the institution document the availability of sufficient funds to meet the projected costs?
12. **Distance Education Technology** – Will any type of distance education technology be utilized in the delivery of the program? If not, why? Address the quality, access, and cost considerations of using distance technology in the program.
13. **Program Viability** – What is the overall program viability level at the institution? What is the viability level of similar programs at other institutions?

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*Alabama Commission on Higher Education*

**PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS MATRIX**

			Independent	Cooperative	Joint	Shared
<b>INST</b>	a.	Sponsored by a single institution	X			
	b.	Sponsored by one primary institution		X		
	c.	Sponsored by two or more institutions			X	X
<b>ADM CONTROL</b>	a.	Administrative control & resources are the responsibility of a single institution	X			
	b.	Administrative control & resources are the responsibility of the primary institution		X		
	c.	Program is planned, implemented & monitored by a joint committee comprised of representatives of all participating institutions & managed by an academic administrator or co-academic administrators jointly appointed by and responsible to all participating institutions. If program is offered by 2 or more institutions within the same system under a single executive head, explicit procedures must be developed and stated to assure equal administrative oversight of the program.			X	X
<b>DEGREE</b>	a.	Degree granted under the seal of a single institution.	X			
	b.	Degree granted under the seal of the primary institution.		X		
	c.	Single degree granted under the seals of all participating institutions (all institutions listed on the award).			X	X
<b>INVENTORY</b>	a.	Program listed in inventory for a single institution	X			
	b.	Program listed in inventory for primary institution only		X		
	c.	Program listed in inventory for all participating institutions with "joint" or "shared" designation.			X	X
<b>ROLE</b>		Program must be consistent with the parameters for new program development in "Guidelines for Instructional Role for 2001-05" adopted by the Commission on 10/21/01. To foster collaboration and cooperation to meet significant identified needs, the Commission may approve institutions without an independent doctoral or master's role to participate in joint, shared, and cooperative doctoral or master's programs. Participation in such joint, shared and cooperative programs will not give such institutions an independent doctoral or master's role and calls for a strong rationale.	X	X	X	X

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			Independent	Cooperative	Joint	Shared
<b>IF INSTITUTION WITHDRAWS . . .</b>	a.	Program is terminated at discretion of governing board	X			
	b.	Program continues for the primary institution if secondary institution withdraws.		X		
	c.	Program is terminated if one or more participants withdraws.			X	
	d.	Should one or more participating institutions withdraw from the shared program, it may be continued if at least 2 institutions remain. This would constitute an alteration of an existing program and would require Commission approval as such. Should the shared program be terminated, participating institutions that previously had independent programs may revert back to independent program status subject to program alteration approval by the Commission. In either case, the proposal must include documentation that the necessary approval has been received by all relevant accrediting organizations.				X
<b>VIABILITY</b>	a.	Single program must meet viability standards.	X			
	b.	Primary program must meet viability standards.		X		
	c.	Program is treated as a single program for viability purposes. All completions reported by participating institutions counted toward viability.			X	X
<b>ACADEMICS</b>	a.	Entrance requirements, curriculum, and degree requirements determined by a single institution.	X			
	b.	Entrance requirements, curriculum, and degree requirements determined by primary institution.		X		
	c.	Common entrance requirements, curriculum, and degree requirements agreed upon by all participating institutions.			X	X
<b>GRAD PROG</b>	a.	Qualifying examinations given and graded by a single institution.	X			
	b.	Qualifying examinations given and graded by the primary institution.		X		
	c.	Common qualifying examinations given and jointly graded by the participating institutions.			X	X

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<b>RESOURCES</b>	a.	Responsibility of a single institution.	X			
	b.	Responsibility of the primary institution.		X		
	c.	Based on carefully prescribed and explicitly stated procedures for sharing resources at participating institutions.			X	X
<b>ACCRED</b>		Proposals must include documentation that the necessary approval has been received from all relevant accrediting agencies.	X	X	X	X
<b>COMPLETIONS</b>	a.	Completions reported by a single institution at CIP Code & degree level approved by the Commission.	X			
	b.	Completions reported by primary institution at CIP Code and degree level approved by the Commission.		X		
	c.	Completions reported by participating institutions according to mutually agreed upon procedures that do not allow duplicate reporting of students. Each graduate of a joint or shared program may be reported once by one of the participating institutions.			X	X

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