

Registration Process for New Programs and Changes in Existing Programs

New York State Education Department (NYSED) and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Guidelines

The New York State Education Department requires that communication with its associates is conducted through a designated institute liaison. Please contact Dennis Gornic, institute liaison for Rensselaer, at 518-276-6488 or gornid@rpi.edu for assistance with program registration questions, procedures, and for the appropriate forms to use.

NYSED Guidelines, Changes & Adaptations Requiring State Education Department Approval

Changes in Program Content (all programs)

Any of the following substantive changes:

- Cumulative change from the Department's last approval of the registered program of one-third or more of the minimum credits required for the award (e.g., 20 credits in an associate degree program)
- Changes in the program's focus or design (e.g., eliminating management courses in a business administration program), including a change in the program's major disciplinary area
- Adding or eliminating an option or concentration
- Eliminating a requirement for completion, including an internship, clinical, cooperative education, or other work-based experience
- Altering the liberal arts and science content in a way that changes the degree classification, as defined in Section 3.47(c)(1-4) of Regents Rules

Other Changes that require NYSED registration

- Program title.
- Program award (e.g., change in degree).
- Mode of delivery (Note: if the change involves adding a distance education format to a registered program, please complete the distance education application.)
- Discontinuing a program.
- A format change that alters the program's financial aid eligibility (e.g., from full-time to part-time, or to an abbreviated or accelerated semester).
- A change in the total number of credits of any certificate or advanced certificate program.
- Establishing New Programs Based on Existing Registered Programs.
- Creating a dual-degree program from existing registered programs.
- Creating a new program from a concentration/track in an existing registered program.

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Rensselaer Procedure

Program Development and Registration

Undergraduate and Master's Programs

- New program and program change proposals are developed by department faculty and academic administrators.
- The faculty and Department Head submit to their School Dean a program curriculum developed according to the NYSED guidelines.
- Approval sequence of faculty proposals:
 - Department Head
 - School Dean
 - Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee
 - Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (Bachelors) or VP & Dean of Graduate Education (Master's & Doctoral)
 - Provost
 - President
 - Board of Trustees
 - NYSED requires the institute liaison to complete a final review of the approved proposal
 - The Office of the President submits the final proposal to NYSED

A cover letter from the President to the applicable NYSED office accompanies the NYSED application. The letter requests program and initial offering date approval. The institute liaison prepares this letter.

Copied on the letter are the Provost, the School Dean, the Vice President of Enrollment Management, the Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the Registrar.

Doctoral Programs

Departments considering a new **doctoral** program should contact Dennis Gornic, institute liaison @ gornid@rpi.edu or 518-276-6488, who will provide the forms and proposal instructions. Please do not contact the state directly.

Doctoral Proposal Development & Approval

- Program need and demand recognized at Department, School, or Institute level. Rensselaer faculty representative of the program's principle academic areas develop the proposal and present it to the Department Head, who if he or she accepts the academic viability of the program, submits the proposal to the Dean of the School.
- The School Dean submits the program proposal to the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (FSCC), for their review and approval.

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- The Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee chair communicates approval or disapproval via memo and attached FSCC meeting minutes to the Dean of the School.
- The Dean of the School submits FSCC-approved proposals to the Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Education, with a cover letter, the FSCC approval letter, *and the names of at least two nationally recognized experts, who must be approved by NYSED.*
- The Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Education reviews the final proposal and the expert assessments. If approved, the dean will send the proposal to the Provost.
- Once approved by the Provost and President, the President presents the proposal to the Board of Trustees for approval.
- The approved NYSED application and supplemental materials are reviewed by the institutional liaison and returned to the Office of the President for submission to NYSED.

A cover letter from the President to the applicable NYSED office accompanies the NYSED application. The letter requests program and initial offering date approval.

Copied on the letter are the Provost, the School Dean, the Dean of Enrollment Management, the Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Education, and the Registrar. The institute liaison prepares this letter.

Key Elements Considered in NYSED Review of Doctoral Proposals, NYSED Guidelines

The following list, provided by NYSED, is intended as a reference guide to begin the proposal process. For complete registration procedures and forms, please contact the Rensselaer NYSED Liaison at 518-276-6488 to receive a copy of the NYSED publication, "Steps in the Review of Doctoral Program Proposals."

- Faculty quality, as demonstrated by breadth and depth of coverage in the field, standing in the field, research grants funded, current research activity, publications in refereed journals, dissertations chaired, and skill in serving as advisors and research leaders;
- The availability of resources, e.g., library holdings and online access, the appropriateness of labs and equipment, and financial and other supports for students;
- The quality of recruits and students;
- Evidence of the institution's long-term commitment to the program;

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- Support for faculty workload: teaching, research and development, dissertation guidance, and program administration (e.g., presence of support staff);
- Rigor of curriculum, including instructional content and research training;
- Ability of program to stand as a national, if not international, leader in the field;
- Presence of a program evaluation system—periodic, out-of-house, and led by experienced peers—to sustain and renew quality;
- Relationship to the institution’s mission and other programs; and
- Program contribution to the field.