

Graduate School Requirements for New Graduate Program Tracks

A number of programs have specific tracks for students within their degree programs. By track, we mean a specific course of study that has degree requirements not shared with other areas of study in the same degree program. Sometimes tracks are multidisciplinary, but at other times they are areas of study within a discipline or department.

When an existing graduate program wishes to launch a new graduate track, the program will first need to work within its own faculty and college to define the track and to secure appropriate approvals. Then, programs must secure the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. This is a two-step process.

- (a) First, proponents of the new track should set up a meeting with the Graduate School's associate dean for academic affairs to brief them on the track's rationale and advantages, and to discuss any difficulties its introduction may present.
- (b) Second, proponents of the track should prepare a short description of the proposed track for formal approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School has created a *template* for new tracks that all applicants should follow—see below. In particular, please note the required letters of support from the program director/department chair and college dean, and the requirement of letters from representatives of all units asked to commit resources to the new track specifying their precise financial commitment, if any.

Once a track is approved, it will have all of the benefits that are offered to other tracks or degree programs. These benefits include assistance in recruiting, the processing of student applications in specific subareas, consideration of financial support, and promotion of the program .

TEMPLATE for Proposals for a New Graduate Program Track (to be submitted to the Graduate School's associate dean for academic affairs). Proposals should include the following items:

1. Name of graduate program, title of the proposed track, and titles of existing tracks.
2. Contact person and contact information.
3. Start date.
4. Brief description of the new track.
5. Rationale of the new track: Describe the niche the new track will fill and why the program proposes to initiate it.

6. Semester-by-semester synopsis of requirements of the new track. The synopsis should identify the required course sequence and outline expectations/milestones for students year by year (for example, when certain courses are taken, when coursework is completed, when candidacy examinations are taken). Identify and describe any new courses that will be taught.
7. Names, credentials (including rank), and areas of interest of faculty members involved in the new track.
8. Student population: How many students does the program expect to choose the proposed track at any given time?
8. Brief statement describing the relationship of the proposed track to any existing tracks in the program. How will the introduction of the new track affect existing tracks? How does the program propose to administer the proposed track?
9. Statement on how the track will be supported financially. For example: Will the new track affect stipends or support for existing tracks? If existing resources will be reallocated, describe how current graduate offerings will be affected by the proposed reallocation. If any new resources are required, what is the source of these resources? (Please provide letters of financial commitment from the appropriate entities.)
10. Letters of support from the relevant program director/department chair(s) and college dean(s).