

ALABAMA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Changes to the Commission's Academic Program Inventory  
Instructions and Forms**

**Commission Review of Proposed Changes to the Academic Program Inventory:** The Commission reviews proposed changes to the Academic Program Inventory to insure agreement with the "Guidelines for the Review of Extensions and Alterations of Existing Programs" related to inventory changes. This document covers the most common of these inventory changes and provides forms for submitting these items.

The Guidelines are available on the Commission's website at the following address: <http://www.ache.alabama.gov/Content/Departments/Instruction/Ext-AltReview.pdf> . Specific sections of the guidelines related to this topic are attached to this document, Attachments 1 (general guidelines) and 2 (inactive programs).

**Types of Inventory Changes:** Changes to the Inventory may be non-substantive or substantive. Non-substantive changes do not require Commission approval, but must be reported to the Commission prior to implementation.

I. **Non-substantive changes** to the inventory include the following:

- A. Changes in CIP code or program title, if documentation is provided that no changes are made in program requirements, content, and objectives. The new title or code must replace an earlier designation. Such a change should only be made when the proposed title or code more adequately reflects the nature or the content of the program.
- B. Changes in degree nomenclature at the same level (except the categories listed below), provided that no changes in program requirements, content, and objectives are made, and provided the new nomenclature replaces the current designation. Prior to implementation, the institution must present an information item which includes sufficient evidence that the proposed degree nomenclature is more appropriate than the current designation.  
The following are exceptions to this policy:
  1. All changes in degree award nomenclature at the doctoral level require Commission approval as substantive changes.
  2. In two-year colleges, the AAT and the AAS are not considered to be at the same level because the AAT is not recognized by the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
- C. Deletion of programs from the inventory.
- D. Placement of programs on inactive status.
- E. Reinstatement of inactive programs to active status.

II. **Substantive changes** to the Academic Program Inventory require Commission approval as reasonable alterations of existing programs. The purpose of the Commission's review and action on such proposal is to insure that the requested change is reasonable in the context of the existing program and in terms of its impact. The following is the most common category of substantive change to the inventory:

- All changes in degree award nomenclature at the doctoral level.

## **Forms and Instructions for the Submission of Non-Substantive Changes to the Academic Program Inventory**

The following forms are provided for submission of proposals for non-substantive changes:

**FORM A:** Alteration of CIP Code, Program Title, Degree Nomenclature (except at the doctoral level)

**FORM B:** Academic Program Inventory Deletion Form

**FORM C:** Academic Program Inventory Inactive Status Form

## **Form and Instructions for the Submission of a Substantive Inventory Change of Degree Nomenclature at the Doctoral Level**

The following form is provided for the submission of substantive changes to the Academic Program Inventory:

**FORM D:** Program Inventory Substantive Change Form--Change of Degree Nomenclature at the Doctoral Level

## **Attachments**

1. Sections of the "Guidelines for the Review of Extensions and Alterations of Existing Programs" which relate to Academic Program Inventory Changes
2. "Guidelines for Placing Programs on Inactive Status and Reinstating Programs to Active Status"

## **Submission Information:**

Send a transmittal letter and the appropriate form for the requested program inventory change to:

Dr. Leonard Lock  
Director of Instruction and Special Projects  
Alabama Commission on Higher Education  
PO Box 302000  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2000

For deadlines for submission, please refer to the Commission website:  
<http://www.ache.alabama.gov/Content/Commission%20Meetings/Deadlines.pdf>.

**Alabama Commission on Higher Education**

**Academic Program Inventory**

**Form A: Information Item for the Alteration of CIP Code, Program Title, and Degree Nomenclature  
Except at the Doctoral Level**

**Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

Using the instructions below, complete and submit the following:

1. Refer to the institution's Academic Program Inventory for the current CIP code, program title, and degree nomenclature. This information is necessary for the review and evaluation of your request. Failure to include this information will cause a delay in processing the request.

The Inventory for each institution is available online at  
<http://www.ache.alabama.gov/Acadaffr/ProgInv/institu.htm>.

2. List the current identifiers for the program from the Academic Program Inventory on line 1 below.

*Example:*

1. Current listing	45.1101	Sociology	BS
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3. List how the program should appear in the Inventory after the requested change(s) are made on line 2 below.

*Example:*

2. Proposed listing	45.1101	Sociology	BA
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**Specify requested change below:**

	CIP Code	Program Title	Degree Nomenclature
1. Current listing			
2. Proposed listing			

4. In an attachment, please state the rationale for the revision. For a non-substantive change, include a statement that there is no change in the requirements or the character of the program, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Inventory Official Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Institution Date

***Alabama Commission on Higher Education***

**Form B: Academic Program Inventory Deletion Form**

Please refer to the Academic Program Inventory for the CIP code, program title, and degree nomenclature to be listed on the deletion form. Only one program should be listed per form.

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>CIP Code</b>	<b>Program Title</b>	<b>Degree Nomenclature</b>

The above entry should be deleted from the Commission's Academic Program Inventory. I, as the inventory contact for the institution above, understand that this entry cannot be added back to the Inventory in the future unless the institution undergoes the regular process for new program review and approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Inventory Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Alabama Commission on Higher Education**

**Form C: Academic Program Inventory Inactive Status**

Please refer to the Academic Program Inventory for the CIP code, program title, and degree nomenclature to be placed on inactive status. Please list only one program per form.

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

CIP Code	Program Title	Degree Nomenclature

The above program should be placed on inactive status, effective \_\_\_\_\_.

Provisions for inactive status:

1. Once a program has been recognized by the Commission as inactive and so designated in the Academic Program Inventory, no new students can be admitted to the program. However, students already in the pipeline can complete the program.
2. The institution may reinstate a program to active status within five years after the program has been placed on inactive status by information item. The information item should provide evidence of adequate resources and student demand to reactivate the program.
3. If a program has not been reinstated within five years after being placed on inactive status, it will be removed from the Academic Program Inventory.
4. If an institution wishes to offer a program again that has been deleted from the Academic Program Inventory, it will be required to submit a new program proposal for Commission review and action.

Programs in the following categories are not eligible for inactive status:

- a. Non-viable programs
- b. Programs that have not been implemented
- c. Programs that have a five-year post-implementation condition report still to be presented to the Commission
- d. Programs that have not met post-implementation conditions

This request for inactive status is for a program that does not fall in one of the ineligible categories above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Inventory Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

ALABAMA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Form D: Program Inventory Substantive Change Form  
Change of Degree Nomenclature at the Doctoral Level**

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Using the instructions below, complete and submit the following form:

1. Refer to the institution's Academic Program Inventory for the current CIP code, program title, and degree nomenclature. This information is necessary for the review and evaluation of your request. Failure to include this information will cause a delay in processing the request.

The Inventory for each institution is available online at  
<http://www.ache.alabama.gov/Acadaffr/ProgInv/institu.htm>.

2. List the current identifiers for the program from the Academic Program Inventory on line 1 below.

*Example:*

1. Current listing	51.1601	Nursing	DSc
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3. List how the program should appear in the Inventory after the requested change(s) are made on line 2 below.

2. Proposed listing	51.1601	Nursing	PhD
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**Specify requested change below:**

	CIP Code	Program Title	Degree Nomenclature
1. Current listing			
2. Proposed listing			

**Form D: Program Inventory Substantive Change Form--Change of Degree Nomenclature at the Doctoral Level, continued**

4. In an attachment, please provide the following information:
  - A. What is the rationale for the change in degree nomenclature?
  - B. How will the content and character of the program be altered?
  - C. What costs are associated with the change, and how will they be met?
  
5. Please attach a copy of the current curriculum and the curriculum that will be implemented with the change in degree nomenclature.

Substantive change requested by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Institutional Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Institution Date

Attachment 1

*Alabama Commission on Higher Education*

**GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW  
OF EXTENSIONS & ALTERATIONS OF EXISTING PROGRAMS**

According to the Commission's statute, a new unit of instruction does not include reasonable extensions or alterations of existing curricula or programs that have a direct relationship to existing programs previously approved by the Commission. However, the statute also states that the Commission may, under its rule-making authority, define the character of such reasonable extensions and alterations.

A Reasonable Extension or Alteration of a Unit or Program of Instruction is defined as a modification of an existing unit or program of instruction that does not change its essential character, integrity, or objectives. Such modifications do not create new units or programs of instruction. Program changes may include the addition of a new area of specialization (concentration, option, emphasis, focus, track), or changes in degree nomenclature at the same degree level (except doctoral), or changes in program title or CIP code, provided these modifications are within Commission guidelines (see below). Provisions for reasonable extensions or alterations of units or programs of instruction do not relate to the addition of off-campus sites or adding any new unit or program.

There are two types of reasonable extensions or alterations of a unit or program of instruction:

- 1) Non-Substantive Change which requires notification to Commission by information item; and
- 2) Substantive Change which requires Commission approval.

**1. Non-Substantive Extensions/Alterations of Existing Units or Programs of Instruction:**

The following extensions and alterations of existing units and programs of instruction are considered non-substantive and do not require Commission approval. However, before any of these changes may be implemented, they must be presented to the Commission as information items. If supporting documentation verifies that any conditions and requirements are met, the changes will be recognized by the Commission by information item. The Commission staff may request additional information if necessary. It is recommended that institutions consult the Commission staff prior to submitting the proposal if there is a question regarding whether the proposed extension or alteration is substantive or non-substantive.

- A. Changes in award nomenclature at the same level for programs listed in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory, with the exceptions listed below, provided that no changes in program requirements, content, and objectives are made, and provided the new nomenclature replaces the current designation. Prior to implementation, the institution must present an information item that provides sufficient evidence that the proposed nomenclature is more appropriate than the current designation.



**Non-Substantive Extensions/Alterations of Existing Units or Programs of Instruction, continued**

- 1) For purposes of this policy, the Certificate and Diploma (30-60 sh) in the two-year colleges are considered to be at the same level but the AAT and AAS are not considered to be the same level, because the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association Colleges and Schools does not recognize the AAT degree. Since the Commission reviews only "long-term" certificates or diplomas in the two-year colleges, any reference to certificates and diplomas is limited to awards of 30-60 sh unless otherwise specified.
  - 2) All changes in award nomenclature at the doctoral level require Commission approval as substantive changes.
- B. Upgrades from Diploma and Certificate to Associate in Applied Technology (AAT) in technical colleges, if documentation is provided that:
- 1) The AAT is limited to the technology and service programs requiring the highest levels of skills as jointly determined by the staffs of the Commission and the ADPE.
  - 2) The total credit hours in general education requirements are no less than that required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Commission on Colleges' standards for associate degrees.
  - 3) The programs are no more than six semesters in length.
  - 4) All courses are on a regular collegiate credit hour basis.
- C. Upgrades from AAT to AAS in technical colleges, if documentation is provided that:
- 1) The technical college achieves Commission on College (COC) accreditation from SACS; or the technical college achieves candidacy status for COC accreditation. In the case of candidacy status, if accreditation is not achieved within four years of the date of candidacy status, the award of completion reverts back to the AAT unless documentation can be provided that the COC has granted additional time to the institution to receive accreditation.
  - 2) Written documentation of the following is submitted to the Commission staff from ADPE:
    - a. Date of achievement of candidacy status with COC or COC accreditation.
    - b. Documentation that the technical college faculty teaching the basic core of general education courses in communication, social sciences, science and math, and fine arts meet the COC requirement of holding at least a master's degree and having completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the field taught.

**Non-Substantive Extensions/Alterations of Existing Units or Programs of Instruction, continued**

- D. Upgrades from Diploma and Certificate to AAS in community colleges, if documentation is provided that the following conditions are met:
- 1) The institution must have a Diploma or Certificate listed in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory at the proposed CIP Code with the proposed program title.
  - 2) The CIP Code and title of the upgraded program must remain the same as for the Diploma or Certificate.
  - 3) The total credit hours in general education requirements must be no less than that required by SACS for associate degrees.
  - 4) The program must be no more than 76 semester hours in length.
  - 5) The two-year institution must have achieved COC accreditation or candidacy status from SACS (copy of letter from SACS must be provided.)

Note: In the case of institutional consolidation, no upgrades from Diploma or Certificate to AAS or from AAT to AAS will be accepted by information item until the institutional consolidation of the institution has been approved by the Commission and documentation is provided by ADPE from SACS that the educational institution resulting from the consolidation has COC accreditation or candidacy status. Administrative consolidation of institutions, as defined by the Commission, does not provide a basis for changing or upgrading awards.

- E. Changes in program titles or CIP codes if documentation is provided that no changes are made in program requirements, content, and objectives, and provided the new title or code replaces an earlier designation. Program title changes or CIP code changes should only be made when the proposed title or code more adequately reflects the nature and content of the program. The burden of demonstrating this is upon the institution.
- F. New Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) degree programs if documentation is provided that they are implemented in conjunction with State Board of Education approved sixth-year (AA) teacher certification programs.
- G. Non-degree programs of senior institutions including prebaccalaureate, postbaccalaureate, and postmasters certificates. Note: These certificates are not listed in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory.
- H. Short-term certificate programs (less than or equal to 29 semester hours) in community, junior, and technical colleges designed for completion in less than one academic year (two semesters) of full-time study or the equivalent. Note: These certificates are not listed in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory.

**Non-Substantive Extensions/Alterations of Existing Units or Programs of Instruction, continued**

- I. Dual degree programs sponsored by two different institutions or two departments, schools, or colleges within an institution, leading to the awarding of two separate degrees. Dual degrees are not discretely identified in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory. This definition assumes the existence of two degree offerings prior to an agreement for a dual offering.
- J. Administrative changes at the Department level, such as establishing a new department, combining two or more departments into a single department, or dividing a department into two or more departments. If the administrative change creates a more prominent unit of instruction, such as a division or school, Commission approval as a new unit is required.
- K. New Units of Instruction, Research, or Service which do not offer courses or other activities for academic credit.
- L. New Teacher Certification Programs. However, if a certification program involves the addition of a new degree program which will be added to the Commission's Academic Program Inventory and identified in the institution's catalog or other publications, Commission review and approval as a new academic program is required. (For example, if the institution is adding a teacher certification in English under an existing degree program in Secondary Education, Commission approval is not required. However, if a separate degree is to be offered in English Education, per se, then approval is required).
- M. Designation of a program in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory as inactive or reinstatement of an inactive program to active status. While a program is on inactive status, no students will be admitted. If an inactive program has not been reinstated within five years, it will be removed from the Commission's Academic Program Inventory. Once the five-year time limit has expired, the institution will have to submit a new program proposal, following established timetables and procedures for review, to have a program reinstated to the Commission's Academic Program Inventory.

To reinstate an inactive program to active status within five years of the date it was formally recognized as inactive by the Commission, the institution must submit documentation that the program has adequate resources and student demand to be placed on active status. After June 6, 1997, only viable programs, as determined by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, may be placed on inactive status.

- N. Termination of a program in the Commission's Academic Program Inventory. Once the Commission formally recognizes the termination of a program in the Inventory, the institution must submit a new program proposal, following established timetables and procedures, to offer the program again.

## Attachment 2

### *Alabama Commission on Higher Education*

#### **GUIDELINES FOR PLACING PROGRAMS ON INACTIVE STATUS & REINSTATING PROGRAMS TO ACTIVE STATUS**

1. The following programs are not eligible to be placed on inactive status:
  - a. Non-viable programs
  - b. Programs that have not been implemented
  - c. Programs that have a five-year post-implementation condition report still to be presented to the Commission
  - d. Programs that have not met post-implementation conditions
2. To place a program on inactive status, the institution submits an information item to the Commission.
3. Once a program has been recognized by the Commission as inactive and so designated in the Academic Program Inventory, no new students can be admitted to the program. However, students already in the pipeline can complete the program.
4. The institution may reinstate a program to active status within five years after the program has been placed on inactive status by information item. The information item should provide evidence of adequate resources and student demand to reactivate the program.
5. If a program has not been reinstated within five years after being placed on inactive status, it will be removed from the Academic Program Inventory.

If an institution wishes to offer a program again that has been deleted from the Academic Program Inventory, it will be required to submit a new program proposal for Commission review and action.