



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GUIDELINES

Section 2:	Academic Programs and Curriculum: Guidelines and Procedures	
Title:	New Specialization within a Degree Program	
Number (Current Format)	Number (Prior Format)	Date Last Revised
2.6		09/2020
Reference:	BOR Policy 2:23 – Program and Curriculum Approval	
Related Form(s):	AAC Form 2.6 – New Specialization Form	

Approval Summary Quick View

New Specialization ► CAO ► AAC Program Tracker ► Univ. Website ► AAC ► BOR

1. A **specialization** is a designated plan of study within an existing degree program. It provides a student an alternative to the primary format of the major or it may be one of several tracks within a broad major. Specializations contain courses within the discipline(s) of the existing program. Specializations appear in the institutional catalog and on the transcript. Majors that offer specializations typically have one-third to two-thirds of the credits in common with the remaining course work fulfilling the requirements of the specialization(s) offered. A specialization may attach to only one major. Associate degree programs shall not have specializations.
2. While no minimum and maximum number of credits exists for a specialization, universities should align credit hours with current university and system policies and guidelines on academic majors and minors.
3. Board of Regents (BOR) action is required to establish a new specialization within an existing program.
4. The university Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) will review the new specialization request with the system Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The notification to the system CAO shall occur at least one Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) meeting prior to the initial posting of the new proposal. If the proposal involves new courses for the university, the notification to the system CAO shall include a brief justification and evidence that the program does not duplicate existing programming within the Regental system (or that the duplication is justified).
5. The Executive Director grants formal approval to move forward with the new specialization request and for posting on the [AAC Program Tracking Dashboard](#).
6. Program development notifications will be posted to the AAC Program Tracking Dashboard, and institutions shall have the opportunity prior to the next AAC meeting to make formal inquiries with the posting institutions about the intent and nature of the program. Such inquiries

shall be made directly with the provost/VPAA at the posting institution and should include both the system CAO and the system Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs.

7. The system CAO and the Executive Director may approve, deny, or send the proposal form back to the campus for revisions. The Executive Director has final authority for advancing a new specialization request forward for AAC review and to the Board of Regents. Final recommendations to the Board may outline Board staff or institutional concerns for the requested specialization in the “Impact and Recommendation” section of the Board cover sheet.
8. The system CAO Officer will place the request on the AAC agenda.
9. Proposals approved by the AAC move to the agenda of the Board of Regents for review and final approval.

SOURCE:

AAC May 2018; October 2018 (Clerical). AAC September 2020.