



**SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES**

**Guidelines for developing and approving new graduate programs
Academic Council of the School of Graduate Studies
Memorial University**

Initial approval by Council on January 16, 2017.

Latest revision endorsed by Council on February 16, 2026.

These guidelines track the procedures that are normally followed for developing and approving new graduate programs at Memorial University. For the purpose of these guidelines, a new program shall be deemed to have significantly different program requirements and learning outcomes from those currently offered by the University. The final decisions on new graduate programs rest with Senate and the Board of Regents.

Procedures whereby an academic unit may request an expansion of the area in which graduate studies may be initiated are basically the same as those outlined below. They differ primarily in that the review committee established by the Dean of Graduate Studies (hereinafter "Dean") on the recommendation of the Head is composed, normally, of internal members only. This is not to say that such evaluation committees may not have external members – but they need not. Documentation of the nature and in the spirit of that requested above will be necessary to support justification for the expansion of the degree.

In certain exceptional cases and at their discretion, the Dean may decide (with Academic Council Executive (hereinafter "ACE") approval) that a proposal may proceed to Academic Council following the process for any calendar change, and without an internal or external review.

Stage 1 – Proposal development

Early on in the proposal development stage, the proponents must advise the Dean of their intent to develop a new graduate program.

The final proposal must include:

- Executive summary
- Program description
- Statement of justification
- Market analysis
- Projected enrolments
- Admission requirements
- Program requirements
- Resource implications
 - Faculty complement and workload
 - Space and facilities
 - Financial support
- Budget
- Library holdings evaluation (Appendix A)
- Calendar regulations (Appendix B)
- Course listing (Appendix C)
- Consultation (Appendix D)
- Faculty CVs (Appendix E)
- Additional appendices as needed

Stage 2 – Proposal approval

The academic unit will submit the new program proposal with appropriate supporting documentation to the appropriate graduate studies committee and Faculty/School Council for approval. Graduate programs that are interdisciplinary in nature will require additional consultations and approval from all relevant academic units.

Once a proposal is ready for submission and has been approved up to the level of Faculty/School Council (or equivalent governing body), the following steps must take place:

- The proposal is submitted by the proponents to ACE for review. If approved, ACE then submits to Council for review. If approved in principle, the Dean will ask the proponents to submit, for consideration, names of potential internal and external reviewers to serve on a review committee, as well as a member of their academic unit as a resource person to be the liaison with the review committee.
- The review committee, appointed by the Dean, will consist of two internal reviewers, two external reviewers, and a registered graduate student. External reviewers in this case shall be taken to mean senior academics in a relevant field of study from institutions other than Memorial University, and other relevant experts in the field. The selection of members for the review committee will comply with Memorial's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).
- SGS will convene the meetings of the review committee so as to meet the schedules of all members. The review committee will participate in meetings and deliberations normally over 1-2 days. Meetings will normally be held with the proponents, relevant Deans, current and potential students, and other relevant stakeholder groups as deemed appropriate by the Dean.
- The review committee will be asked to evaluate programs using the following criteria:
 - alignment with University's and departmental mission and goals
 - demand for program and potential for growth
 - adequate resources (including library, laboratory, graduate student space, graduate student funding, faculty members, technical/support staff)
 - cost to support program and justification of any special fees
 - appropriate Calendar regulations (regarding program name, admissions and program requirements)
 - overall quality of the program and potential to be successful
- Within one week of its final meeting, the review committee will submit a final report to the Dean. SGS will forward the report to the proponents for appropriate responses. The proposal, the final report of the review committee, and the proponents' responses will be submitted to Council for review and approval.

If approved, the entire package will be sent to the Executive Committee of Senate (hereinafter "SenEx") for review prior to its final approval by the whole Senate. If Senate deems it warranted, they will also then forward to the Board of Regents for Board approval.

Timeline

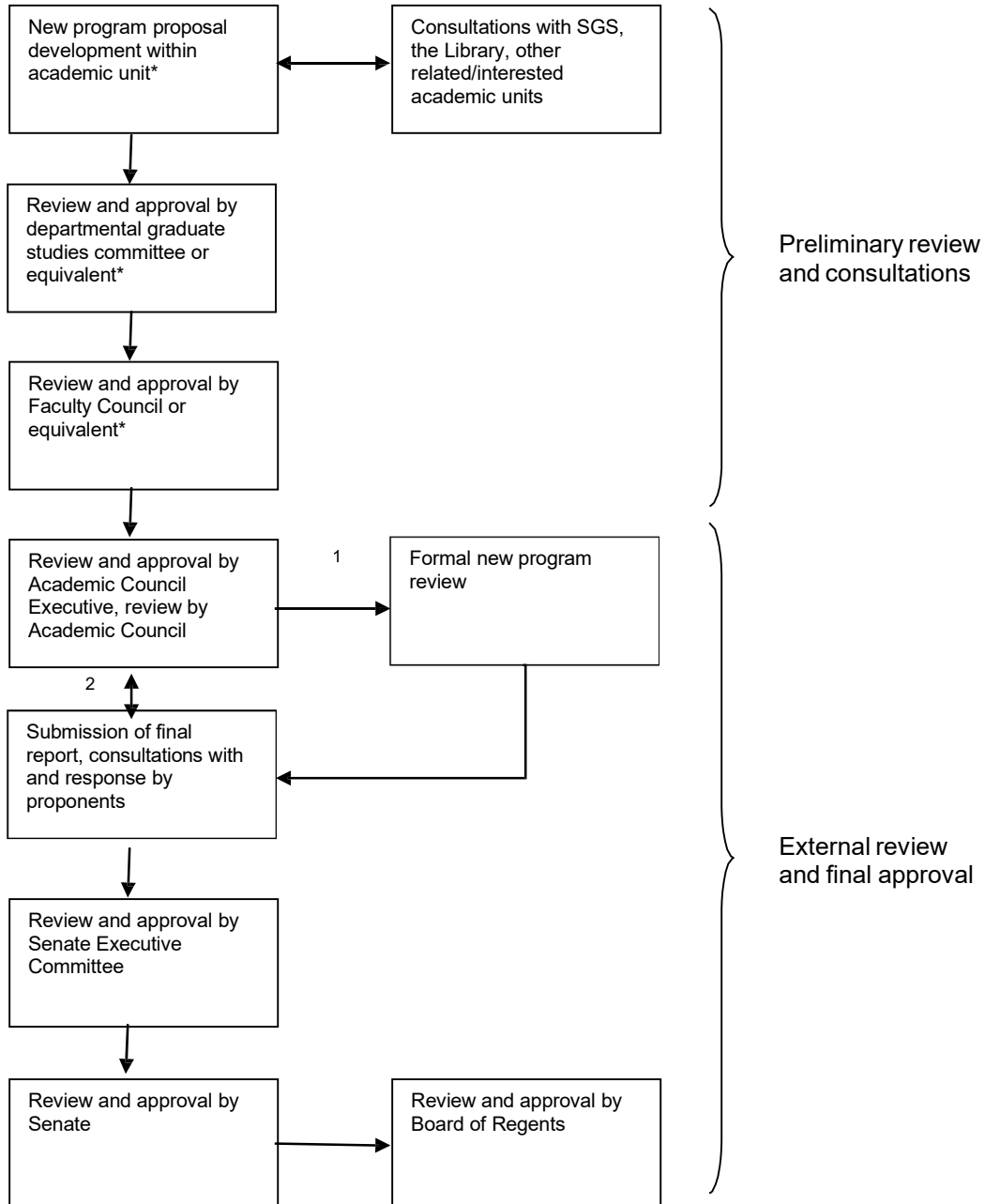
Academic units are strongly encouraged to start planning and developing a proposal in January and aim to submit the final proposal to ACE by August, to ensure a new program is recorded in the following year's University Calendar, and able to admit students for Fall semester of that same year.

Academic units that intend to submit after June are encouraged to consult with SGS on appropriate timelines, to ensure the program may be approved in time to accept students in the upcoming Fall semester.

The following is an approximate timeline including each of the steps involved in the new program development/approval process:

- Proposal development and consultations (4 months)
- Review by departmental graduate studies committee(s) and Faculty Council(s) (2 months)
- Review by SGS (1 month)
- Review for approval in principle by ACE and Academic Council (1 month)
- External review (2 months)
- Review for final approval ACE and Council (1 month)
- Review/approval by SenEx, Senate, and Board of Regents (2 months)

New Graduate Program Approval Flowchart



*For interdisciplinary programs, approval must be sought by governing committees/bodies from all relevant academic units