

This message is sent on behalf of Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Colleagues,

I write to inform you of some changes to new academic program development and approval processes. These changes are a result of input from the community about the need to streamline and expedite these processes.

You will recall that in 2014, we instituted the requirement that all new program proposals must go through a concept paper process. The purpose of this concept paper stage was multi-faceted. By posting concept papers for community review, we encouraged the campus to offer comments on the viability of the proposal and suggestions for improvement. In addition, the concept paper allowed the president to approve the idea of programs before faculty invested considerable time in creating full proposals. At the time, our university leadership and curriculum review bodies supported this practice.

But, as we know, the concept paper process did introduce an additional phase in the program approval procedures and this resulted in increasing the time to market for new programs. Over the years, we heard from many in the community that this increase in time was burdensome.

As a result, we are eliminating the concept paper requirement effective immediately.

In order for the campus to make strategic decisions regarding new programs, I have asked each degree-granting unit to [recommend academic master plans](#) to the president. These master plans are to look forward seven (7) years, in alignment with the RIT strategic plan, and to recommend specific programs the units would like to offer. Details of the master plan can be found here on my website or in individual deans' offices. These master plans are due to the Provost by May 30, 2018.

In the interim, if you are currently working on either a concept paper or a full proposal, I offer the following advice:

1. If you are working on a concept paper, please bring this forward through your dean or equivalent. They will bring this to the provost and to the president. You will receive feedback for how to move forward.
2. If you are in the full proposal stage, the proposal must move through the normal college and university-review stages, and have the approval of the academic senate before it will be considered by the president.
3. Make sure that the program in #1 or #2 above is incorporated in your unit's academic master plan.

If you have not developed either a concept paper or a full proposal but are thinking about a new program, I recommend that you work to include this program idea in your unit's academic master plan.

It is my expectation that the elimination of the concept paper requirement will add agility to the program development process and that moving forward the academic master plans will accommodate strategic decision making and maintain respect for shared governance which we value at RIT.

Respectfully,

Jeremy Haefner
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs