

**Interinstitutional Committee on Academic Program Planning (ICAPP)
Program Planning Process**

Frequently Asked Questions

ICAPP provides a platform to discuss state and national policy implications as it relates to degree development and is a forum for partnership and engagement among community and technical colleges and public baccalaureate institutions.

The purpose of the Interinstitutional Committee on Academic Program Planning ([ICAPP](#)) is to provide a forum for collegial discussion of degree development in Washington with the goal of increasing communication and awareness to ensure Washington’s public colleges and universities meet both student and economic demands and minimize the potential duplication of state resources.

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is the history of degree program planning in Washington?

In 2011 the Washington State Legislature eliminated the Higher Education Coordinating Board. In 2012, state policymakers created a new agency – the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). WSAC, at the time of the transition, was no longer responsible for degree program approval.

WSAC did retain responsibility, as stated in [RCW 28B.77.080](#) and [RCW 28B.77.020](#), for determining if a degree should be assigned to an institution or sector to create a center of excellence, creation of higher education centers or consortia and approval of off-campus or new degree programs between private, non-profit higher education institutions and community or technical colleges.

To meet the need for continuous collaboration and communication regarding degree program development and implementation among the state's public higher education institutions, ICAPP undertook this work.

What is the purpose of ICAPP?

The purpose of the ICAPP is to provide a forum for collegial discussion of degree development in Washington with the goal of increasing communication and awareness to ensure Washington's public colleges and universities meet both student and economic demands and minimize the potential duplication of state resources.

What is the role of ICAPP?

The role of ICAPP is to establish a transparent and collaborative community of proactive engagement among institutions and sectors focused on new baccalaureate and graduate degree programs, as well as existing programs that seek new locations and modalities of program delivery.

The role of ICAPP is achieved through:

- Collective review of current statewide degree goals and needs assessments.
- Resolution of concerns and/or disputes among institutions.
- Identification and referrals regarding outstanding program planning differences among institutions.
- Identification of opportunities for collaboration, planning process improvements and awareness of emerging trends and issues.
- Development of processes and practices of the Committee.

ICAPP does not have an approval role in the development and implementation of degrees.

Who participates as a member of ICAPP?

Washington's public higher education institutions, including community and technical colleges and the public four-year college and universities, collaborate through ICAPP.

ICAPP members include a representative from each of the six public baccalaureate institutions, the executive deputy director of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) or designee and the executive director of the Council of Presidents (COP), or designee. ICAPP is staffed by the Council of Presidents.

How often does ICAPP meet and what is the purpose of ICAPP meetings?

ICAPP meets bi-annually in April and November. Outside of the bi-annual meeting if an issue or topic emerges that requires ICAPP's attention, COP and SBCTC will work with the Committee to schedule a conference call to address the topic and/or issue.

The purpose of each meeting is to:

- Provide a forum for collegial discussions of degree development in Washington.
- Review and discuss state and national policy implications relevant to degree development and implementation.
- Create a forum for peer-to-peer engagement about opportunities and challenges.
- Address any conflicts among or between institutions.

How does ICAPP and WSAC collaborate?

The executive director of the Council of Presidents or designee is the ICAPP liaison to WSAC regarding questions and information about ICAPP and its work.

ICAPP PROGRAM PLANNING PROCESS

What degrees do the *ICAPP Guidelines* impact?

The [ICAPP Guidelines](#) apply to new baccalaureate and graduate degree programs, as well as existing programs that seek new locations and modalities of program delivery at Washington's public higher education institutions.

The ICAPP Guidelines do not apply to changes to a majors offered by an institution if the major leads to an existing degree. The ICAPP Guidelines would apply if a change to a major would lead to a new degree.

What is the ICAPP Degree Program Planning Process?

The ICAPP degree program planning process is structured in three stages:

- *The Idea Stage*
- *Degree Proposal Stage*
- *Waiting for External Approval Stage*

What is the *Idea Stage*?

In the *Idea Stage* a degree program is under consideration for proposal. The college or university has a concept for what could be a future degree program. This includes new baccalaureate or graduate degree program or an existing degree program for a new location or modality of program delivery.

The intent of the *Idea Stage* is to facilitate early collegial discussions among institutions. The degree program is only a concept. The *ICAPP Guidelines* state if a degree program is under consideration for proposal, the degree program should be placed in the *Idea Stage* on the *ICAPP Grid*. There are no further deadlines, timelines or documentation associated with this stage beyond this action.

A degree program in the *Idea Stage* should be shared with COP or SBCTC to include on the *ICAPP Grid*. In addition, colleges and universities with concepts for degree programs are encouraged to reach out to both community and technical colleges and baccalaureate institutions if they have ideas for collaboration, issues or concerns. A list of BAS [contacts](#) at each of the public baccalaureate institutions is available and institutions are encouraged to engage.

What is the *Degree Proposal Stage*?

In the *Degree Proposal Stage*, a degree program is proposed as either a new baccalaureate or graduate degree program or an existing degree program for a new location or modality of program delivery. This step aligns with the [Statement of Need](#) for community and technical colleges.

The *Degree Proposal Stage* is the first formal step in the process in which an institution declares intent to implement a degree program. Institutions will prepare and submit a degree proposal to SBCTC or COP. COP will post the degree to the *ICAPP Grid* and communicate the proposal to ICAPP for review and comment. The review period for degree proposals is 30 calendar days. COP will send a notice to ICAPP when the 30-day review is completed.

Institutions must provide the following documentation for the *Degree Proposal Stage*.

- Program Description
Describe the proposed program, including where and when the program will be offered, modality, credit hours, anticipated enrollment, student demographics to be served, focus, overview of the curriculum, change in mission if any, and rationale for offering the program. For undergraduate programs, outline the plan for articulation with associate degree programs, including any applicable major-ready pathways.
- Need for the Program with Emphasis on Student Demand
Describe context for the degree program including how the program and/or location will support the state's goals for higher education; student demand; demand for graduates in the degree program; presence or not of similar programs at other public or private, non-profit institutions in the region, in-state as well as out-of-state and differentiation from similar programs; and options for collaboration.
- Resource Implications
Identify whether the program will be state-supported or, for graduate and fee-based programs, the level of tuition to be charged, and any other significant resource implications.
- Other Institutions Contacted
List any institutions and individuals contacted about the degree program outside of the ICAPP process.

What is the *Waiting for External Approval Stage*?

A degree program in the *Waiting for External Approval Stage* is a program that has completed the 30-day review process.

Degree programs offered by a public four-year institution are awaiting approval by a board of trustees or regents and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).

Degree programs offered by a community or technical college are awaiting final approval by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Programs are approved during the regular business meetings of the SBCTC Board [scheduled](#) throughout the academic year, usually three times a year.

What is the role of ICAPP at each stage of the process?

At each stage the role of ICAPP is to coordinate inter-institutional communication among and between sectors by providing a forum for consistent communication, transparency, feedback, collegial resolution of differences and exploration of partnership opportunities.

What are the institutional steps in the ICAPP Program Planning Process for new degrees or changes to existing degrees?

There are seven major steps in the ICAPP Program Planning Process for new degrees or changes to existing degrees.

1. When institutions have a degree program under consideration for proposal, they provide degree programs at the *Idea Stage* to either the SBCTC, if the institution is a community or technical college, or COP, if the institution is a public four-year university or college.
2. COP then adds the degree at the *Idea Stage* to the *ICAPP Grid*.
3. The *ICAPP Grid* is updated six times each calendar year (January, March, May, July, August and November). To update the *ICAPP Grid*, COP reaches out to ICAPP members for updates. All updates received by the deadline, usually around the 15th of the month, are placed on the *ICAPP Grid* for that update period. COP then shares the updated *ICAPP Grid* with ICAPP and the provosts of Washington's public, four-year colleges and universities.
4. Institutions are encouraged to begin engagement with colleges and universities, if interested, when a degree is added to the *Idea Stage* and continue engagement throughout the ICAPP process.
5. In the *Degree Proposal Stage*, an institution will submit the required documentation to either the SBCTC, if the institution is a community or technical college, or COP, if the institution is a public four-year university or college. All documentation is provided to ICAPP through dissemination of materials by COP. The 30-day review period begins when the documentation is disseminated by COP to ICAPP.
6. Institutions will review the documentation provided by the college or university developing the degree and determine if they are interested in further conversations about the proposal. If there is no interest, no further action is required. If an institution is interested in contacting the degree proposing institution, then the institution must communicate, either verbally or in writing their concerns or feedback and request further engagement.
7. The *Degree Proposal Stage* institutions are required to provide feedback within a 30-day period. Once the 30-day period is completed COP will send a note to ICAPP announcing completion of the *Degree Proposal Stage*.

How are areas of concern or conflicts resolved?

In the event where a college or university has concerns among or between institutions regarding a proposed degree program, ICAPP will mediate conflicts and concerns.

An institution must:

- First communicate, either verbally or in writing, with the institution or sector proposing the degree program to discuss it further. Requests may be routed through COP staff and/or SBCTC staff, who may serve as designees on behalf of one or more institutions to facilitate communications with other sectors or institutions.
- If concerns remain after this discussion, institutions may request that either SBCTC or COP convene a small representative group of ICAPP. The meeting will include the degree program proposing institution, the institution(s) requesting the meeting, an institution with no position on the proposal and representatives of ICAPP in equal parts representing community and technical colleges and baccalaureate institutions. The meeting may take place in-person, or via conference call or web. The intent of the meeting is to present opportunities and/or concerns early in the process in hopes of informing further development of a degree.

What stages does an institution have to provide documentation?

For the ICAPP degree program planning process institutions are required to provide documentation for the *Degree Proposal Stage* only.

The *Waiting for External Approval Stage* will likely require documentation required by external organizations, such as SBCTC, NWCCU or boards of trustees or regents.

When should an institution post a degree program on the grid in the Idea Stage?

Institutions are encouraged to include proposals that they are considering and are prepared to publicly discuss. The earlier a degree program can be added to the *ICAPP Grid* the easier it is to facilitate conversations among institutions.

What timelines are included as part of the process?

The only formal deadline is the 30-day review period during the *Degree Proposal Stage* to review a degree program. Institutions that have comments must provide them to the contact listed in the *Degree Proposal* documentation. There are no formal deadlines or time frames for the *Idea Stage* or *Waiting for External Approval Stage* as part of the ICAPP process.

How does an institution place a degree program on the ICAPP Grid?

Each institution or system has a process for degree development. The ICAPP representative for the institution or sector responsible for aligning this process with the ICAPP process. Institutions interested in viewing the *ICAPP Grid* should contact their sector representative.

The Council of Presidents in collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges maintains the ICAPP grid of new baccalaureate and graduate degree programs, existing programs for new locations and modalities of program delivery and

degrees implemented by each sector. The purpose of the grid is to retain a record of degree development among public higher education institutions in Washington and to facilitate partnerships and engagement among and between Washington public higher education institutions.

In January, March, May, July, August and November, COP will ask ICAPP members for updates to the *ICAPP Grid*. All updates received by the 15th will be placed on the *ICAPP Grid*. COP will provide an updated grid to ICAPP.

Degree programs identified as in one of the three ICAPP stages will be added to the *ICAPP Grid* by COP or SBCTC on behalf of a public baccalaureate institution or community or technical college.

How are changes in degrees or new degrees communicated?

Each stage for each degree is identified in the *ICAPP Grid*. The *ICAPP Grid* provides institutions with the most recent status of a new baccalaureate or graduate degree programs and existing programs for new locations and modalities, distinguishing between short-term and long-term planning.

In addition, each time the *ICAPP Grid* is updated, COP provides a summary of changes from the prior version to ICAPP.

How does the ICAPP program planning process align with the Applied Baccalaureate Degree implementation process?

Community and technical colleges notify the State Board of Community & Technical Colleges when there is a proposed idea for a degree (*Idea Stage*).

Community and technical colleges submit the notice of proposal within 12 months prior to submitting the Statement of Need (*Degree Proposal Stage*) to SBCTC.

Once the *Degree Proposal Stage* is completed, then SBCTC staff have at least 90 days to complete the paperwork (*Waiting for External Approval Stage*) and recommendation to the Board of the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges. The Board has final approval of the degree program.

As the ICAPP process indicates throughout this timeline engagement with other two- and four-year institutions takes place and comments regarding proposed programs may be provided until the final approval of the Board.

How does the ICAPP program planning process align with institutional degree approval processes?

Each public baccalaureate institution has a different process for approving degrees. The ICAPP process serves as the way by which public four-year college and universities are able to communicate with both two- and four-year institutions regarding proposed changes in degrees and the development of new degrees.

In general terms, a degree is initially proposed by a faculty member or Department (*Idea Stage*). Information regarding the program is shared and collegial communications are shared within the institution. This is followed by a full proposal (*Degree Proposal Stage*). If successful, the program is then shared with faculty senate/faculty for review and approval. If approved the degree is reviewed and formal action is taken by the institution's Board of Regents or Trustees (*Waiting for External Approval Stage*). Finally, the institution seeks NWCCU approval, any additional program accreditation requirements, and U.S. Department of Education requirements for Veteran's benefits and financial aid considerations.

CONTACTS

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