



Policy for the Approval or Revision of Academic Programs and Organizational Units

Training Session – Spring 2026

Agenda

1. ADHE Structure and Purpose
2. Degree Information and Approved Lists
3. Academic Program Development & Change
 - a. Letter of Intent
 - b. Program Proposals
 - c. Letter of Notification
 - d. Certificate and Degree Definitions
4. Best Practices
5. Scenarios

Arkansas Division of Higher Education

Structure and Purpose



ADHE Structure and Purpose



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**Elementary &
Secondary
Education**



**Career &
Technical
Education**



**Higher
Education**



**Arkansas
State Library**



**Schools for The
Deaf & The
Blind**



**MLK Jr.
Commission &
Board**



ADHE Structure and Purpose

ARKANSAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD (AHECB)

**7 members appointed by
the Governor and serve
staggered six-year terms**

The AHECB is charged by state law to coordinate higher education in Arkansas and to assure an orderly and effective development of each of the publicly supported institutions of higher education. ADHE serves as the administrative staff of the AHECB.



ADHE Structure and Purpose



DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**Academic
Affairs**

**Institutional
Finance**

**Financial
Aid**

Data Team


Operations

**Career
Pathways
Initiative**

**Carl D.
Perkins**

EngageAR

**SAA for
Veterans
Training**



Degree Information and Approval Lists



Degree Information & Approval Lists

The following lists can be found on ADHE's website and should be referenced when working in this policy.

- **AHECB Approved Degree Programs**
- AHECB Approved List by Distance
- AHECB Approved Concurrent Contacts
- **AHECB Approved Department Codes**
- AHECB Approved Graduate Programs
- **AHECB Approved Concentrations**
- Assigned Degree Codes for Private & Nursing Institutions
- AHECB Approved Degree Programs (Excel Format)



Degree Information & Approval Lists

AHECB Approved Degree Programs List

**AHECB Approved Degree Programs
Arkansas State University
Academic Year 2026**

Status	Level	Award	CIP 2020	Degree Code	Credit Hours	Percent Distance	Program Name	Approval Date	Last Prg Revw Yr	Next Prg Revw Yr
A	01	CP	01.0101	3483	18		Livestock Business Management	1/24/2025		
A	01	CP	09.0199	1265	12	100%	Debate and Forensics	7/26/2019	2019	2029
A	01	CP	09.0702	2394	9	100%	Swift Coding	7/27/2018	2018	2028
A	01	CP	09.0702	5395	12	100%	Social Media Management	4/21/2017	2017	2027
I	05	BSE	13.1329	3960	120		Physics	1/1/1985	2022	2032
F	07	MEM	15.1501	7530	30	100%	Engineering Management	4/25/2008		
F	07	MSE	14.0101	6810	30		Engineering	4/27/2012		
P	01	CP	50.0411	1755	9	100%	Game Production and Development	7/30/2021	2021	2031
P	01	CP	50.0411	1775	9	100%	Android Application Development	7/30/2021	2021	2031

Status: A=Active; N=Active Future; I=Inactive; F=Future Inactive; P=Phase-Out Delete



Degree Information & Approval Lists

AHECB Approved Concentrations List

AHECB Approved Concentrations

National Park College

Academic Year 2026

Status	DegCode	Degree Name	Deg Level	Concentration Code	Concentration Name	Approval Date	Effective Date
A	0050	AA-General Education	03	ORGANIZLEADER	Organizational Leadership	7/1/2025	7/1/2025
A	0300	AAS-Business Management	03	ACCOUNTING	Accounting	7/1/2025	7/1/2025
A	0300	AAS-Business Management	03	HOSPITALITYMGMT	Hospitality	7/1/2025	7/1/2025
A	0300	AAS-Business Management	03	MARKETING	Management/Marketing	7/1/2025	7/1/2025

Status: A=Active; N=Active Future; I=Inactive; F=Future Inactive; P=Phase-Out Delete



Degree Information & Approval Lists

AHECB Approved Department Code List

AHECB Approved Department Codes
University of Arkansas at Monticello
Academic Year 2026

Department Code	Department Name	Date Approved
2830	Arkansas Heavy Equipment Operation Training Academy	
0325	Center for Mathematics & Science Education	
1440	College of Forestry, Agriculture and Natural Resources	7/27/2018
2670	College of General Studies	
1790	Department of Military Science	11/4/2005
1800	Division of Music	
2720	School of Arts & Humanities	



Degree Information & Approval Lists

Definitions of approved certificates and degree types can be found in Appendix B of the [policy](#).

Definitions include

- Purpose
- Credit hour ranges and/or limits
- Curriculum requirements
- Prior external approvals – teacher licensure, nursing, etc.

Any deviation from an approved definition must be approved.



Academic Program Development and Change



Academic Program Development & Change

Important Webpages

[ADHE Academic Affairs](#)

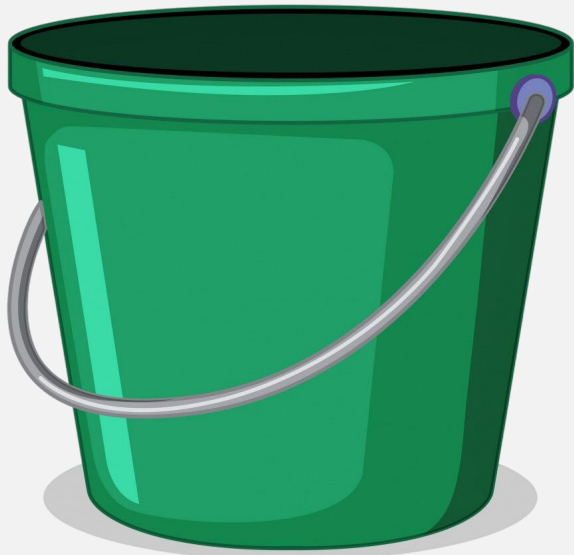
[Academic Program Development & Change](#)

(includes links to policy, forms, templates, information, and guidance)

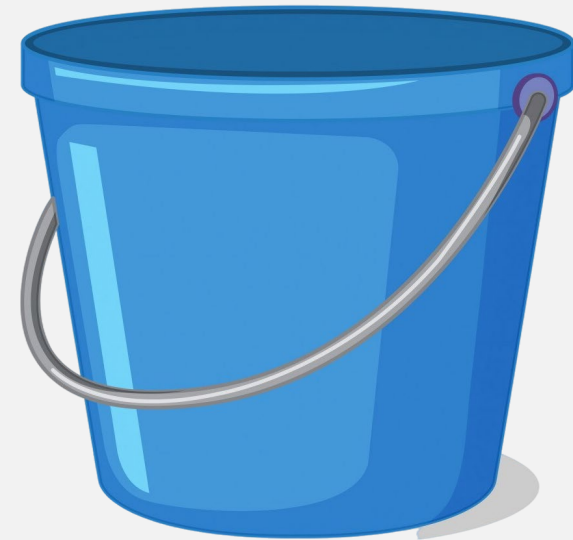
[ADHE File Transfer System](#)



Approval Types



Requires AHECB Approval



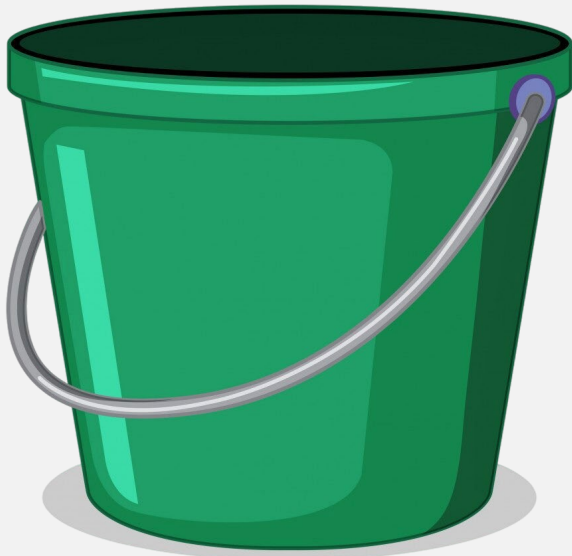
**Requires ADHE
Commissioner Approval**



Academic Program Development & Change

AHECB Approval Required

1. The creation of a new certificate or degree program, regardless of mode of instruction, where 25% or more of a degree program or 50% or more of a certificate program is new coursework.
2. The establishment of new organizational units that serve as a base for faculty appointments or offer degree programs.



Process Overview





Academic Program Development & Change

Letter of Intent

A Letter of Intent (LOI) informs the Coordinating Board of an institution's intent to create a new academic program or organizational unit.

- Initial step in the process to create a new program or organizational unit
- Form is submitted to ADHE and requires an email notification to all CAOs (*See form for email details*)
- Intent is presented to the AHECB via the quarterly Letter of Intent agenda item
- Valid for one year
- Initiates the generation of a LMI report to be used in the writing of the proposal

Ooooo tell me more...



Academic Program Development & Change

ADHE uses Lightcast to create a Workforce Analysis Report to be used when writing a program proposal. On the LOI form, the following must be provided.

1. Proposed 6-digit CIP code
2. Relevant SOC codes
3. Relevant NAICS codes
4. Possible Occupation titles
5. Employment regions (cities, counties, states, MSAs)

**Letter of
Intent**

This report provides a strong foundation for all institutions, regardless of their size or available resources. While it should be included in a proposal's workforce analysis; it should not be the sole source of information.

We even do ad hoc workforce analysis reports!



Academic Program Development & Change

Deadlines for Letters of Intent

Letters of Intent are due on the first business day of the month of the scheduled AHECB meeting. Letters of Intent to create a new program must be presented at least one AHECB meeting prior to the presentation of the proposal. Comments or objections to a Letter of Intent must be submitted in writing to ADHE and submitting institution within 30 days of the email to all Arkansas public institutions.

**Letter of
Intent**

Letter of Intent	
AHECB Meeting	Deadline
January	January 1
April	April 1
July	July 1
October	October 1



Academic Program Development & Change

Program Proposal

A Program Proposal outlines the detailed information about the new program or unit's purpose, goals, curriculum, resources, and funding.

- Second step in the process to create a new program or organizational unit
- Form submitted to ADHE for review and summary
- Requires the institution's Board of Trustees approval prior to consideration by the AHECB
- Presented to the AHECB within one year following the Letter of Intent, but not concurrently



Academic Program Development & Change

Deadlines for Program Proposals

Proposals are due on the first business day of the month, two months prior to the scheduled AHECB meeting. Program proposal summaries are available on the ADHE website.

**Program
Proposal**

Program Proposal	
AHECB Meeting	Deadline
January	November 1
April	February 1
July	May 1
October	August 1



Academic Program Development & Change

After a Program Proposal is reviewed and summarized, it is placed on the AHECB agenda as a voting item.

- Final step in the process to create a new program or organizational unit
- Proposal summary is presented to the Board by the ADHE Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs
- Institutional representatives must attend the AHECB meeting to respond to questions about their proposed new program or unit.
- Institutions must initiate programs or units by the dates listed in the Board agenda item. AHECB approval terminates if not initiated within two years

**AHECB
Vote**

A green arrow pointing to the right, with the text 'AHECB Vote' written in white, bold, sans-serif font inside it.

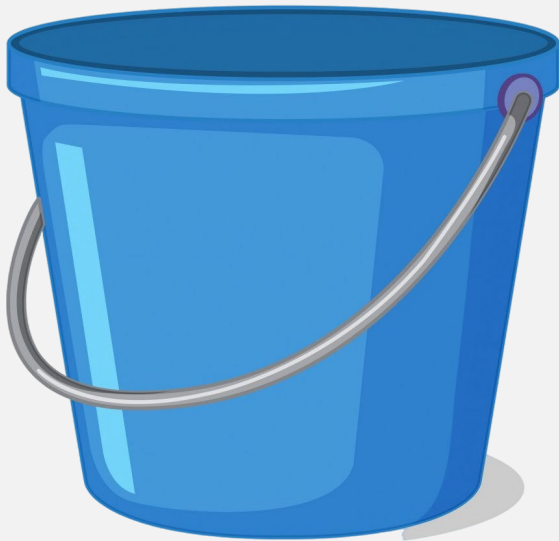


Academic Program Development & Change

ADHE Commissioner Approval Required

Programmatic, organizational, and location changes requiring Commissioner approval fall into 3 categories detailed by 17 distinct conditions, as outlined in the policy.

1. Modification of existing programs or units
2. Creation of new certificates or degrees made of mostly existing coursework and within policy thresholds.
3. Creation of new organizational units or off-campus locations, including concurrent education





Academic Program Development & Change

Process Overview



A Letter of Notification (LON) notifies the Coordinating Board of proposed revisions to previously approved programs or units, or the creation of new programs or units based on existing approvals.

- Form is submitted to ADHE with required documentation attached
- ADHE reviews and evaluates the request, then compiles into an agenda item listing
- Prior to finalization, agenda item listings are sent to the institution's CAO for review and approval
- All LON agenda item listings are consolidated and placed on the AHECB agenda as single consent item, requiring no vote



Academic Program Development & Change

When to Use an LON

Program Development

- Creation of a new certificate where less than 50% of the curriculum is new coursework
- Creation of a new degree where less than 25% of the curriculum is new coursework
- Creation of a concentration
- Creation of a minor

**Letter of
Notification**

Requirements for specific certificate and degree award types are listed in the policy.



Academic Program Development & Change

When to Use an LON

Changes to Existing Certificates or Degrees

- Change the title
- Change the CIP Code
- Offered via distance education
- Offered at an existing off-campus location
- Revise the curriculum
 - An LON is only required when an institution makes a change of 25% or more of a degree program or 50% or more of a certificate program.
 - If revisions affect information on the Approved Programs List, an LON is required regardless of the percent of change.

**Letter of
Notification**



Academic Program Development & Change

When to Use an LON

Letter of Notification

Deletions

- Delete a certificate, degree, concentration, or minor
- Requires teach-out plan
- The effective date should reflect when the teach-out begins, not the projected date when enrollment reaches zero
- Status will change from A=Active to P=Phase-Out until enrollment is zero. The status will then change again to D=Delete and be removed from the Approved Programs List



Academic Program Development & Change

When to Use an LON

Inactivations

- Inactivate a certificate or degree program
 - *Does not apply to a concentration under a certificate or degree program*
- The effective date should reflect when the teach-out begins, not the projected date when enrollment reaches zero
- Status will change from A=Active to F=Future Inactive until enrollment is zero. The status will then change again to I=Inactive
- Programs in Inactive status for longer than 5 years will be deleted.

**Letter of
Notification**



Academic Program Development & Change

When to Use an LON

Letter of Notification

Reactivations

- Applies to certificate or degree programs previously inactivated
- Institutions are given 2 options
 1. Reactivate and maintain previous program review and viability standards *OR*
 2. Reactivate and reset or extend program review and viability standards



Academic Program Development & Change

When to Use an LON

Letter of Notification

Instruction, Research, or Service Centers including Concurrent

- Create new center fully supported by sources other than state funds
 - Must provide list of initial program(s) offered, include CIP & degree code
- New off-campus location including Concurrent Education Partners
 - Requires email notification to all CAOs
 - Must provide list of initial program(s) offered, include CIP & degree code
 - Must follow all ADHE Concurrent Education policies & procedures
- Deletion of an Instruction, Research, or Service Center



Academic Program Development & Change

When to Use an LON

Letter of Notification

Organizational Units

- Create units *not* serving as a base for faculty appointments or degree programs
- Reorganize existing organizational units
 - Combine or separate
 - Change the title
 - Delete an organizational unit



Academic Program Development & Change

Deadlines for Letters of Notification

Letters of Notification are due on the first business day of the month, two months prior to the scheduled AHECB meeting.

**Letter of
Notification**

Letter of Notification	
AHECB Meeting	Deadline
January	November 1
April	February 1
July	May 1
October	August 1

Best Practices



Best Practices: General

Form Completion & Submission

- Up-to-date version available on ADHE website
- Intended to be completed and signed digitally, not printed and scanned
 - Tip: Most digital signatures will lock pdfs and prevent them from being edited. Get your CAO's digital signature last.
- Enable Java, if prompted
- Board of Trustees approval/notification date must be prior to the AHECB meeting date
- Required supporting documents should be attached to form ([*Demo video*](#))
- When submitting more than one form, please do not combine as one large file.
- Uploaded to the File Transfer System into appropriate folder

What would you do, Tracy?

When completing the LOI or LON form, I would complete it in this order (if possible)

1. Download latest version from ADHE's [website](#).
2. Save it on my computer using a naming convention that is informative and includes my institution's abbreviation, award type, program name, etc.
Ex. LON ASU BS Exercise Science Revision
3. At the top of the form, select my institution and complete the remaining institutional information *skipping the signature (for now)*.
4. If you are unsure of the President/Chancellor Approval Date or the BOT Approval/Notification Date, please do not skip it. Ask your CAO to complete this information when they add their signature.
5. Complete the required information in the appropriate category.
6. Attach required documentation.
7. Save!
8. Send to your CAO for their digital signature (this will lock the form from edits).
9. The CAO/AA staff will submit to ADHE via the File Transfer System.



Best Practices: Letter of Intent

- Send LOIs early!
 - LOI indicates intent to develop, it does not obligate the institution to create the credential
 - LOI will allow the institution to collect valuable feedback to better contribute to substance, details, or depth to a proposal
- All workforce analysis fields are necessary for ADHE to create a meaningful report required in program proposals.
 - Partial CIP and SOC codes will not be accepted.



Best Practices: Proposal

- Should be written as though this is your 15 minutes of fame!
- The Board's first impression of your program will be from reading the summary prepared by ADHE Academic Affairs staff. The summary of the program is only as good as the information provided in the proposal.
- Please use AI (LLM) responsibly and ensure content has been thoroughly reviewed for accuracy and relevance. It is good practice to cite when AI has been used.
- Program advisory committees should be formed and have met prior to proposal submission.
- ADHE Academic Affairs Staff are willing to review and provide feedback on draft proposals before formal submission.
 - Because each program and proposal has unique features and elements, we would encourage you to seek guidance and feedback early and often.



Best Practices: Letter of Notification

- Email notifications are not required for LONs *except* for Category 6, adding a New Off-Campus Location for Concurrent Education.
- For similar programs, multiple categories can be completed on the same LON form
- Form fields should be completed based on the information listed on the AHECB Approval Lists.
 - Access these lists directly from our website. Googling will result in old versions!
 - *Discrepancies between AHECB and institutional information are common. Contact us for guidance on how to resolve these differences.*
- If a program is not approved to be offered online, a concentration under this parent program *cannot* be offered online. It is package deal...online approval must be obtained for the parent program first.



Best Practices: Letter of Notification

- Effective Dates are very important!
 - Directly affects a program's status and how it appears on the Approval Lists
 - Statuses exist to accommodate for phase-out and teach-out plans.
 - Determines a program's starting and ending dates
 - Has a direct impact on program viability & program review.

SHALL WE PLAY A GAME?





**WHAT
WOULD
YOU
DO?**

Our college's Art Department is interested in creating a Certificate of Proficiency in Graphic Design. Many faculty have begun developing new courses that will comprise 12 hours of the total 15 credit hours.

Answer is in slide notes below.



WHAT WOULD YOU DO

A high school contacted us about offering our certificate programs in welding and construction technology to their students. We are excited for this opportunity since we haven't offered courses to these students before!

Answer is in slide notes below.



**WHAT
WOULD
YOU
DO?**

Our Bachelor of Science in Computer Science degree has some outdated courses in the curriculum. We would like to remove twelve credit hours and replace them with 4 new courses in Artificial Intelligence.

Answer is in slide notes below.



**WHAT
WOULD
YOU
DO?**

My institution has an Associate of Science in Agriculture degree which is currently 60 credit hours.

We need to add American Government to the degree plan to comply with Act 566, which will increase the credit hours to 63.



**WHAT
WOULD
YOU
DO?**

Our institution recently reviewed both the Bachelor of Science in Education in Mathematics Education and the Bachelor of Science in Education in Science Education programs. The Dean would like to combine these two degrees to create a Bachelor of Science in Education in STEM. The proposed changes have been sent to DESE, but approval has not been received.

Open Discussion

We make “house” calls!



We are available to offer training on your campus as a workshop, presentation, or in other formats.

Groups that may benefit are

- Curriculum Council or Committees
- Deans, Program Chairs, or other campus leaders
- Academic Affairs staff

If you are interested, contact us to set up a Zoom or call to discuss the needs of your institution or program. We can then customize this training and guidance to suit your needs.

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