Process for Developing Self-Supporting Programs

Steps in gaining approval for a new self-supporting degree:

I. Preliminary Review by the Graduate Division.

In order to streamline the proposal review process, all new self-supporting graduate degree proposals begin with a preliminary review by the Graduate Division. Please inform the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate Division, Frances Leslie, of plans to establish a new SSP and to schedule a consultation. The Graduate Academic Programs Manager, Kate Triglia, will then coordinate the degree proposal process. Preliminary market research will need to be conducted before the schools invest resources in the development of a proposal.

II. Approve the Initial Concept.

A. Proposer to complete a “UCI Project Proposal—Preliminary Concept Form”. The goal of this step is to name and describe the proposed degree and gather information relevant to its potential for success at an early stage in the program proposal process. The form:
   i. Describes the program—its scope and courses, its intended format (online, residential, hybrid), any special features, and any special facilities or equipment needed.
   ii. Provides information currently available about the intended audiences for the program.
   iii. Lists the lead faculty member(s) and those willing to develop the proposal/program.
   iv. Describes how faculty resources would be generated to support the program (i.e. curriculum development, course development, instruction).
   v. Indicates the endorsement from the relevant dean.

B. The completed form will be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate Division who will meet with the faculty and dean who are submitting the proposal to determine if there are any issues that need to be addressed at this stage before more work is initiated.

Go, no go decision 1. Are there any significant barriers to the program? Determined by: Graduate Dean, in consultation with relevant Deans.

III. Approve Market Research Funding.
The goal of this step in the process is to determine whether the assumptions related to the financial projections for the program will result in a program that will be financially viable.

A. Proposer to complete the “UNEX Programmatic Market Intake Sheet” that will serve as a preliminary business plan. The program sponsor will provide as much information as practicable on the perceived market demand and audience, competitors, student profiles, desired graduate outcomes, a program launch timeline and details about any specific concerns.

B. The form will be submitted to the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate Division who will share it with UNEX. Once received, University Extension’s marketing project lead will source a detailed, project estimate, including research tasks and timeline.

C. The proposer will complete the “Authorization to Initiate Market Research” form and submit the form to the following entities for authorization: School Dean and the Graduate Dean.

Go, no go decision 2. Does the program meet the preliminary criteria for a viable project and should funding up to $10,000 for market research be committed? Please note that the $10,000 market research funds are a loan from the university and must be repaid by the proposing school(s) or program when the program is launched. (Does it have a good chance for success so far?) Determined by: Dean, Graduate Division.

IV. Conduct and Assess Market Research.

Based upon results of the market analysis, determine the financial viability of the program and decide whether to move forward with the academic proposal and business plan.

Go, no go decision 3. Review and assessment of market research and a decision is made to move forward with the degree proposal/business plan. Please note that if the proposed program is not approved, the University will cover the cost of the market research. Determined by: Dean of Graduate Division, in consultation with relevant Deans and the Budget Office.

V. Create the SSP Degree Proposal and Cost Analysis Template for SSP Fee Proposal.

The goal of this step is, based on the preliminary market research, to produce a full scale and detailed business plan (SSP degree and fee proposals) which includes a detailed list and totals of startup costs (including the creation of a marketing plan), a definition of roles and responsibilities, full financial projections, timelines and milestones, and all other information necessary for the University to commit to full start-up funding (up to $500K).

A. Create the SSP Degree Proposal
   i. Read the Graduate Council’s process for the Review of Proposals for new graduate degree programs. All proposals must be written according to CCGA proposal format.
   ii. Follow the “Guidelines for the Development and Review of New Self-Supporting and Senate Regulated Graduate Degree Proposals at the University of California Irvine.”
   iii. Before submitting your proposal to Graduate Division, please review the Requisite Steps Checklist to ensure you have completed all of the requirements.
iv. Proposers are requested to submit a recommended list of internal and external reviewers, as part of their proposal package. The Graduate Council will select the reviewers from the list provided.

B. The school Dean’s office will need to develop a program budget, resource analysis, and is required to notify and work with the Budget Office to complete the pro forma financial projections and determine the fee structure of the program (Cost Analysis Template for SSP Fee Proposal and Questionnaire). Contact Budget Office Principal Finance Analyst, Karen Mizumoto.

i. The call for SSP proposals from UCOP comes at the end of November/early December, and is due on March 1. Proposals are due to the Budget Office at the end of January/beginning of February.

ii. NOTE: SSP proposals may be developed concurrently with the development and approval of academic programs; however, SSP Fee proposals will not be forwarded to UCOP until the academic programs have received both systemwide CCGA and Presidential approval.

iii. It is important to remember that all SSP proposals are additionally reviewed by the UC Council on Planning and Budget (UCPB).

Email the completed new self-supporting graduate program proposal, with a list of internal and external reviewers, for initial review to the Graduate Academic Programs Manager, Kate Triglia, and the Academic Senate’s Graduate Council Analyst, Adriana Collins. Email the program budget and resource analysis to Budget Office Principal Finance Analyst, Karen Mizumoto.

VI. Approve SSP Degree Proposal and Cost Analysis Template.

The Graduate Council and the Council on Planning and Budget (CPB) will be asked to provide an analysis of the proposals. Proposers must address issues raised by the solicited internal and external reviews and make appropriate adjustments to the final proposal, before final approval is considered by the Graduate Council. A budgetary and resource analysis will be provided to the Graduate Council for its final deliberation. If Graduate Council approves the proposal, the proposal will be eligible for consideration for full start-up funding.

Go, no go decision 4. Approval of degree proposal/business plan. Determined by: Graduate Council in consultation with CPB.

VII. Commit Full Start-up Funding.

The University will make a decision on whether to commit up to $500K in start-up funding for a new self-supporting program.

Go, no go decision 5. Approval to commit full startup funding. Determined by: the EVC/Provost, in consultation with the Budget Office and Graduate Dean.
Process for Determining Feasibility and Market Research

Preliminary Review and Consultation by the Graduate Division
- Schedule a meeting with the Dean of Graduate Division

Approval of Initial Concept
- UCI Project Proposal - Preliminary Concept Form

Approval of Preliminary Business Plan and Market Research Funding
- Programmatic Market Intake Sheet
- Authorization to initiate Market Research.

Academic Review Process

Create Self-Supporting Degree Proposal
- CCGA Proposal Format

Graduate Division Pre-Review

Graduate Council and Campus Review & Approval

CCGA Review & Approval

UCOP Approval

Business Review Process

UCI Budget Office Requirements:
Cost Analysis Template for SSP Fee Proposal and Questionnaire:
- Program Budget
- Resource Analysis
- Pro Forma Financial Projections

UCI Budget Office Review

Approval of degree and fee proposals and commitment of full startup funding from the EVC/P
CHECKLIST

Process for Developing Self-Supporting Programs

Please send all completed forms to the Graduate Academic Programs Manager, Kate Triglia.

☐ Review the “Process for Developing Self-Supporting Programs”
☐ Complete a “UCI Project Proposal - Preliminary Concept Form”
☐ Complete the “UNEX Programmatic Market Intake Sheet”
☐ Complete the “Authorization to Initiate Market Research”
☐ Create the SSP Degree Proposal
☐ Complete the Cost Analysis Template and Budget Questionnaire

UCI Project Proposal-Preliminary Concept Form
Name of Project (Working Title):

Primary Lead:

School:

Department:

1. Briefly describe the project (subject, number of courses, hours of instruction, type of credit):

2. What are the unique and compelling features of the project?

3. Briefly describe the audience (size, student status, profession, geographical dispersion, what they will be able to do after they take this program and how will it help them).

4. Describe ideas for reaching the audience with marketing information:

5. Are there currently existing (competitive) programs? Please list:

6. What is a logical time of year (start date) for this program?
7. List UCI administrators, faculty who would support this program:

8. Describe any possible commitments to support this project from UCI and/or outside sources.

Reviewed and Approved by:

_________________________  ____________  ______________________  ____________
Dean, Graduate Division         Date               Dean, University Extension         Date
Before a market research initiative can be undertaken, please complete as many of the sections below as possible. Responses to each question may be brief (several sentences to one paragraph), or longer as needed. If desirable, please provide attachments.

If a particular question does not apply, or you do not have the information needed to provide a response, please indicate such. All responses will be used to help scope the extent and type of research conducted.

1. **Opportunity Definition**
   
   Provide a brief summary of the proposed program.

2. **Delivery Modality**
   
   Is the program envisioned as an on-ground program, online or a hybrid program (either blended or an online with a residential component)?

3. **Target Audience**
   
   Describe the typical student this program is expected to serve. Please include as much information as possible on student age, prior education, professional experience, geography and similar details.

4. **Why would a prospective student wish to enroll in the proposed program?**

5. **Business Objectives**
   
   Describe the metrics you will use to measure the success of your program, both at launch and during the first 3-5 years.

6. **Desired Outcomes**
   
   What are typical student outcomes expected to be able to do upon completion of the program?
7. **Comparative or Competitive Programs**
   Are you aware of similar programs currently offered within UCI or by other institutions? How are these programs different or similar from the proposed program?

8. **Pricing**
   What is the anticipated cost to the student for the program?

9. **Research Already Completed**
   How was the need for this program identified? Please describe any market research activities which have already been conducted. This may include anecdotal research (conversations with peers, etc.)

10. **Stakeholders**
    Who are the stakeholders (UCI or external) involved in the development of this proposal?

11. **What is the most important marketing question you need answered?**

12. **How are you planning to use the results of a marketing research project?**
13. **Do you have prior experience delivering this type of program to the intended target audience? Please explain.**

New program, current audience? New program, new students? Current program, new students? Current program, current audience (for example, entering a new geographic region)?

14. **Deliverables**

What are critical components of the marketing research report? May include:

a) Qualitative research to further define proposed program (e.g., focus group)

b) Competitive analysis, including SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) of key competitors

c) Employment demand or hiring data *(Required)*
   i) By vertical
   ii) By geographic region

d) Recommended market positioning and strategic direction *(Required)*

e) Price Point *(Required)*

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**Authorization to Initiate Market Research for Proposed Self-Supporting Programs**
Name of Proposed Program:  

School Housing Proposed Program:  | Department:  

Primary Lead:  

Anticipated Start Date of Market Research:  | Anticipated End Date of Market Research:  

Cost of Market Research (UNEX):  

**Authorizations:**

School Dean Signature:  

________________________________________  Date:  ______

Graduate Dean Signature:  

________________________________________  Date:  ______