Athabasca University
OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT ACADEMIC

AU Approval Processes for New Program Proposals and Changes to Existing Programs and Courses

Consultation: Consultations with affected faculties and/or administrative units are expected prior to submission to FGS (for graduate programming) or to APPSC (for undergraduate programming).

For consultation requirements and required templates please refer to the Program Development page of the Office of the Vice President Academic website.

Table Key

☐ = referring body   ◇ = final approving body   ◯ = for information only   ☆ ≈ requires template

AAE PSP:	Alberta Advanced Education, Post-secondary Programs Branch
APPSC:	Academic Planning, Policy, and Standards Committee of GFC
BoG:	Board of Governors
CAQC:	Campus Alberta Quality Council
Faculty Council:	This also includes the Centre for Distance Education and the Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research
FGS:	Faculty of Graduate Studies (for graduate programming only)
GFC :	General Faculties Council
VPA:	Vice President Academic

Glossary of Terms

Specialization: The principal discipline or disciplines that constitute the program of study in a degree program; the secondary level of subject specification within the primary degree level. At the undergraduate level this is also called a major.   E.g. Mathematics major in the Bachelor of Science degree; Integrated Studies specialization in the Master of Arts degree.

Focus Area: At AU, a third level of subject concentration within a graduate degree specialization program. E.g. Master of Arts with a specialization in Integrated Studies and a focus in Cultural Studies.
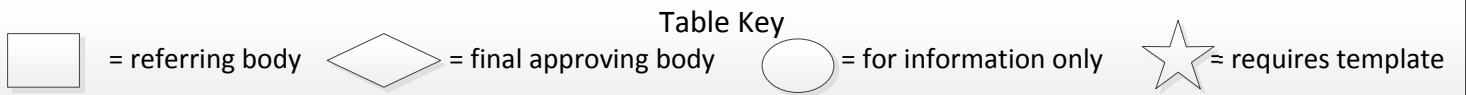
Program Load Characteristics: Elements that comprise program load include program length, instructional credits and practicum credits.

Program Suspension: Suspension of a program closes the program to new registrants but typically leaves the program open to continuing students to allow them to complete the program within a specified timeframe before the program is terminated or reactivated.

Program Reactivation: The reopening of a program that has been suspended for a period of time.

Program Closure: Termination of a program, following a period of suspension, once all existing students have completed or transferred elsewhere.

See Also: Samples of Approval Processes and Motions, Office of the University Secretariat

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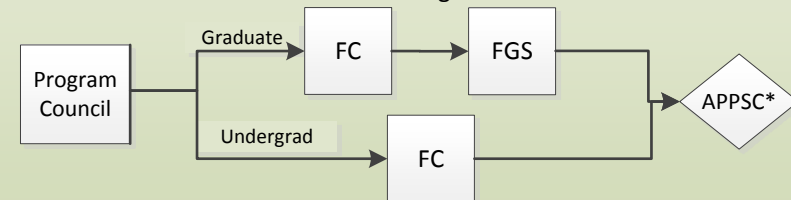
Approval Process for Course Changes

Course opening and closure and changes to course title, level, credit value, and discipline/area of study, where there is no impact on credential regulations
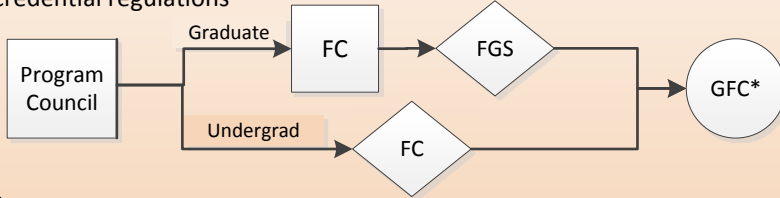
Program Council → Graduate → FC → FGS ◇ → GFC* ○
Program Council → Undergrad → FC ◇ → GFC* ○

*Faculty reports to GFC for information only on course changes, additions, removals, openings and closures on the authorities delegated by GFC.

Addition or removal of course cross-listings

Program Council → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC* ◇
Program Council → Undergrad → FC → APPSC* ◇

*Or to GFC for approval if, in the opinion of the VPA, APPSC should recommend to GFC

Approval Process for Program Changes

Courses added or removed within the list of electives in credential regulations

Program Council → Graduate → FC → FGS ◇ → GFC* ○
Program Council → Undergrad → FC ◇ → GFC* ○

*Faculty reports to GFC for information only on course changes, additions, removals, openings and closures on the authorities delegated by GFC.
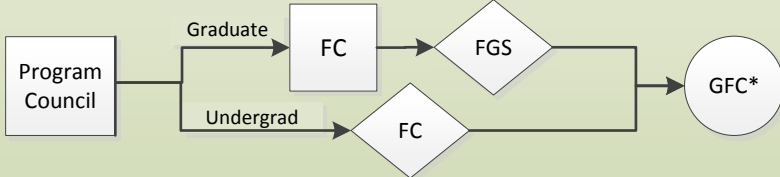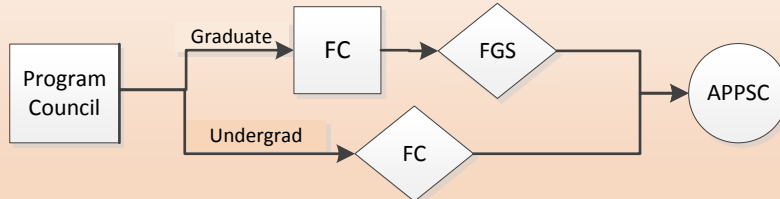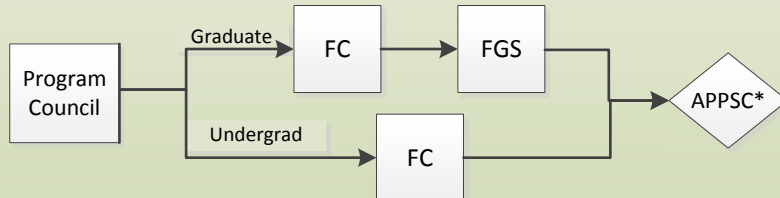
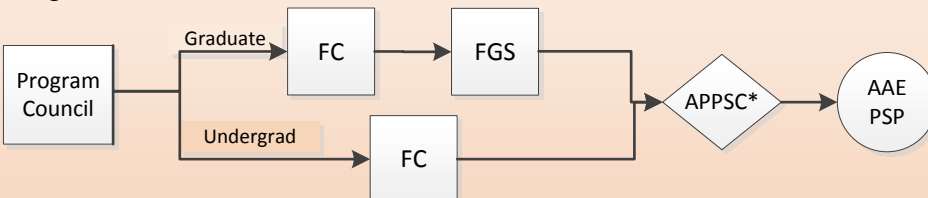**Name change for an undergraduate minor or graduate level focus**

Program Council → Graduate → FC → FGS ◇ → APPSC ○
Program Council → Undergrad → FC ◇ → APPSC ○

Program regulation changes (excluding the above, e.g. changes to a program's core courses)

Program Council → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC* ◇
Program Council → Undergrad → FC → APPSC* ◇

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New graduate level thesis route or course route

Program Council → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC* ◇ → AAE PSP ○
Program Council → Undergrad → FC → APPSC* ◇ → AAE PSP ○

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Table Key

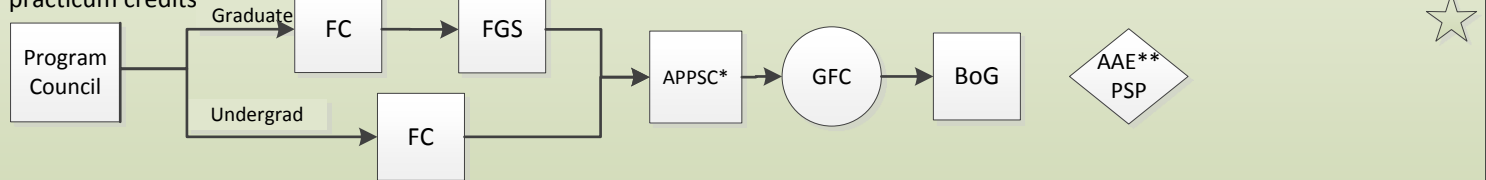☐ = referring body   ◇ = final approving body   ◯ = for information only   ☆ = requires template
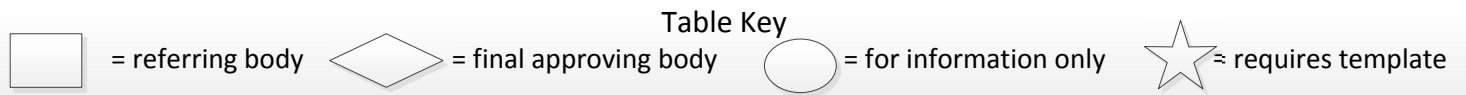
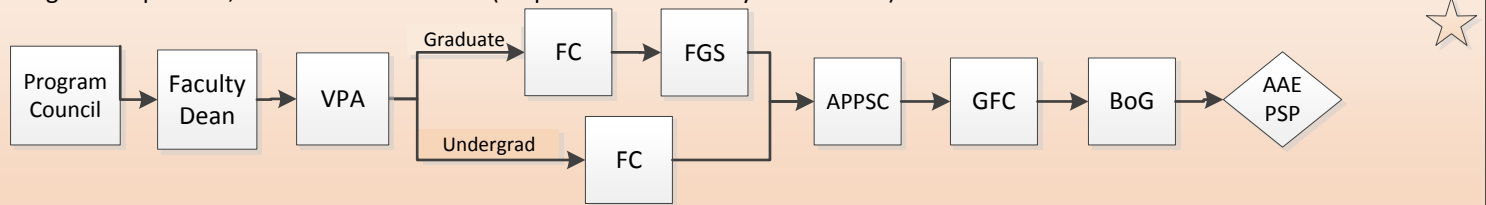### Approval Process for Program Changes (continued)

December 15, 2016

Program/specialization name change; changes to program load characteristics, including program length, instructional credits and practicum credits ☆

Program Council → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC* → GFC → BoG → AAE** PSP

Program Council → Undergrad → FC → APPSC* → GFC → BoG → AAE** PSP

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** For degree programs, name changes and substantive changes to curriculum resulting in load changes may require referral by AAE to CAQC

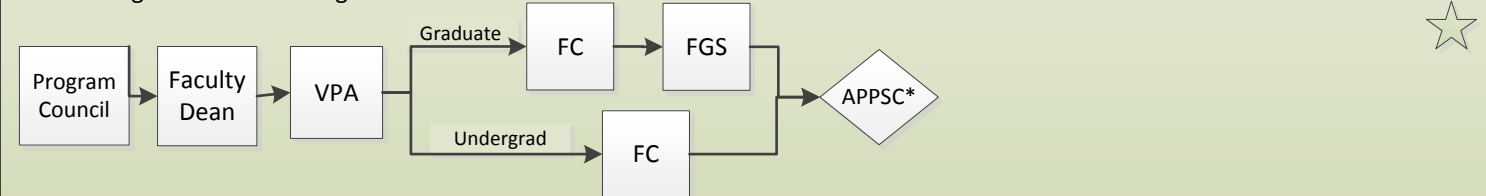**Program suspension, reactivation or closure (suspension followed by termination)** ☆

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC → GFC → BoG → AAE PSP

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Undergrad → FC → APPSC → GFC → BoG → AAE PSP

Approval Process for New Program Proposals

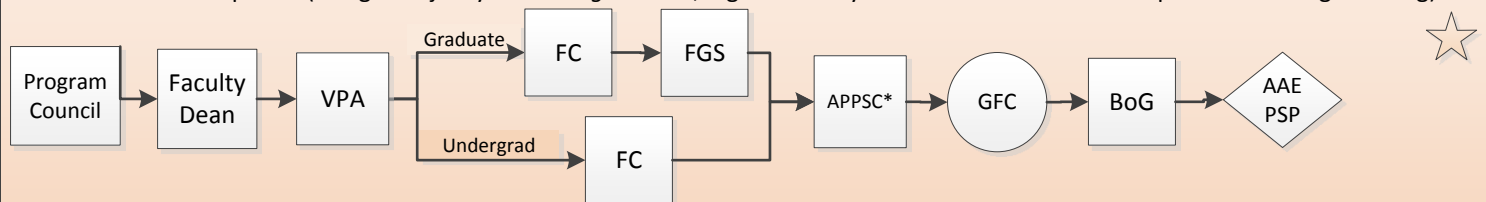**New discipline in an existing area of study (e.g. Italian discipline in Humanities area of study)** ☆

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → FC → APPSC

New undergraduate minor or graduate level focus ☆

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC*

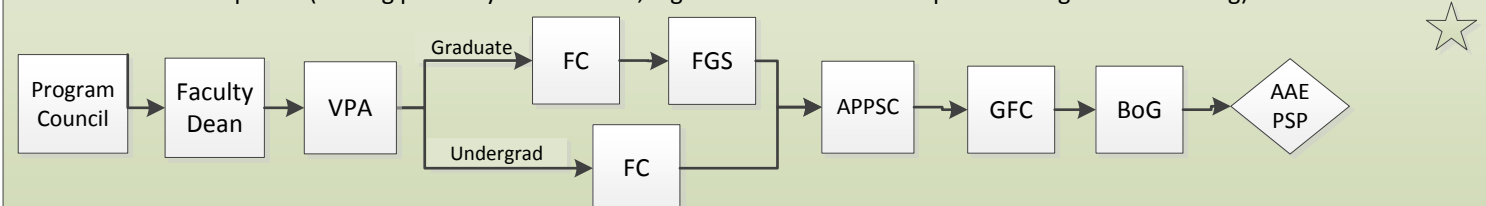Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Undergrad → FC → APPSC*

*Or to GFC for approval if, in the opinion of the VPA, APPSC should recommend to GFC

New certificate or diploma (using a majority of *existing* courses, e.g. University Certificate in Game Development and Programming) ☆

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC* → GFC → BoG → AAE PSP

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Undergrad → FC → APPSC* → GFC → BoG → AAE PSP

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New certificate or diploma (if using primarily *new* courses, e.g. Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Legislative Drafting) ☆

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Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Undergrad → FC → APPSC → GFC → BoG → AAE PSP

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New undergraduate major or graduate specialization within an existing degree program (e.g. German major in existing BA degree) ☆

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC → GFC → BoG → AAE PSP → CAQC → Minister of AAE

FC → External Reviewer

System Coordination Review (AAE PSP)

New precedent-setting degree credential (e.g. introduction of a PhD or an MLIS where no such degree program exists at the university) ☆

Program Council → Faculty Dean → VPA → Graduate → FC → FGS → APPSC → GFC → BoG → AAE PSP → CAQC → Minister of AAE

Undergrad → FC → External Reviewer

System Coordination Review (AAE PSP)

External Organizational Evaluation