CHE Standing Committee:
Academic Affairs and Quality Committee
Mission & Responsibilities
Adopted July 24, 2025

Mission

The primary charge of the Academic Affairs and Quality Committee (Committee) is to ensure the Commission carries out its statutory responsibilities related to matters of an academic nature and the quality of the student experience.

Creation Under Bylaws

Under Article III of the Commission's bylaws, the Committee is authorized as a standing committee to consider any matter or matters concerning academic affairs and postsecondary education quality which might otherwise be considered and acted upon at a regular or special meeting of the Commission. The Commission Chair shall designate the Committee's Chair and members.

Statutory Duties

The Commission has delegated the Committee with certain procedures before action may be considered by the full Commission. Under Indiana Code (IC) 21-41-2-2, all state educational institutions must obtain the approval of the Commission to offer any new associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree program. Moreover, IC 21-18-9-5 requires the Commission to approve or disapprove the offering of any proposed or existing degree programs or academic programs leading to a certificate or other indication of accomplishment. The Committee shall review all new academic program proposals from state educational institutions. The Committee will perform the academic program review procedures required of every state educational institution's academic program at least once every ten years under IC 21-18-9-5.5. The Committee will also consider requests from state educational institutions to continue degree programs with a rolling three-year average of graduates below the corresponding statutory thresholds specified under IC 21-18-9-10.7.

Finally, the Committee will process all Routine Staff Actions, serving as the conduit to inform the full Commission of recent changes to state educational institutions' Academic Program Inventories, such as the suspension and elimination of programs, merging or splitting programs, adding or removing distance education options, adding or removing an instructional location, changing the credit hours or name of a program, and the creation of certain new sub-associate certificates.

<u>Responsibilities</u>

Specific, on-going responsibilities of the Committee include reviewing:

- All requests for new academic degree program proposals and reaching consensus on whether they should be placed on the Commission's agenda for action, and if so, as regular action (full discussion) items or as expedited action items.
- All routine staff actions that will be reported to the Commission as information items.
- Commission processes related to acting on new academic programs.
- Commission processes related to the review of existing academic programs.
- Commission policies regarding institutions and their respective degree type offerings.

The Committee will periodically review progress on implementing the Commission's strategic plan, the HOPE Agenda, in relation to academic program approvals and reviews. In conducting its work, the Committee will keep front of mind Indiana's college-going rate (HOPE Goal #1), utilization of credit for prior learning (Goal #3), completion rates (Goal #4), retention of graduates (Goal #5), and postsecondary credential attainment (Goal #7).

In pursuit of the Commission's HOPE Agenda, the Committee will incorporate into its considerations as well as invite discussion or outside presentations on the following trends and promising practices that address the statutory approval and review criteria for academic programs, including, but not limited to:

- Workforce relevance and industry alignment
- Enrollment demand and completion trends in aggregate and on the academic program level
- In-state graduate retention
- Experiential and work-based learning opportunities
- Apprenticeship models in postsecondary education
- Qualification frameworks
- Supporting Indiana's high school diploma redesign
- Transfer of credit, such as dual credit/enrollment and two-year degrees
- Accelerated delivery and completion options
- Opportunities for embedded, stackable credentials and degrees
- Credit for prior learning, particularly for military service and workforce experience
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and postsecondary education
- Student completion rates, job placement, wages, and debt load
- Career exploration and planning based on timely labor market information
- Facilitating direct connections between students and employment opportunities
- Distance education and other modalities that provide students with access and flexibility
- Competencies and student learning outcomes informed by employer engagement
- Innovative and collaborative degree programs, particularly interdisciplinary synergies
- Campus investments in academic programs
- National or regional initiatives that include or impact Indiana

<u>Committee Business Meetings</u>

The committee meets monthly at the call of the chair in a virtual format. Typically, the committee meets on the final Monday of each month in the afternoon, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm (ET). However, the Committee does not normally meet in the month of November but does convene in early December. A majority of the Committee's membership shall constitute a quorum. Any number of members may participate via telephone or other electronic means so long as a majority of the Committee's members participate in the meeting. All meetings will be recorded and made available on the Commission's website.

Each publicly posted agenda of the Committee will specify submission deadlines for new academic program proposals to be eligible for consideration at the next meeting. Generally, proposals must be submitted at least three weeks beforehand. Each publicly posted agenda of the Committee will specify submission deadlines for Routine Staff Actions to be eligible for consideration at the next meeting. Generally, Routine Staff Actions must be submitted at least one week beforehand.

A Committee meeting will generally address the following items, at the discretion of the chair:

I. Information Items
   a. Academic Degree Programs Awaiting Action
   b. Certain Crediting-Bearing Certificate Programs Awaiting Action
   c. Academic Program Actions Taken by Staff (Routine Staff Actions)

II. Selected New Degree Programs Awaiting Action

III. Selected Credit-Bearing Certificate Programs Awaiting Action

IV. Action Items (As Applicable)

V. Discussion Items (As Applicable)

VI. Updates (As Applicable)

Academic Degree Programs Actions

The Committee currently operates under the following Commission-approved practices and procedures:

Practices and Procedures Regarding Approval of New Academic Programs

Revised and Approved July 24, 2025

1. No proposal from a state educational institution for a new degree program or certain credit-bearing certificate program will come to the Commission for action without first being reviewed by Commission staff and then discussed by the Committee, which meets monthly.

2. Deadlines to be eligible for consideration at the next Committee meeting will be published in the preceding Committee meeting's agenda. The deadline is typically three full weeks before the meeting date but may be longer if there are intervening holidays. Eligibility for consideration does not guarantee a proposal will be placed on the corresponding meeting's agenda.

3. All proposals for new degree programs and certain credit-bearing certificate programs from a state educational institution will be submitted electronically to Commission staff in a manner and form prescribed by the Commission. The corresponding forms may be updated occasionally and reposted to the Academic Affairs website.

4. Commission staff will promptly review submissions to determine if the submission is in the form and manner prescribed by the Commission and complete. If an application is determined to be incomplete, Commission staff will promptly notify the submitting institution.

5. Once Commission staff determine the application is complete, Commission staff will inform the submitting institution. For new degree program proposals, Commission staff will inform all other state institutions' Academic Officers of the submission and offer copies upon request.

6. The Commission or Committee must take official action on all complete proposals within 90 days of submission.

7. For new degree program proposals, Commission staff will schedule a degree call with the submitting institution to discuss the proposal. Commission staff comments and questions will be circulated beforehand. Commission staff may request additional information or further meetings to discuss the proposal before calendaring the proposal for the next eligible Committee meeting.

8. Commission staff may request additional information, including meetings, from a proposing institution regarding a proposal for certain credit-bearing certificates.

9. At each meeting of the Committee, the status of all pending proposals for new degree programs and certain credit-bearing certificates will be reviewed.

10. If a new degree program proposal is calendared for a Committee agenda, the proposing institution shall provide a short presentation on their degree program proposal and take questions from the Committee.

11. Following the presentation, questions, and discussion, Commission staff, at the direction of the chair, shall provide the Committee with one of the following recommendations for the new degree program proposal:
    a. Approval and to be brought to the full Commission as an Expedited Item (Default);
    b. Approval and to be brought to the full Commission as a full Discussion Item;
    c. Direction to revise and resubmit the proposal to address issues identified by the staff and/or committee no sooner than three (3) months; or
    d. Denial with a written rationale.

12. Commission staff, at the direction of the chair, shall provide the Committee with one of the following recommendations for a proposal for certain credit-bearing certificate programs:
    a. Approval and to be brought to the full Commission as an Expedited Item (Default);
    b. Approval and to be brought to the full Commission as a full Discussion Item;
    c. Direction to revise and resubmit the proposal to address issues identified by the staff and/or committee no sooner than three (3) months; or
    d. Denial with a written rationale.

13. If any Committee member determines that an Expedited Item for degree program or certain credit-bearing certificate program should instead be considered as a full Discussion Item at the next full Commission meeting, it shall be considered as any regular action item for the full Commission. Likewise, if after the full Commission agenda has been published, any Commission member may determine that an Expedited Item should instead be considered as a full Discussion Item at the next full Commission meeting to be considered as a regular action item.

14. Upon formal approval by the full Commission as an Expedited Item or Discussion Item, Commission staff will provide the proposing institution with the necessary authorization letter and other documentation.

Checklist of Criteria for New Degree Program Proposals

Revised and Approved July 24, 2025

All new academic degree program—associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral—proposals must be submitted by email to the Commission's Academic Affairs staff for consideration by the Committee. Institutions must submit a complete application in a manner and form prescribed by the Commission, following the current application template. A complete application must address at least the following statutory and Commission-approved criteria, as applicable:

1. **Program Description & Developmental Timeline**
   a. Program Description
   b. Developmental Timeline

2. **Rationale for the Program**
   a. Rationale: General
   b. Institutional Rational: Mission and Strategic Alignment
   c. State Rationale: Postsecondary Educational Attainment
   d. National Rationale: Competitiveness, National Security, and/or National Interest

3. **Career Relevance and Evidence of Market/Societal Need**
   a. External Input on Program Design
   b. Program Learning Outcomes: Competencies, Skills, Knowledge, and Experience
   c. Indiana-Specific Talent Needs: Strategic Plans, Studies, and Reports
   d. Identify the Most Relevant Occupations and Industries
   e. Occupational Outlook: Projected Employment Trends *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

4. **Evidence of Positive Student Outcomes: Job Placement, Wages, and Student Debt**
   a. Student Career Exploration and Planning *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   b. Connecting Students with Employment Opportunities *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   c. Job Placement *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   d. Graduate Retention *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   e. Special Fees above Baseline Tuition
   f. Student Return-on-Investment (ROI): Wages and Student Debt *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

5. **Market Intelligence: Student Demand, Provider Competition, and Projected Enrollment**
   a. Evidence of Student Demand and Interest
   b. Provider Market Inventory: Details on Similar Programs at Other Institutions

    c. Projected Enrollment/Completions and Threshold Viability *(IC 21-18-9-5(b) and IC 21-18-9-10.7)*

6. **Program of Study: Curriculum, Quality, and High-Impact Practices**
       a. Total Credit Hours and Required Coursework *(IC 21-18-9-8(d) and IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
       b. Accelerated Delivery Options *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
       c. Opportunities for Credit for Prior Learning *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
       d. Opportunities for Embedded, Stackable Credentials and Degrees *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
       e. Work-Based Learning and/or Experiential Learning Requirement *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
       f. Capstone Course(s) and High-Impact Practices
       g. Career Readiness and In-Demand Transferable Skills
       h. Assessment
       i. Accreditation/Certification
       j. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Fluency and Competency
       k. Licensure and Certification
       l. Defined Pathways for Certain Student Populations *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
       m. Transfers from Two-Year Institutions: Articulation Agreements *(IC 21-42-3-5 and IC 21-42-6-4)*

7. **Programmatic Costs**
       a. Fiscal Support
       b. Cost to Operate and Per Student Cost *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
       c. Faculty and Staff
       d. Physical Plant and Capital Equipment Costs
       e. Collaborative Support and Curricular Synergies

8. **External Letters of Support**
       a. At least five external letters of support

Additional Information for Baccalaureate Degrees:

The Commission requires all proposed baccalaureate degrees be presented with articulation plans for students from Ivy Tech Community College (ITCC) and Vincennes University (VU). The application's 'APPENDIX 8: Course Articulation Planning for New Baccalaureate Degrees' must be included as part of the degree proposal. One best-fit articulation plan is required for both ITCC and VU. All articulation plans must incorporate the Indiana College Core (ICC) milestone, baccalaureate degree requirements (i.e., prerequisites, introductory, preparatory, and major coursework), and ICC flexibility should be considered when crafting articulation plans.

Prior to submitting a baccalaureate degree program for approval, the Commission and Committee expect institutions to work directly with ITCC and VU to develop articulation agreements that maximize transfer opportunities for students.

Checklist of Criteria for Certain Credit-Bearing Certificate Programs

Approved July 24, 2025

All proposals for new credit-bearing certificate programs of **13 or more credit hours** must be submitted by email to the Commission's Academic Affairs staff for consideration by the Committee. Institutions must submit a complete application in a manner and form prescribed by the Commission, following the current application template. A complete application must briefly address at least the following statutory and Commission-approved criteria, as applicable:

1. **Instructional Location**
   a. Campus/Campuses

2. **Program Description & Rationale**
   a. Program Description
   b. Stackability or Embeddedness to Credential Pathways
   c. Rationale: General

3. **Career Relevance and Evidence of Market/Societal Need**
   a. Indiana-Specific Talent Needs and Relevant Occupations
   b. Occupational Outlook: Projected Employment Trends *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

4. **Positive Student Outcomes: Job Placement, Wages, and Student Debt**
   a. Student Career Exploration and Planning *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   b. Connecting Students with Employment Opportunities *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   c. Job Placement *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   d. Graduate Retention *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   e. Student Return-on-Investment (ROI): Wages and Student Debt *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

5. **Market Intelligence: Student Demand, Provider Competition, and Projected Enrollment**
   a. Evidence of Student Demand and Interest
   b. Provider Market Inventory: Details on Similar Programs at Other Institutions
   c. Projected Enrollment/Completion Rate *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

6. **Program of Study: Curriculum, Quality, and High-Impact Practices**
   a. Certificate Program Learning Outcomes: Competencies, Skills, Knowledge, and Experiences
   b. Coursework Overview

c. Accelerated Delivery Options *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

d. Opportunities for Credit for Prior Learning *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

e. Opportunities for Embedded, Stackable Credentials *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

f. Work-Based Learning and/or Experiential Learning Requirement *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

g. Licensure and Certification

h. Defined Pathways for Certain Student Populations *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*

7. **Programmatic Costs**
   a. Fiscal Support
   b. Cost to Operate and Per Student Cost *(IC 21-18-9-5(b))*
   c. Faculty and Staff
   d. Physical Plant and Capital Equipment Costs
   e. Collaborative Support and Curricular Synergies

8. **External Letter(s) of Support** *(Optional)*

Practices and Procedures Regarding Review of Staff Actions

Revised and Approved: July 24, 2025

The following academic and degree program-related requests can be handled through Routine Staff Action and do not need to be brought to the Commission for action:

1. Changes to program names and degree designations, such as adding a B.S. to a B.A. or an A.S. to an A.A.S.;

2. Adding a credit-bearing certificate program that is no greater than 12 credit hours (or the quarter hour equivalent) for any institution;

3. Adding Ivy Tech campuses and off-campus locations for existing programs at Ivy Tech;

4. Adding off-campus locations within the campus service area for existing programs at an IU or Purdue regional campus;

5. Changing a degree designation, such as a B.A. to a B.F.A., or an Ed.D. to a Ph.D. (however, changes at the doctoral level should be accompanied with additional documentation; explanation of why the change is being requested, indication of new CIP code, enrollment data broken out by tracks/majors, history of the tracks/majors);

6. Merging two separate programs into a single program or separating a major, concentration, specialization from an existing degree as a standalone degree program, as appropriate (however, changes at the doctoral level should be accompanied with additional documentation); and

7. Delivering an existing, on-campus program through distance education, provided the request is consistent with the Policy on Approving Distance Education Programs passed by the Commission at May 11, 2012.

> NOTE: In all cases involving requested changes through Routine Staff Action, Commission staff may request any additional information deemed necessary and may bring actions to Committee for discussion if circumstances warrant it.

Degree Award Level Definitions
(Originally Approved January 25, 2022)
Reapproved July 24, 2025

Institutions, Academic Affairs staff, and the Committee shall use the following Commission-approved degree award level definitions:

01 Award of Less than One Academic Year:
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (less than 1 academic year): An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in less than 1 academic year (2 semesters or 3 quarters), or designed for completion in less than 30 semester or trimester credit hours, or in less than 45 quarter credit hours, or in less than 900 contact or clock hours.

02 Award of at Least One but Less than Two Academic Years:
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma of (at least 1 but less than 2 academic years): An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 1 but less than 2 full-time equivalent academic years, or designed for completion in at least 30 but less than 60 semester or trimester credit hours, or in at least 45 but less than 90 quarter credit hours, or in at least 900 but less than 1,800 contact or clock hours.

03 Associate's Degree:
Associate's degree: An award that normally requires at least 2 but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college work.

04 Postsecondary Award, Certificate, or Diploma of at Least Two but Less than Four Academic Years:
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (at least 2 but less than 4 academic years): An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 2 but less than 4 full-time equivalent academic years , or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 semester or trimester credit hours, or in at least 90 but less than 180 quarter credit hours, or in at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact or clock hours.

05 Bachelor's Degree:
Bachelor's degree: An award (baccalaureate or equivalent degree, as determined by the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education) that normally requires at least 4 but not more than 5 years of full-time equivalent college-level work. This includes all bachelor's degrees conferred in a 5-year cooperative (work-study) program. A cooperative plan provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government; thus, it allows students to combine actual work experience with their college studies. Also includes bachelor's degrees in which the normal 4 years of work are completed in 3 years.

06 Post - Baccalaureate Certificate:

Post-baccalaureate certificate: An award that requires completion of an organized program of study beyond the bachelor's degree but less than a master's degree. It is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree. The program of study does not meet the requirements of a master's degree.

07 Master's Degree:
Master's degree: An award that requires the successful completion of a program of study of at least the full-time equivalent of 1 but not more than 2 academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree. Some of these degrees, such as those in Theology (M.Div., M.H.L./Rav) that were formerly classified as "first-professional", may require more than two full-time equivalent academic years of work.

08 Post - Master's Certificate:
Post - Master's certificate: An award that requires completion of an organized program of study beyond the master's degree, but less than a doctor's degree. The program of study does not meet the requirements of a doctor's degree. An example of this type of degree is the Ed.S.

17 Doctor's Degree - Research/Scholarship:
Doctor's degree-research/scholarship: A Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. Some examples of this type of degree may include Ed.D., D.M.A., D.B.A., D.Sc., D.A., or D.M, and others, as designated by the awarding institution.

18 Doctor's Degree - **Professional Practice**:
Doctor's degree-professional practice: A doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. The degree is awarded after a period of study such that the total time to the degree, including both pre-professional and professional preparation, equals at least six full-time equivalent academic years. Some of these degrees were formerly classified as first-professional and may include: Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.); Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.); Law (J.D.); Medicine (M.D.); Optometry (O.D.); Osteopathic Medicine (D.O); Pharmacy (Pharm.D.); Podiatry (D.P.M., Pod.D., D.P.); or, Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), and others, as designated by the awarding institution.

19 Doctor's Degree - **Other**:
Doctor's degree-other: A doctor's degree that does not meet the definition of a doctor's degree - research/scholarship or a doctor's degree - professional practice.

Current Committee Members:
Dennis Bland (Chair)
Jud Fisher
Larry Garatoni
Kent Kramer
Dr. Edward Castronova
Pepper Mulherin
Dan Peterson

CHE Staff Liaison:
Dr. Matthew Butler