



THOMAS MORE
UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC PROGRAM DEFINITIONS AND PROCESS GUIDE

DECEMBER 2019

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, PLANNING, AND ASSESSMENT

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

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Compliance with Substantive Change

Thomas More University is required to follow Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education state licensure requirements (13 KAR 1:020), SACSCOC accreditation standards (SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy), US Department of Education Federal Student Aid regulations, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement Student and Exchange Visitor Program regulations, Ohio Department of Education Office of Program Development and Approval regulations (Chapter 3333-1.08), and National Council for State Authority Reciprocity Agreements. These regulations cover the University's academic programs, instructional locations, and instructional modality. Therefore, all modifications, additions, or removals of academic programs, instructional locations, or instructional modality must follow Thomas More University substantive change requirements. The Substantive Change Policy can be viewed online at: <https://itwin.thomasmore.edu/Policy/Home/Policy?policyID=85>. The policy and all regulations will be followed by completing the appropriate process.

Definition of Academic Programs

References:

Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, Definitions Related to Academic Programming, <http://cpe.ky.gov/policies/academicaffairs/academicprogramdefinitions.pdf>
National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Glossary, <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/VisGlossaryAll.aspx>
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Substantive Change Policy Statement, <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/SubstantiveChange.pdf>

An academic program is defined as the combination of degree level (master, bachelor, associate), degree designation (BA, BS, etc.), and major (CIP code) for the attainment of broad educational objectives. Minors and concentrations can also be added. A major, minor, and concentration include a combination of courses that focuses on a single discipline or a clearly defined interdisciplinary focus. All require approval paperwork and must comply with Thomas More University Substantive Change Policy.

Students are awarded academic credit for academic programs. These processes do not apply to non-credit programs.

Formal degrees and awards

Thomas More University is currently approved to offer Masters, Bachelors, Associates, and Postsecondary Certificates.

Master's Degree: advanced degree in a specialized field of study. Minimum of 30 credit hours. Thomas More University currently offers the following master's degrees: Master of Business Administration, Master of Science, Master of Arts, Master of Education.

Bachelor Degree: four-year undergraduate degree program. Thomas More University currently offers the following baccalaureate degrees: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Elected Studies

Associate Degree: two-year undergraduate degree program. Thomas More University currently offers the following associate degrees: Associate of Arts, Associate of Elected Studies.

Certificate Programs: a formal award certifying the satisfactory completion of an education program.

Postsecondary Certificate: An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree). Thomas More University currently offers postsecondary certificates.

Postbaccalaureate certificate: An award that requires completion of an organized program of study beyond the bachelor's. Thomas More University does not currently offer postbaccalaureate certificates.

Post-master's certificate: An award that requires completion of an organized program beyond the master's degree. Thomas More University does not currently offer post-master's certificates.

Curriculum Definitions

CIP Code: Classification of Instructional Program – six-digit code in the form of xx.xxxx that identifies instructional program disciplines. The CIP code supports the accurate tracking and reporting of program offerings and completions as required for reporting. CIP codes are assigned to degrees and certificates.

Bachelor Major: a primary area of study designed to prepare students for entry-level positions or graduate/professional school. Baccalaureate majors include a minimum of 39 credit hours; recommended maximum of 65 credit hours with exceptions for external accreditation requirements. A minimum of a third of the required credit hours should be at the 300- and 400- level. A major is printed on the diploma and transcript.

Associate Major: a stand-alone program that can be earned without a Bachelor's degree. Associate majors prepare students for entry-level positions and are designed to enable students to easily transition into a bachelor's program. Associate majors should only include 100- and 200-level courses. Minimum of 18 credit hours required in the major; recommended maximum of 33 credit hours. A major is printed on the diploma and transcript.

Undergraduate Minor: a secondary area of study outside of the major earned with a Bachelor's Degree. Minors are designed to increase knowledge or skills for student interest and to improve career preparedness. Students cannot minor in their major but can minor in an area offered by their major department. Minimum of 18 credit hours required; recommended maximum of 24 credit hours. Must include 6 hours at the 300- or 400-level. Minors will not be printed on diplomas but will be included on transcripts.

Concentration: an area of emphasis within the major that must be earned with the major (either a Master, Bachelor, or Associate major). Concentrations provide students with an opportunity to focus their coursework and specialize in a topic. A concentration can be required for the major (for instance a student MUST choose between concentrations to complete the major) or the concentration can be optional to complement the major. Concentrations must include at least 9 credit hours. Concentrations will not be printed on diplomas but will be included on transcripts.

Instructional Locations

A teaching site is an instructional site or campus that is located physically apart from the main campus of the institution. All new teaching sites require internal approval through the teaching site procedures. Any teaching site in which we **offer** more than 25% of a degree program must be approved by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education and SACSCOC.

Instructional Modality (Distance Education)

Thomas More University is approved to offer all programs via distance education, but the University is required to report enrollment and submit programs according to their instructional modality. Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education classifies programs according to the following:

- 100% face to face/hybrid
- combination of face to face/hybrid and distance learning
- 100% distance learning

Face to face – instruction occurs when students and instructors are in the same place

Hybrid – less than 50% of the instruction occurs via distance education/more than 50% of instruction occurs when students and instructors are in the same place

Distance learning – instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education – education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education.

Academic Agreements with other Institutions

Reference: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Agreements Involving Joint and Dual Academic Awards: Policy and Procedures, <http://sacscoc.org/pdf/JointDualAwards.pdf>

All agreements with other institutions require internal approval. Dual and joint agreements must be approved by SACSCOC. In order to comply with the SACSCOC Substantive Change requirements, and ensure proper implementation of any agreements, all collaborative academic arrangements with another institution, which includes dual academic awards, joint academic awards, or articulation agreements, must be approved through the Academic Arrangements with another Institution procedures.

Articulation Agreement: An agreement among institutions to accept transfer credits from one institution(s) by the other institution(s).

Consortia Agreement: An agreement in which two or more institutions develop and deliver courses that meet standards of academic quality. Current Thomas More University students are able to take courses through these arrangements and earn credit at Thomas More.

Contractual Agreement: typically is one in which an institution enters an agreement for receipt of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs (i.e., clinical training internships, etc.) delivered by another institution or service provider.

Dual Academic Award: An agreement by two or more institutions to grant dual academic awards is one whereby students study at two or more institutions and each institution grants a separate academic award bearing only its name, seal, and signature.

Joint Academic Award: An agreement by two or more institutions to grant a joint academic award is one whereby students study at two or more institutions and the institutions grant a single academic award bearing the names, seals, and signatures of each of the participating institutions.

Current Processes

Current processes are described below. If a change to academic programs, teaching sites, etc. is not covered below, please see the Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment.

Teaching Site

New Teaching Site

*Required when offering instruction at any location not included in the approved instructional locations.

Forms and documentation required: New Teaching Site Application

Final approved needed: Provost. If opening a teaching site where a degree or other credential will be earned or where more than 30 credit hours will be offered: President, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, SACSCOC, Department of Education.

Closing Teaching Site

*Required when closing an instructional site

Forms and documentation required: See Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment

Final approval needed: Provost. If opening a teaching site where a degree or other credential was earned: President, SACSCOC.

New Academic Program

*Required for addition of any master, bachelor, associate, or certificate program

Forms and documentation required: Academic Program Proposal and all referenced forms

Final approvals needed: Faculty, President, Board of Trustees, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, SACSCOC

Academic Program Revision

*Required for program revisions, including modification of degree requirements, offering the program using a different modality, adding or removing concentrations, modifying admissions requirements, offering the program at a different location.

Forms and documentation required: Revised Academic Program Proposal and all referenced forms

Final approval needed: Provost. If more than 30% of the curriculum is revised: Faculty.

Academic Program Removal

*Required for removal of any master, bachelor, associate, or certificate program

Forms and documentation required: Academic Program Removal and all referenced forms

Final approvals needed: Faculty, President, Board of Trustees, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, SACSCOC

Minor Proposal – New, Revised, or Removal

*Required to add, modify, or remove minors.

Forms and documentation required: Minor Proposal – New, Revised, or Removal

Final approvals needed: For revisions of 30% or less: Provost. For revisions of more than 30%: Faculty. For addition or removal: President.

Course Inventory

*Required to add, modify, or remove courses. Modifications include changes to course number, title, credit hours, prerequisites, or requirements.

Forms and documentation required: Course Inventory Form

Final approvals needed: Provost. For course modifications impacting more than one department – Faculty.

Academic Arrangement with another Institution

*Required to enter into an agreement with another institution or organization in which Thomas More University students will earn or receive credit

Forms and documentation required: Academic Arrangement with another Institution

Final approvals needed: President. For dual and joint academic arrangements: SACSCOC.