Office of the Provost

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Policy on Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code Assignment and CIP Code Change

Based on federal regulations (for institutions receiving Title IV funding), a CIP code must be assigned to an academic program when it is created, based on the curriculum approved by the Board of Undergraduate Studies or the Graduate Studies Coordinating Board and based on its program learning outcomes. The CIP code is then recorded in the student information system. The information below outlines the basics of CIP codes, the assignment of CIP codes for new programs, and requests for changes to CIP code assignments.

The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) provides a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity. The assignment of CIP codes to each program supports the institutional tracking, reporting of funding, and communication of program-level enrollments and program completion activity. For an overview of what a CIP code is and how to select one that is aligned with your program learning outcomes, please start here.

To request a CIP code assignment for a new program.
A program's CIP code is determined via consultation between the program's leadership, Academic Programs and Planning, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The proposed CIP code is included in the proposal for the new program. The Provost has final approval of CIP code assignment.

CIP code assignment is based on the approved curriculum and the program learning outcomes using the following principles:

The Program Leadership consults the Federal CIP code taxonomy and associated descriptions to identify the closest match to the program, using the proposed or approved curriculum. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness can help Program Leadership determine CIP codes that are linked to existing programs. To identify a match, the Program Leadership should verify the following:
1. the CIP code is appropriate at all levels of the CIP code taxonomy,
2. the CIP code is not already in use for another program unless the new program is an extension of an existing program (e.g., the addition of a PhD to an existing master's program) or is acknowledged to be in a closely related and potentially overlapping area of study to an existing area of study,
3. generally, no two programs (except for within the same academic unit) should have the same 6-digit CIP code,
4. generally, programs that are certificates or minors should be nested within the discipline-specific codes of the home academic unit

If the CIP code that best represents the program is a 30.xxxx (multi/interdisciplinary), additional consideration is required before assignment. The program leadership will consult with Academic Programs and Planning, OIE, and the Office of Research Services to ensure there are no unintended consequences of this selection, such as ineligibility for scholarship awards or ineligibility for external reporting.

If no closely matching CIP code is found, the following pieces of information are considered in the assignment:
1. the academic home (Department, School/College) of the program and the current CIP code assignments of existing programs within the academic home,
2. CIP code recommendations from the academic home of the program,
3. known attributes associated with the CIP code description,
4. the level of the program (i.e., minor, certificate, Bachelor's, Master's),
5. benefits to international students, for example, one CIP code option may qualify international students for additional work authorization such as the STEM OPT Extension for F-1 students or additional months of Academic Training for J-1 students (only if the program meets STEM designation as evidenced by program learning outcomes and curriculum, and as identified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), as outlined below.
6. avoidance of a CIP code already in use for another program at the same degree-level.

To request a CIP code change for an existing program
Generally, an existing program may have its CIP code changed based on two criteria: its program learning outcomes have changed or the list of CIP codes have changed. The federal government's list of CIP codes typically do not change, but every 10 years the Department of Education releases new CIP codes that programs may wish to review to consider whether there is a better fit. Other than this 10-year cycle, CIP code changes can be made to increase alignment with a program's learning outcomes and curriculum. The Provost has final approval of CIP code changes.

To request a change to the CIP code based on either criteria, the program modification form should include the following information.

- Current CIP code and official CIP code description.
- Proposed CIP code and official CIP code description.
- A justification for how the proposed CIP code is a better description for the program than the current assignment, grounded in the approved curriculum and PLO Information demonstrating that the CIP code change will not have an adverse impact on students.

CIP code changes are only effective starting in a fall term to ensure no disruption to student financial aid disbursement, international student visa considerations, and federal reporting requirements.

CIP codes and a STEM designation
To receive a STEM CIP code designation, the program must demonstrate that 50% or more of the program content and associated learning outcomes are grounded in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The evidence for this is found in the curricular requirements and the program learning outcomes. Program electives may be applied to the 50% threshold only if all elective choices are STEM so that there is no avenue for a student to complete the program without having taken at least 50% of their courses in STEM. For a course to be considered STEM, the majority of the course content must be STEM. The Provost has final approval of STEM CIP code assignment.

Below are common uses of CIP codes for STEM designation:

- **STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT) Extension**: The United States government designates certain STEM disciplines for special consideration in determining visa status for F-1 international students and eligibility for STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT). A STEM OPT Extension is a 24-month period allowing an international student to obtain additional training in their subject area. The program of study must be in an approved STEM discipline as identified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The list of STEM OPT extension programs is developed by the DHS and the most **recent version of the list is found online.**
- **Grant Eligibility**: Refer to specific funding guidelines to determine STEM program eligibility.
- **National or State Initiatives**: Initiatives in which the University participates, or Statewide efforts may define or adopt definitions of STEM specific to the need.

Students who have graduated from a degree program with a CIP with a STEM designation and those on an F-1 or J-1 visa who are authorized to work through Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Academic Training (AT) will continue to have active SEVIS records under Loyola's sponsorship for up to three years post-graduation. If changes occur to an international student's CIP code post-graduation, the CIP code assigned at degree conferral is the accurate CIP code and should not be updated.

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