

Affected Department (or Other Academic Unit) Guidelines

- *When do proposals need to be reviewed by other academic units at USC?*

At a glance

If any unit outside the submitting unit may be affected by a proposal, the proposal must be communicated to the Curriculum Dean of each relevant unit. (See the [resources page](#) of the Curriculum Office website for a list of Curriculum Deans.) Unless there is documented correspondence between the proposing unit and the Curriculum Dean of the affected unit, the Curriculum Coordination Office will forward the proposal to affected units based on an assessment of the proposal's details. The Curriculum Dean(s) will then comment and/or sign off on the proposal according to the unit's findings.

- **NOTE:** All academic units are strongly encouraged to reach out to affected units before submitting in Curriculog. Signoffs attached to a proposal often satisfy the required affected unit review, but please note that the proposal must still be selected as having an affected unit. Signoffs must come from the Curriculum Dean.

In more depth

1. The Purpose of "Sign-off" by Affected Departments/Units is to:

- Encourage coordination, communication, and where appropriate, interdisciplinary cooperation among departments and schools. If units teach similar material, or their faculty has expertise in the areas in question, they are encouraged to communicate about the curriculum proposal.
- Ensure that if a unit uses courses offered by another unit, they are informed of any changes to, or drops of, these courses. This pertains whether the courses are prerequisites, or co-requisites, of their own courses, degree requirements for their degree, or even just listed in their degree as being among the options for fulfilling degree requirements (i.e., in a list of possible choices). For example, if Physics were to change the courses commonly taken by engineering students, they should communicate with Engineering in advance.
- Ensure that units partnering for dual degrees are informed and consulted when one of the standalone degrees is being changed or dropped.

- Ensure that units that are expected to provide resources for other units (e.g., their courses are listed as options for a minor), are informed and agree.
- Avoid excessive overlap or redundancy in the curriculum.
- Attempt to avoid a “turf war,” where different units may feel that they have priority in teaching a certain topic. (Such cases are likely to go to UCOC if the departments have not reached an accommodation among themselves.)
- Communicate to units whose majors might be interested in taking a proposed course or minor are aware of it.
- Coordinate cross-listed courses with other units; both units should sign off on any proposal related to the course.

2. Timing and Procedure of Sign-offs:

- Ideally proposing units should obtain all necessary sign-offs before sending a proposal to the Curriculum Dean. Including all necessary sign-offs will likely expedite a proposal’s timeline, though the CCO, subcommittee chair or members may request additional sign-offs. In such cases, the CCO may ask the unit (typically the Department Curriculum Coordinator) to obtain the additional approvals.
- Unless there is documented correspondence between the proposing unit and the Curriculum Dean of the affected unit, the CCO will forward the proposal to affected units based on an assessment of the proposal’s details.
- The Curriculum Dean(s) will then comment and/or sign off on the proposal according to the unit’s findings.
- If a unit does not respond they are interpreted as forfeiting the right to comment.
- Approval by the Curriculum Dean assumes that he or she has consulted with the departments within their unit as appropriate.

➤ **NOTE:** Units may state their concerns about a proposal; an affected unit’s objection to a proposal will not automatically block its approval, but will be considered by the subcommittee or perhaps UCOC.