# 300-2-1-.06 Reasonable Extensions and Alterations of Existing Programs of Instruction. NEW RULE

1. **Purpose**. The purpose of reviewing extensions and alterations to existing programs of instruction is to ensure that public postsecondary institutions can make reasonable changes to their program offerings without creating new programs of instruction.
2. **Commission Responsibility**. The Commission is responsible for reviewing changes to programs of instruction for academic credit at the state’s public postsecondary institutions in order to determine whether a proposed change can be considered a reasonable extension or alteration of an existing program of instruction or whether it constitutes a new program of instruction. In addition, the Commission’s responsibilities for data collection and research necessitate that it maintains an accurate and comprehensive record of for-credit program offerings in its Academic Program Inventory.
3. **Scope.** This rule shall apply to all programs of instruction offered for academic credit by public colleges and universities in Alabama. It does not apply to non-credit programs or other offerings that do not culminate in a postsecondary award.
4. **Definitions**. The following definitions shall apply:
	1. Academic Program Inventory (“Inventory”): List maintained by the Commission’s staff of programs of instruction offered by public postsecondary institutions in Alabama, with a record for each degree and certificate program.
	2. Alteration: A type of program change that modifies an existing academic offering within its previously defined scope. Such changes include modifications to program coursework, modifications to program requirements, including total number of hours, and updates to program titles or CIP codes.
	3. Credit Hour: A unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other recognized postsecondary credential. Alabama’s public postsecondary institutions typically use the semester credit hour, rather than quarter credit hour or other equivalent unit.
	4. CIP Code: A six-digit code in the form of xx.xxxx that identifies an instructional program specialty using the taxonomic coding scheme known as Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), maintained by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) within the US Department of Education. A program’s CIP code should accurately reflect the content of instruction and allow for comparison of programs both within and between institutions.
	5. Competency-Based Education: ck. “Method of delivery” p.41 Sub change; by direct assessment
	6. Delivery Modality: Technology or method used to deliver instruction within courses required for program completion, such as in-person/face-to-face instruction, distance education, or a combination thereof. In addition, an academic program may be offered in multiple modalities.
	7. Existing Program: An academic degree or certificate program listed in the Academic Program Inventory.
	8. Extension: A type of program change that expands an existing academic offering beyond its previously defined scope. Such changes include the addition of program options within a degree program, as well as the development of for-credit, non-degree certificate programs that are related to an existing program or unit of instruction.
	9. IPEDS: The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System is the postsecondary education data collection program for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), a division of the Institute of Education Sciences within the US Department of Education. IPEDS is designed to collect standardized data from postsecondary institutions and educational organizations operating within the United States.
	10. Nomenclature: Also referred to as “degree nomenclature” or “award name,” a designation for the specific type of award within a given level (e.g., Bachelor of Science, Master of Business Administration, or Doctor of Philosophy). In its official record of an award, an institution will identify the nomenclature followed by the program title (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Biology).
	11. Option: An extension of an offering that is closely related to the existing program and shares a common set of program coursework (“program core”) with all other options of the same program. Options can be referred to as concentrations, tracks, or specializations.
	12. Program of Instruction: A postsecondary course of study offered for academic credit that leads to one of the following types of postsecondary awards:
		1. Degree: An academic program approved by the Commission under the rules set forth in §300-2-1-.03.
		2. For-Credit Non-Degree Certificate: An academic program that leads to one of the following award designations as defined within the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS):
			1. Level 1a, Mini-Certificate or Micro-Certificate: A for-credit certificate program consisting of at least six (6) but less than nine (9) semester credit hours of undergraduate coursework or the equivalent.
			2. Level 1b, Short-Term Certificate (STC): A for-credit certificate program consisting of at least nine (9) but no more than twenty-nine (29) semester credit hours of undergraduate coursework, or the equivalent.
			3. Level 6, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate: A for-credit program consisting of at least six (6) semester credit hours of graduate coursework, or the equivalent. Most graduate certificates fall into the post-baccalaureate classification.
			4. Level 8, Post-Master’s Certificate: Apart from the Education Specialist degree defined above, a post-master’s certificate is a for-credit program consisting of at least six (6) semester credit hours of graduate coursework designed specifically for those already holding master’s degrees. Post-master’s certificates are typically offered in nursing or other fields where it is common for master’s degree holders to seek additional specialized training.
	13. Program Status: An indication of whether a program of instruction is currently enrolling new students. Program status is treated more fully below in §300-2-1-.07.
	14. Program Title: A name given by an institution to the specific program of instruction used in official records of the award, such as in student transcripts. The program title should accurately reflect the content of instruction and therefore should closely correspond to the standardized name within the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP).
	15. “Reasonable”: A reasonable extension or alteration of an existing ~~unit or~~ program of instruction is a modification which does not change the essential character, integrity, or objectives of the ~~unit or~~ program. ~~Such modifications do not create new units or programs of instruction. Reasonable extensions and alterations of existing programs are defined as substantive or non-substantive. Substantive changes that are determined by the staff not to be “reasonable” extensions or alterations will be submitted to the Commission for action, either as an extension or alteration or as a new program of instruction. Those considered to be “reasonable” require notification to the Commission by information item prior to implementation. (From Operational Definitions adopted by the Commission on 8/19/94.)~~
5. **Changes to Existing Degree Programs**
	1. Substantive Requiring Approval
		1. Changes in award nomenclature at doctoral
		2. Merging programs
		3. Splitting programs
		4. Changes to curriculum over 50%
	2. Substantive Requiring Notification
		1. Addition of Options (must be 50% or more overlap with program, shared core)
		2. Updates to Program Inventory
			1. Changes to CIPs
			2. Changes to titles

[[Changes to program status]]

* + 1. Changes to curriculum 25%< 49%
	1. Non-Substantive
		1. Dual degree
		2. Changes to curriculum under 25%
		3. Other changes to options
	2. Programs Leading to Teacher Certification
1. **Changes to For-Credit Non-Degree Certificates**
	1. Substantive Requiring Notification
		1. Addition of new for-credit non-degree certificates
		2. Deletion of existing
	2. Non-Substantive

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**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§16-5-1, et seq., specifically §§16-5-7 and 16-5-8.

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**Repealed and New Rule**: XXX