

CIP Code Assignments

What are the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Codes?

Originally developed in 1980 by the U.S. Department of Education, the Classification of Instructional Programs is the national taxonomic standard of academic program titles. The CIP Code system enables academic programs in the U.S. to use a standard system of program titles and six digit codes for all federal surveys and data reporting. All new academic programs at Iowa State University are assigned a CIP Code by the Office of the Provost during the program approval process. Once a new program is approved by the Board of Regents, the CIP code is recorded as an attribute of an academic program (degree/major or certificate) in the student information system

CIP Code Changes

The Department of Education updates CIP Codes every ten years to reflect changes in disciplinary fields. In addition to those changes, departments might explore a change in a program CIP code if there is a shift in the curricular content of a degree program and a different CIP code will better match the program content. In those cases, please contact the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost to discuss whether a change is warranted. CIP changes are typically made effective in a fall term to ensure that there is no disruption to student financial aid disbursement, international student visa considerations, and associated federal reporting requirements.

STEM-Related CIP Code Changes

On occasion, departments may seek to change their program CIP code to enable their International students to qualify for the [STEM OPT Extension](#). Because the U.S. Department of Education will review CIP code changes as a condition of Iowa State's participation in the university's Title IV program, programs that seek to change their CIP code to qualify for this program, must submit the following materials to the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost. As a general rule, only those programs that can demonstrate that more than 50% of the credits required for the program qualify as STEM courses will be approved for the designation.

1. The current CIP code and its official description,
2. The proposed CIP code and its official description,
3. The rationale/justification for how the proposed CIP code is a better description for the degree/major than the current assignment, (The most common reason is because the curriculum and/or the learning outcomes have changed from the time of the original approval and it is an essential consideration in any CIP code assignment. Despite any external motivations or benefits for a change in CIP code the CIP code must accurately represent the program learning outcomes and curriculum, and stand up to any scrutiny by internal or external audiences)
4. A detailed listing of REQUIRED program courses, credits, and course descriptions or learning outcomes which indicates which courses fall within the STEM classification (emphasize scientific method, quantitative reasoning, and/or technology).

5. A list of similar academic programs at other institutions that have claimed a STEM CIP code.

In order to ensure that our federal reporting processes are consistent, all CIP Code changes are only made once per year. Submit your request by July 1 to Kelsey Gillen, Director of Academic Quality and Undergraduate Education. (515) 294-7063 or kmgillen@iastate.edu