

Procedures Related to the Establishment, Reorganization, and Elimination of Colleges and Schools

Under the authority of the Board of Trustees, the University of Vermont Faculty Senate is empowered to review, recommend, and participate in the formulation of policy with regard to academic organization, including the establishment or elimination of colleges, schools and departments and the reorganization of the general university and college academic structure (Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws, Sect. 1.2.c.). This document lays out the process by which proposals to establish, reorganize or eliminate a College or School at UVM are to be initiated, prepared, and reviewed and specifies the format for such proposals.

Section 1. Definitions (from the University Manual)

College.

A College is an academic unit with a defined and congruent mission in instruction, research and scholarship, and service. With the exception of the Honors College, a College presents degree candidates to the Faculty Senate, which recommends those candidates for the award of appropriate degrees by the Board of Trustees. A College is organized into Departments.

School.

A School is an academic unit with a defined and congruent mission in instruction, research and scholarship, and service, the mission being narrower in scope than that of a College and ordinarily focused upon professional training. A School that is not established within a College presents candidates to the Faculty Senate, which recommends those candidates for the award of appropriate degrees by the Board of Trustees. A School may be located within a College, in which instance it is led by a Director who reports to the Dean. A School may be organized into Departments. A Director is subject to University Manual policies and procedures otherwise applicable to the recruitment, appointment, evaluation and review of Deans

Section 2. Procedures for the Establishment of a College or School or Reorganization Within a College or School

- a. A proposal to establish a new College or School outside of a College (see separate process for proposals to establish a school within a college) is initiated by the Provost.
- b. A proposal to reorganize an existing College or School is initiated by the Dean of that unit.
- c. A proposal to take one or more existing departments/programs to form a new College or School outside of a College should be treated as a proposal to establish a new College or School and not as a proposal to reorganize a College or School. (see separate process for proposals to reorganize a school within a college)
- d. A proposal for a current School inside or outside a College to become a College, or for a College to become a School outside or inside a College, will be treated like a proposal to establish a new School or College. This proposal should come from the Provost.
- e. The following procedure is meant to focus more on administrative structure rather than curricular matters, but it is recognized there may be some overlap with consideration of curricular matters. All curricular proposals (change, new, termination/deactivation, name change) must be written and proposed following approved Curricular Affairs Committee

- processes.
- f. For proposals to reorganize within a College or School, at each level of the review, the head of the relevant voting body (department, appropriate College/School Committee, College/School faculty) should submit a letter in support of the proposal, or a letter that summarizes the reasons for not approving the proposal including any additional information relevant to review of the proposal by the Faculty Senate and the results of the body's vote.
 - g. The timeline will not begin until a proposal is considered complete by both the Provost's office and the Faculty Senate President.
 - h. An ad hoc committee of nine members will review the proposal. The ad hoc committee will include 3 faculty senators elected by the Faculty Senate, and one member each of the Faculty Senate Executive Council (FSEC), the Senate Curricular Affairs Committee, the Senate Financial and Physical Planning Committee, the Senate Student Affairs Committee, the Senate Educational and Research Technologies Committee, and the Senate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Arts Committee, selected by those bodies. The Senate Executive Council may instruct the ad hoc committee to review any additional proposals relating to academic structure (College/School, School within a College, Department) in that same academic calendar year.
 - i. Following review by the ad hoc committee, all proposals must also be considered by the Faculty Senate, with Senate action promptly communicated to the President and Provost, with a request that they be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for a vote.

Section 3. Proposal Guidelines for the Establishment of a College or School or Reorganization Within a College or School

- a. Abstract
 - i. A one-page summary of the essential information from each of the sections below. Please submit this abstract both as an introduction to the proposal and as a separate document; proposals will not be considered complete without the abstract.
- b. Description
 - i. For reorganization proposals, please provide a detailed description of the proposed academic structure, including graphic representations of the old and the new structure
 - ii. For new College or School proposals, please provide a detailed description of the proposed College or School. The description should clearly demonstrate how the proposed unit meets the definition of College or School.
- c. Rationale
 - i. As in the description section above, if a new College or School is proposed, outline how the proposed unit meets the above definitions of College or School, including having a defined mission in instruction, research and scholarship, and service.
 - ii. Clearly describe the rationale behind this proposal including reasons why other options are not appropriate.
- d. History of the academic unit(s) included in the proposal
 - i. When was the academic unit(s) formed?
 - ii. Have there been any significant changes, including name changes, since the time of formation? If so, provide a summary of these changes.
- e. Goals
 - i. What are the goals of the proposed new academic structure and how do they align with the mission of the University?
 - ii. How will the new administrative model achieve the stated goals?
- f. Impact

- i. What will the impact of the proposed academic structure be on:
 - a. Students, both undergraduate and graduate?
 - b. Faculty?
 - c. Staff?
 - d. The unit's academic programs?
 - e. Other academic units and programs at UVM?
- g. Budget
 - i. What will be the effect of the new academic structure on the budget and operations of the University, or College/School, and the unit's programs?
 - ii. Include data that is relevant to the financial sustainability of the proposed new administrative structure.
- h. Benchmarking
 - i. Have other universities reconfigured their administrative structure to reach this model? If so, what is known about the history and outcomes at those institutions?
- i. Evaluation
 - i. How will the performance of the new or restructured School be evaluated? Please outline existing or additional processes withing the housing unit that will be used for evaluation of the School's success, and whether it has met the expected goals outlined above.
- j. Summary of Communications with academic units likely to be involved in or affected by the proposal.
 - i. Summarize all communications with the academic units likely to be involved in or affected by the proposal, including the details indicated below. Include all written communications (e.g. emails, memos) in an appendix to the request.
 - a. individuals involved and roles/positions
 - b. primary points of discussion
 - c. any alternatives offered
 - d. outcome(s) of the communication
- k. Schedule
 - i. What is the proposed implementation schedule?

Section 4. Process and Timeline for Proposals to Establish New Colleges or Schools or Reorganize Within a College or School

- a. Completed proposals for new Colleges or Schools should be submitted by the Provost to the Faculty Senate.
- b. For proposals to reorganize within a College or School, completed proposals should be submitted to the Vice Provost for Academic and Student Success. If the Provost determines that the proposal is complete and a reasonable case has been made for academic unit restructuring, the Provost will forward the proposal to the Faculty Senate with a request for review. The Provost has **two weeks (14 days)** to make a decision on whether to forward the proposal.
- c. The proposal abstract will then be circulated via email to all faculty, academic deans, and department chairs with a link to a survey to submit feedback/comments; the survey will be available for **30 days**. The full proposal will be made available by the Faculty Senate office to any faculty member upon request. The 30-day comment period shall fall wholly during the normal appointment period for 9-month faculty, and no more than five days of a 30-day comment period should occur between fall semester grades admission and the start of spring

semester classes.

- d. At the time of circulation, an ad hoc committee (membership described above) will be appointed to manage a process of comment on and revision of the proposal and to make a report and recommendation to the Senate. All feedback collected from the electronic survey described above will be made available to the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee will also invite faculty comment on the proposal either in writing or in person. The ad hoc committee will summarize faculty comment to the Provost's office for the purpose of responding to commentary and/or revising the proposal. Additionally, the ad hoc committee may ask the Provost to respond to specific comments. Additionally, the ad hoc committee will meet with the Provost, the Dean of the responsible unit (for reorganization proposals), and program faculty, and may request additional information. The comment and revision period will last for 40 days from the time the ad hoc committee is constituted, though the committee will extend the period for comment and revision if members judge that revisions to the original proposal are significant enough to warrant another round of commentary. The comment and revision period must fall wholly during the normal appointment period for 9-month faculty, and no more than five days of that period may occur between fall semester grade submission and the start of spring semester classes.

Upon completion of the comment and revision period, the ad hoc committee will write a report summarizing commentary received, any additional information gathered during the comment period, and the revisions (if any) made to the proposal on the basis of the commentary. The committee will also recommend to the Senate one of the following:

- That the proposed action be implemented as described in the proposal;
- That the proposed action be implemented with adjustments or conditions;
- That the proposed action be implemented only if certain concerns are resolved;
- That the proposed action not be implemented at the present time, or in the present form;
- That information pertinent to the evaluation of the proposed action is not available and that the Senate request clarification.

The report will provide a justification for the ad hoc committee's recommendation and specify any relevant adjustments, conditions, concerns, or matters still requiring clarification.

The ad hoc committee will complete its work within 20 days of the end of the comment and revision period, unless significant issues arise that require additional time for the ad hoc committee to complete its review.

- e. The Chair of the ad hoc committee will write a memo that includes the decision of the committee and a brief summary of the rationale for the decision. The memo and the ad hoc committee's report will be sent to the Faculty Senate President, the Dean of the College/School (for reorganization proposals), and the Provost **within 5 days** of the committee's vote.
- f. The ad hoc committee memo and report will be **considered by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) at their next meeting**. The FSEC may accept the ad hoc committee's position or send the matter back to the ad hoc committee for further discussion, with specific instructions about what aspects of the report require additional consideration and a deadline for the ad hoc committee's response. If additional consideration is requested, the FSEC will consider it at their next meeting.
- g. Once accepted by the FSEC, the proposal will be placed on the agenda for a vote at the next

Faculty Senate meeting. Materials including the ad hoc committee's memo report, recommendation, and any other information deemed relevant by the FSEC will be **sent to all Faculty Senators immediately** to allow sufficient time for consideration prior to the Faculty Senate meeting.

- h. Results of the Faculty Senate vote will be communicated to the President and Provost **the day after the Faculty Senate meeting**.
- i. All proposals must also be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Section 5. Elimination of a College or School

- a. Elimination of a College or School requires Board of Trustees approval and would follow the required shared governance procedures required for either:
 - i. the approval of an academic reorganization of the University.
 - ii. the elimination of all of the academic programs offered by departments or programs located within the College or School.