

## **Procedures Related to the Establishment, Reorganization, and Elimination of a School within a College**

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 School within a College at UVM are to be initiated, prepared, and reviewed and specifies the format for such proposals.

### **Definitions (from the University Manual)**

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.

### **Procedures for the Establishment of a School within a College or a Reorganization of a School within a College**

- a. A proposal to establish or reorganize a School within a College is initiated by the Dean of that unit in consultation with associate deans, chairs/program directors, and faculty in that unit.
- b. A proposal to take one or more existing departments/programs to form a new School within a College should be treated as a proposal to establish a new School within a college and not as a proposal to reorganize a College.
- c. 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 program proposals (change, new, termination/deactivation, name change) must be written and submitted according to approved Curricular Affairs Committee processes prior to the submission of the proposal to establish or reorganize a School within a College.
- d. At each level of the review, the head of the relevant voting body 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.
- e. Proposals must be reviewed at the College level prior to submission in accordance with College procedures (e.g., faculty of the school, a college-level committee as appropriate, and dean's office; unit faculty in some units).
- f. Once College-level review of a proposal is complete, proposals should be submitted to the Provost's office.
- g. The review process and timeline are described in detail following the proposal requirements.

Incomplete proposals will be returned with a request for the missing information. 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 five members, to include representatives from the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Council (FSEC), the Senate Curricular Affairs Committee, the Senate Financial and Physical Planning Committee, and the Senate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Arts Committee, will review the proposal. The members of the ad hoc review committee and a Chair of the committee will be appointed by the Faculty Senate President. The committee members may not hold primary or secondary appointments in academic unit(s) that are the subject of the proposal.
- 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.

### **Proposal Guidelines for the Establishment or Reorganization of a School Within a College**

- 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. Please provide a detailed description of the proposed academic structure, including graphic representations of the old and the new structure.
- c. Rationale
  - i. 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/were the academic unit(s) formed? For a new school, this may include departments or programs that will be combined to form the school.
  - ii. Have there been any significant changes, including name changes, since the time of formation? If so, provide a summary of these changes if they are relevant to the proposal to establish a school or restructure an existing school.
- e. Goals
  - i. What are the goals of the proposed new academic structure and how do they align with the mission of the University and the mission of the College?
  - 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, College, 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 within 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?

### **Process and Timeline for Proposals to Establish or Reorganize a School Within a College**

- a. Completed proposals should be submitted to the Provost's office.
- b. If the Provost determines that the proposal is complete and a reasonable case has been made, 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.
- d. At the time of circulation, an ad hoc committee (membership described above) will be appointed to review the proposal. All feedback collected during the comment period will be made available to the ad hoc committee. During their review, the ad hoc committee may ask the proposers to respond to specific comments. Additionally, the ad hoc committee will meet with the dean of the responsible unit and program faculty, and may request additional information as part of their review. Upon completion of their review, the ad hoc committee will write a report summarizing any additional information gathered during the review process, take a vote to support or reject the proposal, and provide rationale to explain their position. The ad hoc committee will complete its work within **14 days** of the end of the comment 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 and the Dean of the College/School **within 5 days** of the committee's vote. A copy of the memo will be sent to the Provost for information purposes only.
- 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 and report, 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**. All proposals must also be approved by the Board of Trustees.

### **Elimination of a School Within a College**

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