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### ***Policy on Restructuring Academic Units***

#### **Abstract**

*Approximately 150 words on the overall rationale for the policy*

**Source Committee:** Academic Policies Committee

**Unit(s) Responsible for Implementation:** Academic Affairs

**Consultations:** Division of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning, College Deans and University Librarian

#### **History**

Version	Approved	Revisions(s)
2	5/11/2021	Ensured consistency of standards for voting were majority across entire policy. Clarified restructuring initiation and voting processes. Added appendix of example scenarios. Added definitions for Existing Unit, Remaining Unit, and Majority.
1	05/14/2020	Original. Replaces S-92-178. Academic Senate Principles Regarding Academic Reorganization. Informed by RS92-104: Resolution Establishing Principles Regarding Academic Reorganization and RS94-135: Resolution to Conduct a Referendum for the Approval of the Creation of a School of Education and a School of Health and Human Services. Informed by S19-260L College Naming Policy.

#### **Rationale**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles and process by which academic units can be restructured: transferred, merged, divided, or reorganized. A restructuring process might be initiated due to changes in units' academic fields, a desire for more synergies between units, cost savings, or administrative reforms, among other possible reasons.

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## **Policy**

### *Principles*

The following principles should guide any process of restructuring: transfer, merger, division, or reorganization.

- The process through which restructuring take place should be largely faculty-driven.
- Transparency should be embedded throughout every aspect of the process.
- Wide consultation involving, at a minimum, every unit involved in the process, should take place prior to any action involving academic unit restructures. All involved should strive to include the participation of as many faculty members as possible.
- Consideration on how any changes would affect the faculty, staff and students within the unit should be part of any process, and consultation with HR and Faculty Affairs should be made.
- Any process or action should strive to ensure fairness to all.
- To help ensure transparency and openness, if at all possible, decisions made over the summer or other times when the University is not in full session should be avoided.
- Prior to any decision, both the benefits and the challenges involved in any action should be considered.

### *Definitions*

1. Academic Units: For the purpose of this policy, an academic unit grants credentials or degrees and includes programs, departments, schools, or colleges. A degree program and any associated faculty are not always equivalent to an academic unit. Academic units may include multiple degree programs.

2. Existing unit: An existing unit is the academic unit of which faculty are members at the time the restructuring proposal begins.
3. Majority: In a vote, more than fifty percent of the vote of an academic unit as defined by the by-laws, if there are no by-laws, voting can be by faculty appointed time-base.
4. Remaining unit: All the faculty remaining in the existing academic unit if a proposed restructuring is approved, minus the faculty who would be leaving.
5. Faculty: an individual with a current full- or part-time appointment to a unit (i.e., Unit 3 employees).
6. Transfer: A transfer of academic units does not refer to the transfer of individual faculty members but of their academic units.
7. Merger: A merger of academic units is the combining of existing units into a new unit.
8. Division: A division of units is when one or more parts of a larger unit break apart into smaller units
9. Reorganization: A reorganization is the restructuring of academic units within a larger academic unit.
10. Restructure: A restructure is a transfer, merger, division, or reorganization of academic units.

### *Process*

Overall, each process for academic unit restructuring should involve:

- Full disclosure to faculty and staff who could be involved;
- A fair and open decision-making process that includes all involved;
- An implementation process; and,
- An evaluation of the restructuring 3 years after the action takes place.

The President, Provost, dean, or a group of faculty who wish to restructure a unit can initiate the request for restructuring through transfer, merger, division, or reorganization.

### *Process When Requested by President, Provost, or dean*

If a restructuring request is initiated by the President, Provost, or a dean, the following process should be followed.

- The process is initiated by a memorandum copied to the dean(s) and faculty whose colleges include the affected units along with the Chair of the Academic Senate, stating the:
  - Nature of the change requested (transfer, merger, division, reorganization);

- A full description of the desired transfer, merger, division, or reorganization along with a comparison with the existing structure;
- The units involved;
- The goals involved in making the requested changes;
- A full justification for making the proposed changes;
- Any request initiated for cost cutting purposes needs to completely outline the proposed cost savings, the expected costs of the restructuring, and the net savings to any restructuring;
- The faculty and staff who would be affected;
- The number of majors and minors (with estimated FTES) involved;
- The desired timeline; and,
- An outline of anticipated issues to be resolved before any restructuring could be completed.
- Once initiated, all those affected by the proposed action are to be informed as soon as possible. Upon receipt of the initiating memorandum, the deans in receipt of the initiating memo would immediately inform all faculty in the involved units, the Provost, and the Chair of the Academic Senate, and would meet with the involved units to outline their views on parameters and issues that may need to be resolved.
- Upon receipt of information about a requested structural change, the Senate Executive Committee should appoint an Independent Committee of three individuals not directly affected, two of whom are faculty and one of whom is an administrator. This committee will meet with the Planning Committee throughout the process to ensure fairness and openness.
- The role of the Independent Committee would be to review the proposed voting process and the proposed MOU. They would then be expected to make a recommendation to the faculty of all affected units prior to any vote on the effectiveness, fairness, and appropriateness of the voting process and MOU.
- Upon initiation of a restructuring process, a committee of faculty involved in the proposed reorganization should be formed to create a proposal and, ultimately, a MOU for the proposed reorganization. The planning committee will be comprised of two faculty members from each involved unit. Potential members of the planning committee have to first be nominated by faculty from that involved unit and would have to accept the nomination. The department would then hold elections and eligible faculty would vote to select Planning Committee members, using a secret ballot. Along with representation from the administrators requesting the restructuring (each administrator requesting the change, or their designee), these faculty comprise the Planning Committee for the proposed restructure.
- The Planning Committee shall then develop a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the rationale for the reorganization, the pros and cons of the move for each involved party, the budget impact of the proposed reorganization, and the issues that need to be resolved between the units before a reorganization could take place. The MOU also needs to lay out, in detail, the issues necessary to be resolved in the reorganization and the subsequent resolution of each issue. These issues should include the proposed division of resources like budget, space, staff, student assistants, faculty

lines, etc.

- The MOU should then be circulated among all involved faculty members and submitted to the deans involved for their information and feedback.
- After a full discussion by the faculty, the restructuring proposal as represented by the proposed MOU will go to the faculty for a vote of all involved units. The vote will be a by secret ballot. Voting processes and the participation by part-time lecturers would be governed by a department's own by-laws outlining the definition of voting members; if there are no by-laws, voting can be by faculty appointed time-base. The restructuring process involves the required approval of the unit(s) joining / splitting /reorganizing and the unit being joined / leaving, done through agreed upon voting processes.
- To move forward with a restructuring, a majority of affected faculty within each unit must approve. This

includes these situations:

- **Separation:** An academic unit asking to separate from an existing unit and go forward as an independent unit would require the majority approval of both the existing unit and of the faculty involved in the unit seeking to be independent, in two separate votes. Those who are members of a unit seeking to separate from the existing unit would hold their vote first and then, the vote of the entire faculty of the existing unit would occur. Those wanting to leave also participate in the vote of the existing unit.
- **Merging:** A proposed academic unit seeking to separate from a larger unit and then join another academic unit would need a majority approval of the unit seeking to move, the existing unit, and of the receiving unit, in three separate votes. Those who are members of a unit seeking to separate from the existing unit would hold their vote first and then, the vote of the entire faculty of the existing unit would occur, followed by that of the receiving unit. Those wanting to leave also participate in the vote of the existing unit, but not of the receiving unit.
- If the language here does not cover a potential situation, then the Independent Committee will propose a voting process.
- If the MOU is not approved by the faculty, then the proposal goes no further.
- If the MOU is not approved, the parties must wait a year before another attempt is made using the same version.
- After faculty approvals, the MOU then goes to the dean(s) for approval then to the Provost for approval.
- After the Provost has approved the MOU, the proposal then goes to the Senate as an information item.
- If the MOU is not approved by either the dean(s) or the Provost, they must provide a justification in writing to all affected faculty.
- If the MOU is approved and the reorganization implemented, after three years, the involved

Units should submit to the President and Provost a report reviewing the restructuring actions and an assessment of their successes and challenges. All involved faculty need to sign the report to indicate their knowledge of its contents. If issues have arisen due to restructuring, each dean should work with the involved units to resolve the issues.

*Process When Requested by Faculty.*

- The process is initiated by a memorandum to the dean(s) whose colleges include the affected units, stating the:
  - Nature of the change requested (transfer, merger, division, reorganization);
  - A full description of the desired transfer, merger, division, or reorganization along with a comparison with the existing structure;
  - The units involved;
  - The goals involved in making the requested changes;
  - A full justification for making the proposed changes;
- o Any request needs to completely outline the proposed cost savings, the expected costs of the restructuring, and the net savings to any restructuring;
- The faculty and staff who would be affected;
- The number of majors and minors (with estimated FTES) involved;
- The desired timeline; and,
- An outline of anticipated issues to be resolved before any restructuring could be completed.
- Once initiated, all those affected by the proposed action are to be informed as soon as possible. Upon receipt of the initiating memorandum, the deans in receipt of the initiating memo would immediately inform all faculty in the involved units, the Provost, and the Chair of the Academic Senate and would meet with the involved units to outline their views on parameters and issues that may need to be resolved.
- Upon receipt of information about a requested structural change, the Senate Executive Committee should appoint an Independent Committee of three individuals not directly affected, two of whom are faculty and one of whom is an administrator. This committee will meet with the Planning Committee throughout the process to ensure fairness and openness.
- The role of the Independent Committee would be to review the proposed voting process and the proposed MOU.

They would then be expected to make a recommendation to the faculty of all affected units prior to any vote on the effectiveness, fairness, and appropriateness of the voting process and MOU.

- Upon initiation of a restructuring process, a committee of faculty involved in the proposed reorganization should be formed to create a proposal and, ultimately, a MOU for the proposed reorganization. The planning committee will be comprised of two faculty members from each involved unit. Potential members of the planning committee have to first be nominated by faculty from that involved unit and would have to accept the nomination. The department would then hold elections and eligible faculty would vote to select Planning Committee members, using a secret ballot. These faculty comprise the Planning Committee for the proposed restructure.
- Along with representation from each dean involved (or their designee), these faculty comprise the Planning Committee for the proposed restructure.
- The Planning Committee shall then develop a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the rationale for the reorganization, the pros and cons of the move for each involved party, the budget impact of the proposed reorganization, and the issues that need to be resolved between the units before a reorganization could take place. The MOU also needs to lay out, in detail, the issues necessary to be resolved in the reorganization and the subsequent resolution of each issue. These issues should include the proposed division of resources like budget, space, staff, student assistants, faculty lines, etc.
- The MOU should then be circulated among all involved faculty members and submitted to the deans involved for their information and feedback.

After a full discussion by the faculty, the restructuring proposal as represented by the proposed MOU will go to the faculty for a vote of all involved units. The vote will be a by secret ballot. Voting processes and the participation by part-time lecturers would be governed by a department's own by-laws outlining the definition of voting members; if there are no by-laws, voting can be by faculty appointed time-base. The restructuring process involves the required approval of the unit(s) joining / splitting /reorganizing and the unit being joined / leaving, done through agreed upon voting processes.

- To move forward with a restructuring, a majority of affected faculty within each unit must approve. This includes these situations:
  - **Separation:** An academic unit asking to separate from an existing unit and go forward as an independent unit would require the majority approval of both the existing unit and of the faculty involved in the unit seeking to be independent, in two separate votes. Those who are members of a unit seeking to separate from the existing unit would hold their vote first and then, the vote of the entire faculty of the existing unit would occur. Those wanting to leave also participate in the vote of the existing unit.
  - **Merging:** An proposed academic unit seeking to separate from a larger unit and then join another academic unit would need a majority approval of the unit seeking to move, the original existing unit, and of the receiving unit, in three separate votes. Those who are members of a unit seeking to separate from the existing unit would hold their vote first and then, the vote of the entire faculty of the existing unit would occur, followed by that of the receiving unit. Those wanting to leave also participate in the vote of the existing unit, but not of the receiving unit.

- If the language here does not cover a potential situation, then the Independent Committee will propose a voting process.

- If the MOU is not approved by the faculty, then the proposal goes no further.
- If the MOU is not approved, the parties must wait a year before another attempt is made using the same version.
- After faculty approvals, the request then goes to the dean(s) for approval then to the Provost for approval.
- After the Provost has approved the restructuring, the proposal then goes to the Senate as an information item.
- If the MOU is not approved by either the dean(s) or the Provost, they must provide a justification in writing to all affected faculty.
- If the MOU is approved and the reorganization implemented, after three years, the involved units should submit to the President and Provost a report reviewing the restructuring actions and an assessment of their successes and challenges. All involved faculty need to sign the report to indicate their knowledge of its contents. If issues have arisen due to restructuring, each dean should work with the involved units to resolve the issues.

(Resources: University of Arizona-Guidelines for Reorganizations and Mergers of Academic Units at the University of Arizona; Indiana University- Merger, Reorganization and Elimination of Academic Units and Programs Involving Core Schools (ACA-79); IUPUI Policy on Transfer, Merger, Reorganization, Reduction, and Elimination of Academic Programs)

## **APPENDIX. Example Scenarios**

This is one set of example scenarios arising out of a potential restructuring. Overall—3 academic units are now together after a merger some years ago, called AA, BB, and CC. AA now wants to go off with another unit (DD), leaving BB and CC. In one scenario, CC also leaves to join AA and DD.

### **Scenario 1: A Separation then a Merger**

- A majority of the faculty in AA, as the departing unit, votes first in favor of leaving the School and joining DD.
- All of the faculty in the existing unit (AA, BB, and CC programs), vote on the proposal for AA to leave. By a majority vote, they vote in favor of allowing AA to leave the School
- A majority of the faculty in DD, as the receiving unit, vote in favor to accept AA and form a new academic unit.
- RESULT: AA leaves and joins DD to form a new School or Program, and BB and CC remain in the original academic unit.

### **Scenario 2) A Vote to Separate But Then No Merger**

- A majority of the faculty in AA, as the departing unit, votes first in favor of leaving the School and joining DD.
- All of the faculty in the existing unit (AA, BB, and CC programs), vote on the proposal for AA to leave. They fail to achieve the majority vote to allow AA to leave the existing academic unit.
- A majority of the faculty in DD, as the receiving unit, vote in favor to accept AA and form a new academic unit.

- RESULT: AA does not leave the School and join DD.

### **Scenario 3) Two Programs Separate and Join A Separate Unit**

- A majority of the faculty in AA, as one departing unit, votes first in favor of leaving the School and joining DD.
- A majority of the faculty in CC, as another unit seeking to depart, votes in favor of leaving the School and join DD and AA.
- The faculty in the existing unit (formerly the AA, BB, and CC programs), vote together as a "remaining unit". By a majority vote, they vote in favor of allowing AA and CC to leave the School.
- A majority of the faculty in DD, as the receiving unit, in favor to accept AA and CC and all join a new academic unit.
- RESULT: The original School is dissolved; AA and CC join DD and form a new School, and BB becomes a stand-alone Department.

**Signed Memo:**  
S21-290 memo

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