Academic Senate Principles Regarding Academic Reorganization

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Academic Senate Policy S92-178

At its meeting of May 12, 1992, the Academic Senate unanimously approved the following principles regarding academic reorganization:

Although recent discussions of reorganizing the academic units of San Francisco State University have been prompted by the California state budget crisis, the Academic Senate believes that any such reorganization should be considered and adopted—if accepted by the faculty—in the context of how best to serve the mission of the University and strengthen the intellectual/academic activities of the University community. Examination of curricular and organizational structures can, at its best, be intellectually stimulating and creative—something that in healthy organizations is an ongoing and regenerative process.

The Academic Senate further believes that budgetary concerns do not in and of themselves comprise sufficient reason to alter the organization of the schools/programs on this campus, and that any organizational change of this kind must be considered within the framework of principles and processes to be articulated prior to any actual planning process. Thus, timelines for consideration and implementation of any proposed reorganization should both be realistic and be jointly agreed upon by faculty and administrative leadership.

It follows that those discussions should be guided by these principles:
Should the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, or any other person(s) believe that such a reorganization is appropriate, s/he shall advise faculty leadership concurrent with notifying the Council of Academic Deans so that the process will from the outset include faculty and administrative leadership.

Organizational planning shall provide opportunities for broad participation of the entire academic community, including faculty, students, staff, and administration.

Organizational planning shall include a careful examination of all pertinent factors, including but not limited to human, curricular, and budgetary considerations, alternative organizational structures, and the ethos of this campus.

Organizational development shall emphasize middle and long-range planning rather than crisis-driven responses.

The consideration of alternatives shall include a full analysis of the potential benefits and the potential costs of each alternative including any hidden costs, such as the possibility that attempts to streamline may have the unintended effect of generating increases in administrative positions.
The perspectives and preferences of department and program faculty about where they might be located in any proposed academic structure shall be the primary consideration in any proposal for organizational change.

Any proposal for organizational change regarding the structure of major academic units (Colleges, Schools within Colleges, or departments within Schools) shall evolve from the organizational planning process and shall be approved by the faculty through a referendum designed (including the appropriate electorate) and conducted by the Academic Senate.

As any organizational changes affecting alignment of departments and programs within Schools and Colleges, or of the Schools and Colleges themselves, necessarily result in ancillary changes (e.g., review of policy relating to HRTP, membership of the Academic Senate, its standing committees, and other all-University committees, etc.), these changes shall be part of the planning and implementation process so that they can be effected concurrent with the larger changes implied by University reorganization.

*** APPROVED BY PRESIDENT CORRIGAN ON MARCH 12, 1993 ***