THE FORMATION AND MODIFICATION OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS: PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES

PRINCIPLES:

1. Requests to change the structure of a department should usually emerge from the concerns of the faculty and/or the dean directly involved. However, other individuals of the university may suggest that the faculty examine the effectiveness of the present departmental structure.

2. A new department may be formed as an entirely new entity, as a result of dividing an existing department, or as a result of combining two or more existing departments.

3. If the change affects more than one school, then more than one dean will be involved, so any references to a dean in this policy statement imply more than one dean if the situation so indicates.

4. Collegiality is the fundamental principle upon which the governance of the university rests. At any point in this process, any of the parties involved may consult informally with anyone in the campus community whose contribution seems desirable.

PROCEDURES

1. If someone suggests a change in departmental structure, the relevant faculty, the appropriate academic dean and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs should engage in considerable informal discussion. These people should solicit advice from other potentially interested parties, possibly including faculty in other departments or schools as well as the Academic Senate.

2. When informal discussions appear to have elicited all of the relevant issues and concerns, the faculty who wish to form the new department should write a proposal that addresses the following points:

(a) How and why the change will better serve institutional needs;

(b) How the change will affect the governance and delivery of curriculum and degree programs;

(c) How the change will affect recruitment, appointment, review, promotion and tenure of faculty, as well as faculty assignments and workload;

(d) How the change will affect the need for financial support, including operating expenses, equipment, facilities and staffing;

(e) What impact the plan will have on Information Resources (Library books and subscriptions, computing equipment and support) and what is the source for additional funding; and

(f) A plan for effecting the change.

3. The proposal must pass through the following levels of review in the order indicated. The individual(s) at each level shall review the proposal, consult with others as seems appropriate, and then either forward it to the next level with a positive recommendation or return it to the previous level with a written explanation of the reasons for withholding approval:

(a) The appropriate academic dean, who shall inform any potentially interested faculty and invite their consultation;

(b) The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, who shall inform the Council of Deans and invite their consultation;
(c) The Academic Senate, through the Executive Committee, shall forward this proposal to Standing Committees or to the Full Senate at its reasoned discretion before taking final action; and

(d) The President, who shall inform the Cabinet and invite their consultation before delivering his/her final decision regarding the proposal.

4. If the proposal fails to receive approval at any level, those involved may choose to revise and resubmit it.

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