

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD
ACADEMIC SENATE

AAC, BPC, and FAC

Department Formation Criteria

RES 222308

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate adopt the document and policy in “The Formation and Modification of Academic Departments: Principles and Procedures”.

RATIONALE: The existing department formation criteria and procedure is unclear and outdated. The new guidelines provide a detailed description for parties involved in both the proposition and evaluation processes.

Distribution List:

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Approved by the Academic Senate: 11/3/2022

Sent to President: 11/14/2022

Approved by President: 11/15/2022

Academic Senate Task Force

Department Formation Criteria

Response to 2021-2022 REFERRAL #02

At its meeting on August 24, 2021, the CSUB Academic Senate Executive Committee requested that the AAC, BPC, and FAC address the issue of Department Formation Criteria Revision. The standing committees elected representatives to an ad hoc Task Force to examine New Department Formation policies and procedures, with representatives from the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), Budget and Planning Committee (BPC), and Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC). The Task Force was asked to clarify and expand upon the current department formation procedures. Particular issues of concern were the need to include the rationale behind creating a new Department, existing support resources for the proposed department, additional support resources required, and how the creation of a new department affects current RTP process for impacted faculty.

The Task Force members and chairs from AAC, BPC, and FAC met on September 14, 2021 to formally call the Task Force and elect a committee chair. Additional meetings by the committee occurred during the Fall 2021 Semester, with additional committee correspondence via email.

The Task Force reviewed existing new department formation criteria, the University Handbook, the CFA-CSU CBA, example policies from other CSU campuses, and recommendations from last year's Academic Senate standing committees. The current document represents a consensus recommendation from the Task Force for a new policy document. We share this document with the standing committees and invite comments and suggestions, if any.

Composition of the Task Force on New Department Formation:

Maureen Rush (Task Force Chair), Anna Jacobsen, John Deal, Jackie Kegley, Jorge Moraga

John Tarjan, Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) Chair

Charles Lam, Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) Chair

Mandy Rees, Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) Chair

**THE FORMATION AND MODIFICATION OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS:
Principles and procedures**

PRINCIPLES

I. Purpose and qualities of an Academic Department

A. Purpose of an Academic Department

- (1) The purpose of an academic department (unit) is to support the mission of the university by offering academic programs or courses in the disciplines it houses, promoting academic inquiry and critical thinking within and across disciplines, and engaging in disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, scholarship, and creative activities.

B. To qualify as an academic department the proposed entity must:

- (1) Offers a set of academic courses, approved through the appropriate curricular review process (departmental, school, and university levels), that lead to undergraduate or graduate degrees.
- (2) Ensure to its faculty, the rights and responsibilities of Academic Freedom, as defined by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), to engage in free inquiry and dissent in both scholarship and instruction. This includes the rights of the unit to initiate curricular proposals, to make autonomous decisions on instructional materials, pedagogy, delivery mode, and grading systems/practices. The faculty unit is free to offer its own views and interpretations that may dissent from the received views of either the discipline or in any other arena of society.
- (3) Be mainly comprised of Unit 3 faculty, who are subject to the rights and responsibilities of the CFA-CSU CBA, the CSUB University Handbook, and other relevant university policies.
- (4) Include sufficient tenured and tenure-line faculty (see additional guidance below), with assistance of associated departments when necessary, to engage meaningfully in shared governance activities, especially those related to Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) and Post-tenure Review (PTR) processes, classroom observations, and other required activities associated with performance evaluation, and peer feedback/review.

II. Formation of new Academic Departments, or modifications to existing departments

- A.** 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, especially as part of the Program Review process.
- B.** A new department may be formed as (1) an entirely new entity, (2) a result of dividing an existing department, or (3) a result of combining two or more existing departments.
- C.** 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.
- D.** 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.
- E.** It is assumed that each level of review will focus primarily on its charge and issues.

PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT

I. Initiation of Proposal

- A.** Faculty members, departments, or administrative officers of the University may initiate the discussion and consultation processes to consider the establishment of a new academic department.
- B.** When considering 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.
- C.** 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 all of the areas included below (Section II. New Department Proposal: Contents).
- D.** The initial request should be submitted in writing to the appropriate dean(s). Because of the potential impact on departments/schools/programs, faculty, staff, and students, the proposal must follow the guidelines and review process set forth below (Section III. New Department Proposal: Procedure for Review).

II. New Department Proposal: Contents

A. Background and Introduction

- (1) The exact name of the proposed academic department and name(s) of individual(s) preparing the proposal;
- (2) Description of the consultation process and information discussions that occurred prior to the submission of the proposal (Section I. Initiation of Proposal);
- (3) Describe how and why the establishment of a new department will better serve institutional needs, including student, faculty, staff, school, and university needs;
- (4) Description of possible consequences of not forming the new department.

B. Faculty Composition

- (1) List the proposed faculty members for the new department's first year of operation, including the names of existing faculty who would be moved, jointly appointed, or affiliated from other department(s) and/or school(s). A minimum of three tenured faculty affiliated with the unit is required (whether through appointment, joint appointment, or Memo of Understanding) in order to document that they will be able to fully carry out the hiring and performance review duties of the department.

Include the following information:

- a. For each faculty member include their name, rank (Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor), current departmental affiliation, and if they will be moved to the new department or jointly appointed between their prior department and the new department.
- b. For each individual who will have a joint appointment, include:
 - i. the portion of their assignment within the new department,
 - ii. documentation of assignments from the President and his/her designee confirming the assignment proportion, and
 - iii. documentation from the appropriate dean designating which of the units will be responsible for conducting RTP/PTR review.
- (2) If the new department is breaking away or drawing members from existing departments, list all foreseeable effects that this change would have on other department(s) or school(s) in terms of

name change, number of faculty remaining, support staff, curriculum, operating budget, space, etc.

- (3) Results of a vote from each department or school directly affected, including written comments from affected academic program chair(s)/director(s) and faculty. Anonymity, if requested, should be accommodated and respected throughout the process.

C. Curricular and Degree Impacts

- (1) List the courses, curricula, programs, degrees to be administered by the new department;
- (2) Describe how the change will affect the governance and delivery of curriculum and degree programs;
- (3) Present a three-year plan for assessment of student learning outcomes, program development, course scheduling, and individual faculty assignments. In instances where a new department will not be solely responsible for a degree program, include documentation of consultation and course schedule and assessment planning from across all impacted and associated units;
- (4) In the case of impacts on departments or programs with external accreditation, provide the rationale and justification for creating the department that aligns with accreditation requirements.

D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

- (1) Describe how the establishment of the new department will affect recruitment, appointment, review, promotion and tenure of faculty, as well as faculty assignments and workload;
- (2) Include the following criteria and policies, including documentation that they have been reviewed and approved by the incoming departmental faculty (as included in Section II. B.1.), the appropriate school dean, and the P&VPAA.
 - a. Retention, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) Criteria,
 - b. Post-Tenure Review (PTR) Criteria,
 - c. Classroom observation policies, and
 - d. Criteria and Procedures for the periodic evaluation of temporary faculty
- (3) In the case where the initial faculty composition of the new department does not include a minimum of three tenured faculty of the rank of Professor, include information on the pool from which qualified faculty will be drawn for RTP, PTR, and other committees that require faculty of this rank.
- (4) Include "Rules of Governance" that, at minimum, specifically address the following items:
 - Voting procedures
 - Department committees (formation, responsibilities, structure, membership)
 - Advisory committees (formation, responsibilities, structure, membership)
 - Frequency of department meetings

E. Budgetary, Financial, and other Resource Considerations

- (1) Describe the needs of the new department for financial support and resources, particularly for the first three years of operation, including:
 - a. operating expenses,
 - b. staff,
 - c. space, including staff (ASC) offices, mail, housing of instructional support equipment, laboratories, etc.
 - d. equipment, and
 - e. possible other sources of non-stateside funding, if applicable.
 - f. Information Technology Services
 - g. Library
 - h. other facilities;

F. Planned Implementation and Timeline

- (1) The proposed date of implementation and the appropriate timeline for the process of implementation;
- (2) Include important milestones and dates for the development of the department.

III. New Department Proposal: Procedure for Review

A. 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 provide a written explanation of the reasons for withholding approval. If the proposal fails to receive approval at any level, the proposal shall not proceed to the next level of review. The proposers may choose to revise and resubmit to that specific level of review. Any revisions of a proposal shall be communicated with previous levels of review. All levels of review must be documented clearly for subsequent review levels:

- (1) The initial proposal must be submitted to the appropriate dean(s) for consultation and signature(s). The dean(s) shall provide written comments/recommendations to the originator(s) of the proposal.
- (2) The proposal, including responses and revisions based on feedback from the dean(s), shall then be submitted to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, who shall consult with the Council of Deans and provide written comments/recommendations reflecting their own review and feedback from the council;
- (3) The revised proposal, including responses and revisions based on feedback from the dean(s), P&VPAA, and Dean's Council, shall then be submitted to the Academic Senate, through the Executive Committee. If all prior levels of review are deemed to have been satisfied, the proposal shall be forwarded to the Standing Committees for review. Each Standing Committee will review the proposal and provide their comments/recommendation.
- (4) If the revised proposal receives approval from all prior levels of review, the proposal will then be sent to the full Academic Senate for review and final action.
- (5) The approved proposal shall then be forwarded to the President for their final decision regarding the proposal.