

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COUNCIL
on SENATE PROCEDURES FOR FORMING, CONSOLIDATING, TRANSFERRING, CLOSING OR RENAMING
OF DEPARTMENTS, COLLEGES, AND SCHOOLS

November 26, 2008

The Constitution of the University of Florida contains roughly two sentences concerning the forming, consolidating, transferring, closing, or renaming of departments, colleges, and schools. They are:

Constitution Article VI Organizational Units of the University

Section 1: ACADEMIC ORGANIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

...

(C) Colleges and schools may be established or abolished by the initiative of the Faculty Senate with the approval of the President of the University and Board of Trustees. The initiative for establishment or abolition of such units may also be exercised by the Board of Trustees.

Section 2: THE COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS-

A) A college shall be a unit of the University organized to conduct curricula of study and research, and to grant degrees.

...

(B) A school, except for the Graduate School, shall be a unit subordinate to a college organized for a special program of studies.

Section 3: THE DEPARTMENTS-

...

The formation of a department, its consolidation with other departments, its transfer from one college to another, or any other move which changes the original character of the department shall require the approval of the Faculty Senate.

The Constitution and By-Laws do not provide a procedure by which decisions of this magnitude are to be made, nor do they provide details as to what information should be provided to the Senate to assist it in making these decisions. The APC recommends that new constitutional and/or by-law language be drafted to incorporate the following general concepts.

Procedure: The APC recommends that any proposal to form, consolidate, transfer, close, or rename departments, colleges, or schools should conform to the following procedure:

1. Be submitted to the affected faculty which will take a vote on their support for the proposal, by secret ballot, the tally of which will be noted in the proposal;
2. Be submitted to the College (if appropriate) and University Curriculum Committees for their consideration;
3. Be submitted to the Academic Policy Council for its consideration;
4. Be submitted to the Senate Steering Committee for a determination that the proposal has followed the appropriate procedural channels and contains the requisite minimum items (as noted below);
5. Be approved by the Faculty Senate according to its usual procedures for approving action items.

Proposal: The APC recommends that any proposal to form, consolidate, transfer, close, or rename departments, colleges, or schools should contain, at a minimum, the following items:

1. Tally of the faculty vote in the affected units;
2. A description of the proposed change and the rationale for the change, including its impact on faculty, staff, and students, as well as other units;
3. A description of the input received from appropriate college and/or school committee(s);
4. A budget impact statement;
5. Statement of support from the appropriate Dean, Vice President, and Provost.