

SPECIAL REPORT
of the
ACADEMIC PRIORITIES COUNCIL
and
RULES COMMITTEE
concerning
PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE
MERGER OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Presented at the
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1. INTRODUCTION

This special report of the Academic Priorities Council and Rules Committee sets forth the procedures to be used when an approved academic program is proposed for merger with another approved academic program. “An academic degree program shall mean an undergraduate or graduate certificate of 30 semester credit hours or more, or a major or degree at the undergraduate or graduate levels, including a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study” (Trustee Doc. T92-012 as revised 8/6/97; *Course Approval Guide* [Feb. 1998], p.6). Section 2 applies to circumstances in which substantial agreement among the parties is lacking. Section 3 applies to circumstances in which substantial agreement among the parties exists. In case of doubt, the Rules Committee will decide whether Section 2 or Section 3 applies.

This document is intended as a companion to Sen. Doc. No. 90-064B (as amended in 1994): “Procedures to be Followed in the Review of Academic Programs Proposed for Termination.” Until the adoption of the present document, the campus has been without a specific procedure to address situations in which the outcome of planning is the merger of existing programs, rather than reduction or elimination. (Under prior procedures, “merger” had to be interpreted as the “elimination” of a program.) It is envisioned that this document may offer a less adversarial, more evolutionary process to achieve needed structural changes in the area of Academic Affairs.

2. PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS PROPOSED FOR MERGER, WHERE SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES IS LACKING

This section sets forth the procedures that are to be used on the Amherst campus when the merger of academic programs is under consideration, and substantial agreement among the parties is lacking. The timetable for the steps described in Sections 2.1 through 2.6 is outlined in Section 2.8.

2.1 Initiation

A proposal for the merger of two or more approved academic programs may originate at the level of Department, Dean, or Provost. The proposal shall present a brief, in writing, setting forth the reasons why the merger of two or more approved academic programs is deemed to be beneficial or necessary.

2.2 Consultation between Programs Involved

In response to a proposal for merger, the affected academic programs shall consult and individually or jointly present a formal written response to the appropriate Dean(s). Responses should, at a minimum, include consideration of issues of governance; structure and delivery of curricula; facilities; budget; and personnel.

2.3 Involvement of the Dean(s)

In response to the formal responses of the affected academic programs stipulated in Section 2.2, the appropriate Dean(s) shall make a summary response, which shall include but shall not be limited to matters of governance; structure and delivery of curricula; facilities; budget; and personnel.

2.4 Major Budgetary Unit Review

The Dean's summary response, together with all preceding documentation, shall be forwarded to the Personnel Committee of the appropriate School(s) or College(s) for formal comment. Comments of the Personnel Committee shall be forwarded to the Provost.

2.5 Involvement of the Provost

The Provost shall review the brief, the responses from the designated academic programs proposed for merger, the summary response of the Dean(s), and the comment(s) by the School or College Personnel Committee(s), and shall determine whether further action will be taken. Should the Provost determine that implementation of the proposal for merger is not desirable, (s)he will so inform the Dean(s) and the Secretary of the Faculty Senate, and no further action on the merger proposal will be taken.

If the Provost determines that further deliberation of the merger proposal is appropriate, (s)he will forward all the above documentation to the Faculty Senate, via the Secretary, for review.

2.6 Involvement of the Faculty Senate

The Secretary shall immediately advise the Rules Committee of the Provost's request and shall forward the brief and all subsequent documentation to the Academic Priorities Council.

The Council shall conduct a full review, which shall be based on the documentation produced in Sections 2.1 through 2.5 above, but which may also be based on new information presented by any of the parties or generated by the Council itself. The Dean of the MBU(s) and representatives of the academic programs shall be given an opportunity to meet with the Council.

The Council shall prepare a special report, which shall include a synopsis of the brief, the responses of the academic programs, the Dean(s)'s summary response(s), the Personnel Committee(s)'s comments, and an appropriate motion. The motion shall be in the form of a recommendation to the campus administration. Said report and recommendation shall be submitted to the Rules Committee, with the request that the motion be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Faculty Senate.

2.7 Disposition of the Faculty Senate's Recommendation

The report of the Faculty Senate action shall be transmitted to the Provost by the Secretary. Should the Provost recommend implementation of the merger to the Chancellor, the report of the Faculty Senate shall accompany the Provost's

recommendation. Should the Chancellor decide to implement the Provost's recommendation, the Chancellor shall notify the President prior to, and the Board of Higher Education following the action (as required by Doc. T92-012, as amended on 8/6/1997).

2.8 Timetable for the Review Procedure

The timetable provided in this document shall be advisory rather than prescriptive, and it is intended to provide a framework for the process to be carried out, rather than a rigid time frame for completing the merger process. The timetable should be adjusted to take summer recess into account. If one phase of the process is completed in less than the allotted time, the due dates suggested for subsequent steps should be moved towards the present by a corresponding amount.

The time table for the events detailed in Sections 2.1 through 2.6 is as follows:

- Day 1:** The proposer of the merger (Department, Dean, or Provost) sets forth a brief, invites consultation between or among the academic programs concerned, and request a written response from the affected academic programs (Section 2.1).
- Day 30:** The affected academic programs submit their written responses to the appropriate Dean(s). The Dean(s) prepare a summary response (Section 2.2).
- Day 45:** The Dean(s) send(s) the summary response, together with all preceding documentation, to the Personnel Committee(s) of the affected School(s) and/or College(s), and to the Provost (Section 2.3).
- Day 60:** The Personnel Committee(s) of the affected School(s) and/or College(s) send their written comments to the Provost (Section 2.4).
- Day 75:** The Provost will review all the above documentation and either: (1) inform the Dean(s) and the Secretary of the Faculty Senate that no further action is needed or (2) forward all the above documentation to the Faculty Senate, via the Secretary, for review by the Academic Priorities Council (Section 2.5).
- Day 135:** The Academic Priorities Council shall conduct its review and submit its special report to the Rules Committee together with a request that the special report be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Faculty Senate (Section 2.6).
- Day 165:** The Secretary of the Faculty Senate shall forward the Faculty Senate's recommendation to the Provost (Section 2.8).
- Day 185** The Provost shall forward the recommendation to the Chancellor.
- Day 205** The Chancellor shall notify the President prior to, and the Board of Higher Education following the action (as required by Doc. T92-012, as amended on 8/6/1997).

2.9 Personnel Negotiations

Personnel negotiations may become an integral part of the merger process, providing that all such negotiations shall be conducted in a good faith, non-adversarial atmosphere. Faculty members shall be given at least a week to respond to any final offer that would result in a major change in their status.

3. PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED FOR THE MERGER OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, IN CASES IN WHICH THE PARTIES TO A PROPOSED MERGER ARE IN SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT

3.1 Initiation

A proposal for the merger of two or more approved academic programs may originate at the level of Department, Dean, or Provost. The written proposal shall include a succinct rationale for the merger.

3.2 Consultation between Programs Involved

In response to (or as part of) a merger proposal, the affected academic programs shall deliberate and adopt a formal Merger Plan, including (but not necessarily limited to) consideration of issues of governance; structure and delivery of curricula; facilities; budget; personnel; and the best interest of students served by the programs.

3.3 Comments of the Dean(s)

In response to the formal Merger Plan, the appropriate Dean(s) shall make a summary response, which shall include but shall not be limited to matters of governance; structure and delivery of curricula; facilities; budget; personnel; and the best interest of students served by the programs.

3.4 Recommendation of the Provost

The Provost shall review the Merger Proposal, Merger Plan, and Comments of the Dean(s), and shall provide a written recommendation to the Faculty Senate with respect to the proposed merger. The documentation forwarded to the Faculty Senate shall include the Merger Proposal, the Merger Plan, Comments of the Dean, and Recommendation of the Provost.

3.5 Involvement of the Faculty Senate

The Secretary of the Faculty Senate shall immediately advise the Rules Committee of the Provost's recommendation and shall forward the Merger Proposal, Merger Plan, Comments of the Dean, and Provost Recommendation to the Academic Priorities Council.

The Academic Priorities Council shall prepare a Special Report, which shall be forwarded to the Rules Committee for placement on the agenda of the next meeting of the Faculty Senate. Upon approval by the Faculty Senate, the merger shall become a policy of the Amherst campus. In case of emergency, the Rules Committee is empowered to act on behalf of the Faculty Senate during the summer, when the full Faculty Senate is not in session.

3.6 Implementation by the Provost

Upon approval of the Faculty Senate, the Provost shall inform the Chancellor and the President, as required by Doc. T92-012, as revised 8/6/97. Upon approval by the President and the Chancellor, the Provost shall proceed to implement the Merger Plan.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate adopt the Procedures to be Followed in the Merger
17-02 of Academic Programs, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 02-022.