

Procedures for collaborative input for significant academic changes at the University of Oregon

Section 1: Purpose and Regular Collaboration and Reporting Requirements

1.1 - As stated in section 4.2 of the Policy on Retention and Delegation of Authority (Policy I.01.01), "Shared governance, as a principle in American higher education is imbedded in longstanding practices and reflects the regard for all stakeholders in the academic endeavors of the University.

1.2 - In accordance with the principle of shared governance, the President and University Senate shall work to collaborate to provide and receive meaningful input before making significant changes to the academic programs of the University.

This ongoing work should include detailed discussions about the overall status of the University's budget and academic program, and should cover budget scenarios that provide potential alternatives to significant academic changes

1.2.1- The President and Provost, or their designees, shall regularly collaborate with Undergraduate, Graduate and Academic Councils along with existing unit level curriculum committees regarding the health, status and future planning of academic programs at the University.

1.3 - In collaboration with the Senate, the President and Provost shall provide an annual report to the Senate on short- and long-term budget projections during Fall term

1.3.1- The President and Provost, or their designees, shall regularly collaborate with, and provide detailed academic budget reports to the Senate Budget Committee (SBC), and unit level budget committees. The SBC shall provide public feedback to that report as a part of its public meetings.

A. The Senate Budget committee shall regularly collaborate with school and college level budget committees, and invite those committees to report to the SBC as necessary

Section 2: Requirements to initiate procedures

2.1- Significant changes to an academic program through a decision by the President directing:

A. the elimination or reduction of an academic program, department, or school or college by any means including faculty or administrative staff attrition; or

B. the merger of multiple academic departments, programs or school(s),

2.1.1- For this procedure the administrative staff is defined as employees who are directly associated with academic programs.

2.2- The President shall notify the Senate President of a proposal for a significant academic change as early as practicable to allow for the procedures to be followed in a thorough and meaningful manner.

Section 3: Academic Modification Advisory Committee Procedures

3.1- Upon notification from the President, the Senate President shall convene the Academic Modification Advisory Committee (AMAC) as a conduit to receive confidential advice. The President or designee shall provide the AMAC meaningful information and rationale of the factors that led to the recommendation of a significant change to an academic program.

3.1.1- The decision to convene the AMAC shall be given priority on the Senate agenda at the earliest possible meeting so that the Committee can be appointed in a timely fashion.

3.2- In collaboration with the Chair of the AMAC, the Provost shall ensure that the Dean(s) of the school or college that houses the proposed significant change complete the following steps to facilitate meaningful input

A. The Provost shall work in collaboration with the appropriate Dean(s) to solicit input from the Head(s) of the Department(s) and those unit(s) faculty that house the proposed significant change. The Provost shall provide a written report detailing the collected input to the AMAC.

B. In collaboration with the Chair of the AMAC, the Provost shall solicit input from all other faculty, staff, department heads and additional stakeholders necessary to provide a full picture of the effect of the proposed significant change. The Provost shall provide a report with additional collected input to the AMAC.

3.3- The AMAC shall provide timely confidential feedback to the President or their designee based on the procedures listed above before a decision to proceed with a proposal to make a significant change is made public.

3.4. If the President decides not to proceed with the significant academic change, the process ends at this point and the AMAC committee will be disbanded.

3.5- These procedures are not intended to supersede or affect the curriculum revision processes in place for approving new or revising existing programs in Senate standing committees. However, as the hiring of faculty and staff for new programs affects the budget available to support existing programs, that information shall be shared as a part of the procedures outlined in section 1 of this policy.

Section 4: Reporting to University Leadership and University Senate

4.1- After the consultation process in section 3 is completed, if the President decides to proceed with a plan for a significant academic change, the President, or designee, shall submit the plan to the Senate President detailing the following elements.

A. A detailed outline of the plan

B. An explanation of the process used to determine the need for the significant change. This explanation shall include:

1. The financial and/or academic rationale for the change, including the history of attempts to address those issues prior to the proposal to make the significant change. The rationale should include supporting data and documentation that the decision relied upon.

2. The timeline to implement the significant change.

3. A detailed response plan for the students, curriculum, personnel, and related programs and units that will be affected by the significant change.

4.1.1- The plan detailed above shall be considered a public document and will be disseminated to the University of Oregon community by the Senate.

4.2- The AMAC shall provide a preliminary written report to the University Senate with their initial input on the proposed significant change.

4.2.1- The report shall address whether the procedures in section 3 of this policy were followed as directed.

4.3- The AMAC may choose to give an oral report to the Senate regarding their process at a scheduled or special meeting of the Senate.

4.4- The AMAC shall establish a plan for soliciting feedback from specific stakeholders and the University of Oregon community related to the significant academic change. This plan shall include:

A. An invitation for input from relevant department head(s); faculty; staff; and students

B. The announcement of a public comment period, established by the AMAC, with sufficient time to receive and consider substantial feedback. Ahead of the opening of the public comment period, the AMAC shall establish a method for receiving comment, and making that method available on the University Senate website.

C. The AMAC shall convene at least one public meeting to give the opportunity for UO community members to provide oral feedback. This meeting shall be held prior to the writing of AMAC's final report to the Senate.

4.5- The AMAC shall provide the Senate and the President with a final written report on the proposed significant change. This report will include an executive summary of the plan and feedback that may include potential alternative solutions.

4.6- The president shall consider the recommendations of the AMAC report before implementing or abandoning the plan.

Section 5- Role of the University Senate

5.1- The Senate may request that the President or their designee address the final plan for a significant academic change at a regular or special meeting

5.2- Per the procedures in Section 7 of the UO Constitution, the Senate may choose to pass a motion pertaining to the significant academic change. If the Senate chooses to respond, it shall do so at the first possible regular or special meeting after the final plan is released.