

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION

PRESENTED BY: Lisa Kalynchuk, chair, planning and priorities committee

DATE OF MEETING: October 23, 2014

SUBJECT: **Templates for the disestablishment or merger of departments**

COUNCIL ACTION: For information only

PURPOSE:

This report is intended to inform Council about the information required by the planning and priorities committee to consider the disestablishment of a department or the merger of departments. As stated in its terms of reference, the planning and priorities committee is responsible to recommend “to Council on the establishment, disestablishment or amalgamation of any college, school, department or any unit responsible for the administration of an academic program, with the advice of the Academic Programs Committee.” The committee is also responsible for “balancing academic and fiscal concerns in forming its recommendations.”

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

Prompted by a query on the process to establish a new department, the planning and priorities committee created a set of guidelines in template format to guide the development of formal proposals to establish new departments, and presented that template to Council for information in May, 2008. When a query came forward last spring regarding what information the committee would require to consider the merger of two departments, the committee was prompted to likewise develop a template to assist colleges in bringing forward a recommendation to merge departments. As a matter of good governance, the committee decided it should also develop a template for the disestablishment of a department.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Committee Consideration: In its creation of the templates, the committee focused on the academic rationale for the structural change, the effect upon research and scholarly work and the academic programs offered by the unit(s), the impact upon other units, and the impact on faculty, staff and students within the units directly affected. The financial basis

for the structural change proposed and the savings or additional costs resulting from the proposed change and the degree to which the change is supported within the college also formed part of the committee's consideration.

Related Information on the Disestablishment Process: In April of last year, the planning and priorities committee and academic programs committee submitted a joint report to Council on disestablishment processes. Both committees and Council have key roles in the deletion of academic programs and the disestablishment of academic entities. Clear information on the process by which proposals are advanced and the related approval authority of the university's governing bodies can be found at:

<http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/governing-bodies/council/committee/planning/index.php>

(click reports, scroll down to April 2014)

SUMMARY:

The attached templates are intended to give clear direction on the information required by the planning and priorities committee to begin considering a request to disestablish a department or to merge departments.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Template for a proposal to disestablish a department
2. Template for a proposal to merge departments

Planning and Priorities Committee

TEMPLATE FOR A PROPOSAL TO DISESTABLISH A DEPARTMENT

JULY, 2014

The Proposal should address the following questions. If a question cannot be fully addressed at the time of submission, an explanation should be provided.

1. Name of Department

2. Academic Rationale

Please explain the academic rationale with respect to the disestablishment. This rationale should include information about the objectives associated with the disestablishment, and the benefits or challenges derived as a result of the disestablishment. Where relevant, the proposal should also indicate whether the disestablishment of the department is consistent with the goals of the constituent college stated in the college's integrated plans. To what degree, if any, is the disestablishment influenced by disciplinary models elsewhere or by financial considerations. Outline the timeline associated with the intended merger.

Direct impact on the Department: Describe the implications of the disestablishment for the faculty, staff and students within the department, including a description of how the disestablishment will affect the department's faculty, staff and student complement. Confirm that the appropriate consultation has occurred with the Human Resources Division, the Vice-Provost, Faculty Relations, and other agencies and units as required regarding the transition of employees to other units or termination of employment.

Direct and indirect impact on other Departments and the broader University Community: Please indicate how the disestablishment relates to other department or college activities and plans, including the impact it will have on the activities of other departments throughout the college and/or outside the college, and on the broader university community and university as a whole.

Direct and indirect effect on alumni: Describe the anticipated effect of the disestablishment upon alumni associated with the department and what notice, if any, will be provided to alumni.

Undergraduate and Graduate Programs: Briefly describe how the academic programs currently housed within the department will be affected by the disestablishment [i.e. those programs that will be discontinued; those that may be moved to another unit in the university, how many students will be affected, and what

timeline applies to any programmatic changes as a result of the disestablishment]. Please note that advance consultation is required with Student and Enrolment Services Division for programmatic changes requiring changes to the SI system due to the length of time required to build changes within the system (see *Consultation with the Registrar Form* at <http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/forms/>).

Research and Scholarly Work: Identify as specifically as possible the effect of the disestablishment of the department from a research perspective related to those scholars or groups of researchers either employed by or affiliated with the work of the department. Briefly describe whether the disestablishment will enhance research opportunities of existing areas of study elsewhere within the university.

Outreach and International Activities: Describe what effect the disestablishment will have on the outreach activities presently associated with the department, including international efforts.

4. Department Management

Describe clearly the management structure that will be put in place to oversee the disestablishment of the department, and the key individuals who will be administratively accountable.

5. Resources and Budget

The process for approval of the disestablishment of a department is intended to ensure that resources are available for the discontinuation and potential re-location of the department's activities. The budget for the disestablishment should address whether a re-allocation of funds or in-kind resources from a department, college or the university will be required to successfully disestablish the department. The budget should also take into consideration all operations and facets of the department relative to its human resources, material assets, budgetary and other commitments, program offerings, and the potential effect of the disestablishment on the budgets of other units, including with reference to TABBS.

A statement of commitment and support from the dean of the college to provide the necessary resources to disestablish the department should be included. If the disestablishment will result in a projected savings realized by the university, the proposal should identify the amount saved.

6. Consultation Undertaken and Letters of Support

The proposal should outline any consultations that have occurred and the degree of support for the disestablishment of the department. Please attach a copy of any letters of support, including a letter from the dean of the unit, excerpts from approved faculty council minutes (if the disestablishment was considered at faculty council), excerpts from departmental meeting minutes discussing the disestablishment (if available), or a summary document outlining the views of the faculty members within the department involved regarding the disestablishment.

Please submit to:

*Sandra Calver, Secretary,
Planning & Priorities Committee of Council
c/o Office of the University Secretary,
212 Peter MacKinnon Building;
phone 306-966-2192;
email sandra.calver@usask.ca*

Planning and Priorities Committee

TEMPLATE FOR A PROPOSAL TO MERGE DEPARTMENTS

JULY, 2014

The Proposal should address the following questions. If a question cannot be fully addressed at the time of submission, an explanation should be provided.

1. Departments Affected

2. Proposed Name of New Department

3. Academic Rationale

Please explain the academic rationale with respect to the desired merger. Provide a brief description of the goals of the combined department and consistency with institutional priorities as expressed in the college and university strategic and integrated planning documents. This statement should include information about the objectives associated with the merger, and the benefits and synergies derived as a result of the merger. Where relevant, the proposal should also indicate whether the establishment of the department is consistent with the goals of the constituent college stated in college integrated plans, and whether the creation of the department has been identified as an objective in any college integrated plan. To what degree, if any, is the merger influenced by disciplinary models elsewhere. Outline the timeline associated with the intended merger.

Impact on and relationships to other Departments: Please indicate how the merger relates to other department or college activities and plans, including the impact it will have on the activities of other departments throughout the college and/or outside the college.

Direct impact on the Departments that will be merged: Describe the implications of the merger for the faculty, staff and students within the departments intending to merge together.

Undergraduate and Graduate Programs: Briefly describe what programs currently offered in the individual departments will be housed in the new department, and/or whether the merger will create the opportunity to develop new, unique programs, or to reduce programs, and what timeline applies to any programmatic changes as a result of the merger. [Please note that advance consultation is required with Student and Enrolment Services Division for programmatic changes requiring changes to the SI system due to the length of time required to build changes within the system (see *Consultation with the Registrar Form* at <http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/forms/>).

Research and Scholarly Work: Identify as specifically as possible particular scholars or groups of researchers who would be employed by or affiliated with the work of the newly merged department. This section should describe how the expertise and activities of these scholars will contribute to the work of the department, or enable it to realize its objectives. Briefly describe whether the merger will enhance opportunities to develop new areas of scholarship and research and/or enhance existing areas of study.

Outreach and International Activities: Describe what effect the merger will have on the outreach activities of the departments involved, including international efforts.

4. Department Management.

Describe clearly the management structure that will be put in place to administer the combined department, the dean who will be administratively accountable, and the mechanisms for reporting. The individual(s) responsible for transitioning the departments to the new structure should be identified.

5. Resources and Budget.

Please describe the proposed financial basis for the merger. This should include the sources of funding for the department, including existing sources of funding applied against the merger, and whether a re-allocation of funds or in-kind resources from a department, college or the university will be required to successfully establish the new department.

The budget should include projected faculty and support staff numbers along with an estimate of resources necessary and available to support the ongoing activities of the department. This section should clearly identify what, if any, new resources are required to support the merged department, over and above the resources currently used to support the existing departments. A statement of commitment and support from the dean of the college to provide the necessary resources through the reallocation of college resources, if necessary, should be included. If the merger will result in a reduction of the resources required by the new department, the proposal should identify the amount saved.

6. Space & Infrastructure Requirements

The proposal should describe the degree of consultation that has taken place with the relevant Facilities Management Zone Manager about new space requirements related to the merger. Please identify a preliminary space plan (are renovations required?), establish a Class D estimate and preliminary schedule related to the space plan, develop an estimate with ICT for IT and telephone charges, and describe multimedia requirements for the space(s).

7. Consultation Undertaken and Letters of Support.

The proposal should outline the degree of support for the merger. Attached to the proposal should be a copy of any letters of support including a letter of support from the

dean of the department, excerpts from approved faculty council minutes (if the merger was considered at faculty council), excerpts from departmental meeting minutes discussing the merger (if available), or a summary document outlining the views of the faculty members within the departments involved regarding the merger.

Please submit to:

*Sandra Calver, Secretary,
Planning & Priorities Committee of Council
c/o Office of the University Secretary,
212 Peter MacKinnon Building;
phone 306-966-2192;
email sandra.calver@usask.ca*
