Guidelines for Proposals to Transfer the Academic Home of Units across Schools and Colleges at PSU
(Created by the Academic Leadership Team with input from the Educational Policy Committee)
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I. Background and Purpose

Academic units1 (e.g., departments, divisions, programs) within a university may at some juncture wish to explore a different organizational affiliation. For example, an academic department may wish to consider moving its academic home from one school or college to another. A variety of factors may justify such a transfer of academic home in order to better facilitate achievement of the University’s academic mission.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide transparent, inclusive procedures that
• Foster collaboration between and among departments and colleges considering such moves.
• Promote discussion on the merits of proposals.
• Solicit a variety of viewpoints on the educational merits of proposals.

These guidelines apply to the shifting of academic units from one college to another, from one school to another, from a school to a college or from a college to a school. Discussions may be initiated by a majority of faculty in the academic unit or by the Department Chair, Director, Dean, Provost or President however, the transfer must be faculty led and follow established Faculty Senate processes. The unit head will be responsible for shepherding the proposal through all decisions and review processes. Proposals may be withdrawn at any point in the process by the unit initiating the transfer request.

II. Principles Guiding the Transfer of an Academic Unit

The process of proposing moves and evaluating proposals adheres to two fundamental principles:

1. Shared governance
2. Academic quality and student learning

The relocation of the initiating unit to a new academic home must support the academic mission of that unit, the proposed new academic home as well as the university, college and the other departments involved. A strategic argument – including the department’s current status as well as its desired trajectory – for the relocation should be created and shared in a transparent, productive and collegial manner that is evidenced by active and open solicitation and consideration of the viewpoints of all constituencies.

Alignment, synergies and innovations may be demonstrated by congruence and/or complementarity of the academic curricula offered by the initiating unit and the new academic home; congruence and/or complementarity of the initiating unit’s discipline(s) with the disciplines in the new academic home; and potential for new or expanded collaborations with regard to curriculum development, existing degree programs, faculty and student scholarship, community engagement and strategic enrollment management.

1 For the purposes of this template, the following definitions shall be used: (1) The initiating unit is the academic unit that is assessing the benefits and costs broadly conceived of relocation to another academic home within the university; (2) The current academic home is the school or college within which the initiating unit is presently located; (3) The new academic home is the school or college that is proposed to be the new organizational location for the initiating unit. (Some proposals might include options that identify multiple possible new academic homes).
The impact on stakeholders (including and especially students) should be assessed, and they should be given adequate notice as to changes in the academic unit’s reorganization within the university. (See item A-4 in Section IV)

**III. Steps in Proposal Development**

The chair or designated representative of the initiating unit will:

A. Discuss the proposed move with faculty within initiating unit to gauge interest. At this point in the process, the discussions with faculty are to determine whether there is sufficient interest in exploring moving a unit to a new academic home. By a majority vote of the faculty, the chair or designated representatives may be empowered to launch a full exploration of the possible transfer of the academic unit.

B. If a majority of faculty vote for exploration, they will meet with the deans of current and potential new academic home(s) to discuss ideas and rationale for an academic home.

C. It is recommended the unit inform the Educational Policy Committee at this stage of conversation; recognizing that no formal proposal will be ready to yet come forward.

D. Draft a proposal that outlines the rationale and expectations associated with changing from the current and new academic homes (see Section IV below and OAA policies).

E. Meet with the deans of the current and new academic home, the Vice Provost for Academic and Fiscal Planning, the Dean of the Graduate Studies and Provost to discuss draft proposal and obtain feedback from the deans and Provost about the proposed move. The proposal may be modified to clarify mutual expectations about resources, governance and other issues related to the move.

F. Call for a faculty vote in the department regarding support for the proposal. Two-thirds of the faculty must be in support.

G. If proposal receives two-thirds affirmative vote, complete the proposal and submit to the deans as the first step in the existing process for creation, elimination and alteration of academic units (see review process at http://www.pdx.edu/oaa/academic-units).

**IV. Proposal**

A. All requests for change of academic home should include answers to the following questions:

1) **Objectives:** What are the goals and objectives of the proposed move?

2) **Current Status:** What is the current status of the unit with regard to:

   a. Academic degree programs offered (graduate and undergraduate degrees, minors and certificates) and current numbers of students enrolled in each program

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2 Faculty as defined by the academic unit.
b. Scholarly activity (including grants and contracts and amount of extramural dollars generated in the past three years)

c. Existing collaborations of significance at the local, state, national and/or international levels

d. Vision and mission of the department

e. Size of staff, including number of faculty, staff and student workers

f. Number of untenured (tenure-track), tenured, non-tenure track Faculty (NTTF) (with lengths of contracts) and adjunct faculty, with median salary and salary ranges for each

g. Number and responsibilities of graduate students (if relevant), current stipends and graduate tuition remission

h. Budget allocated to the unit

i. A completed RCAT planner

j. Space allocation, including number of offices for faculty, staff, students, administrators, and any other spaces (e.g., labs, conference rooms, supply rooms) used by the unit

k. Specialized accreditation (if relevant)

l. Existing connections and collaborations with the current and new academic home including past/current collaboration of faculty, staff and students, joint programs or appointments and affiliations with relevant centers and institutes

3) Rationale for Reorganization: What are the expected benefits to the initiating unit associated with relocation to a new academic home? Include a costs/benefits analysis, as possible. Responses should address the alignment, synergy and innovation elements outlined in the first point of the Principles section.

Also under consideration will be the initiating unit’s history (how long initiating unit has been in current academic home, rationale for the shift, any conversations that have already taken place). Where appropriate, the initiating unit may provide a description of the criteria used to select the new academic home and a summary of where similar units are housed at comparator institutions.

4) Impacts: What are the anticipated positive and negative impacts of the proposed transfer on the current academic home and the new academic home? On other departments, units? On the university? On students? How will this move affect the current and new academic homes’ organization?

a. Impact on current students (both graduate and undergraduate). Include an evaluation of the following:
   i. College- or school-specific requirements in the new and current academic homes
   ii. types of degrees conferred, including major and minor requirements
   iii. number and types of required courses
   iv. student services (including academic mentors and advisors)
b. Impact on current faculty and staff, especially untenured faculty on the tenure track

c. Impact on resources (number of positions, space, equipment, time)

d. Impact on quality of program, including the impact on the following aspects:
   i. student recruitment
   ii. time to graduation and graduation rates
   iii. specialized accreditation
   iv. interdisciplinary efforts
   v. scholarly productivity
   vi. other

e. Impact on external constituents (alumni, donors, community and industry partners), including any existing agreements and expected changes to existing agreements

f. Impact on other departments and offices in both current and new academic homes.

g. A current and new organizational chart for all units affected

5) Expectations: What are the fundamental elements of an agreement that the initiating unit sees as critical in order for the transfer review process to move forward?

The initiating unit and the new academic home need to develop a clear understanding of how the initiating unit will administratively operate within its new academic home. This understanding shall include expectations about work assignment, governance bylaws and P&T guidelines and resources. Most of this should be contained in Section 4 above, but other, unexamined assumptions should be described and discussed.

6) Agreement: The current and new academic homes will develop a mutually agreement which designates what personnel, budgets and related resources will move from the current home to the new academic home. The impacts (as described in Section 4 above) should inform the mutually agreed-upon MOU.

7) Timing: Achieve consensus on the initiating unit’s current and new academic homes’ preferred timing for the transfer of academic home and determine the rationale for this timing.

8) Budget: Reset expectations (revenue requirements and expenditure budget) for current and new academic homes.

V. Approval process

The following steps must take place once the proposal is developed and approved by the unit wishing to transfer:

1. A recommendation from the deans of the current unit college and the college of desired transfer.

2. The proposal, with the recommendations from the deans is forwarded to the Educational Policy Committee (EPC).
3. The EPC (in consultation with the Faculty Senate Budget Committee (FASBC) provides a recommendation to the Faculty Senate.

4. The Faculty Senate provides a recommendation to the Provost.

5. The Provost makes the final decision.

6. Budget and personnel transfers will take place in the timeline deemed appropriate.

NOTE: A faculty member may make an individual request to not transfer with the unit via the established guidelines for the individual faculty transfer of tenure home.