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### OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

# *UNC Charlotte Academic Procedure: Academic Department/School: Establishment, Name Change, or Relocation*

## *I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

This procedure provides the criteria and procedures necessary for establishing, renaming, or relocating an academic department or school at UNC Charlotte. The establishment, renaming, or relocation of academic departments or schools is approved at the campus level.

## *II. PROCEDURE STATEMENT*

### **Establishment of an Academic Department or School**

**Academic Department:** An **academic department** is the basic organizational unit of the university that is designed to carry out the institutional mission of instruction, research, and community engagement within a single discipline or a focused group of disciplines. New

departments may be established out of existing departments, from a combination of departments, from the reconfiguration of existing programs into single units, or to meet a need of the university for developing a program not presently being offered.

Proposals for the establishment of a new academic department must present evidence of student demand for enrollment and the need for an identifiable disciplinary home to support research or instruction. In general, proposed academic departments should have at least ten (10) full-time faculty members and should expect to offer one or more degree programs. In the formation of a new academic department, consideration will be given to the availability of resources needed and the impact of the new academic department on existing academic departments.

**Academic School:** An **academic school** is an academic unit within an existing college that may be composed of one or more departments organized around a specific disciplinary focus. A school is expected to support programs at both the graduate and undergraduate levels and to have a separate discipline-specific accreditation. In evaluating proposals for the formation of a school, consideration will be given to the size and scope of the research program, the complexity of the programs offered within the proposed school, the demand for enrollment, the need and availability of resources to support the school, and the impact of the school on other academic units.

The Chancellor has the final authority to establish an academic department or school that does not involve a naming in recognition of an individual or organization; establishment or academic departments or schools that include a naming in recognition of an individual or organization are subject to the requirements outlined in [\*\*University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities\*\*](#).

## **Name Change or Relocation of an Academic Department or School**

Proposals to change the name of an academic department or school or to relocate an academic department or school are considered at the campus level through the Provost and Chancellor in consultation with the Faculty Council. Proposals are expected to articulate an academic disciplinary and/or administrative need for the change. The Chancellor has the final authority to change the name of or relocate an academic department or school that does not involve a naming in recognition of an individual or organization; instances that include a naming in recognition of an individual or organization

are subject to the requirements outlined in **University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities**.

## Procedures

All requests to establish, rename, or relocate an academic department or school should follow the procedures below:

1. The Dean of the applicable college sends a proposal (including the justifications/ articulations above) to the Provost.
2. The Provost may, but is not required to, seek outside review of the proposed academic department or school.
3. The Provost consults with the Chancellor about the request.
4. The Provost writes the Faculty President requesting a consultation with the Faculty Executive Committee (if confidential and/or invoking **University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities**) or the Faculty Executive Committee and Faculty Council.
5. Faculty Executive Committee and Faculty Council vote on proposed establishment/ name change/relocation of the academic department or school, including its inclusion in the academic department/school list in the Constitution of the Faculty (Faculty Executive Committee votes on behalf of the Faculty Council if confidential and/or invoking **University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities**).
6. The Provost writes the Chancellor indicating that the consultation is complete.
  - a. If an initial naming or name change request involves naming in recognition of an individual or organization, the procedures outlined in **University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities** apply.
  - b. An initial naming or name change request that involves the naming of an academic department or school for any elected public official or any official of the State, the UNC System, or of the University while they are currently serving in their official capacity requires an exception granted by the Board of Trustees. In such a case, the Chancellor must place a request on the Board of Trustees agenda for consideration and approval in accordance with **University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities**.
  - c. In all other cases, the Provost either recommends the establishment/name change/relocation to the Chancellor or denies the request.
7. Once the establishment/name change/relocation of the academic department or school is approved by the Chancellor (or the Board of Trustees, if required), then:
  - a. Academic department/school initiates updates to campus systems, including:
    - Verifying changes to the upcoming Catalog edition(s) (undergraduate and/or graduate Catalogs);
    - Applying updates to relevant websites;

- Updating Banner:
  - Sending an email to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics to initiate Banner request (STVDEPT);
  - Sending an email to the Budget Office to initiate HR/FINANCE module changes;
  - Contacting the Office of the Registrar to verify appropriate changes have been made.

8. The college's Director of Communications will coordinate with University Communications and Academic Affairs to prepare an announcement to be made to campus, which will include the effective date of the establishment/name change/relocation.

### ***III. DEFINITIONS***

- **Chancellor** – The chief executive officer of UNC Charlotte.
- **Provost** – Reporting to the Chancellor, the Provost is the chief academic officer of the University who oversees the academic mission of the University. The Deans of each college report to the Provost.

### ***IV. PROCEDURE CONTACT(S)***

- **Authority:** Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- **Responsible Office:** Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- **Additional Contact(s):** n/a

### ***V. HISTORY***

- **Revised:** July 12, 2016 [Updates made in accordance with University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities]
- **Revised:** September 8, 2021 [Clarified process for communicating changes and inclusion of Director of Communications role]
- **Revised:** January 14, 2025 [Clarified alignment with University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities]
- **Revised:** August 22, 2025 [Clarified Faculty Executive Committee as consultative body on behalf of the Faculty Council]

## ***VI. PRIOR VERSIONS***

- [January 14, 2025 – August 22, 2025](#)

## ***VI. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES***

- [University Policy 602.9, Naming Opportunities](#)

## ***VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

- **Where is this procedure referenced?**

The procedure is published on the Academic Policies & Procedures webpage of the [Provost website](#).

- **Do degree name changes automatically follow an academic department/school name change?**

No. Degrees are approved by the Board of Governors, and as such any degree name changes must be approved by the UNC System Office. Requests to change the name or title of an existing degree program, accompanied by an explanation of the reason for the proposed change, is submitted to the UNC System Office (see [UNC Charlotte Academic Procedure: Degree Name Change](#)).

- **Who may initiate the formation of a new academic department or school?**

The initiative for creation of a new academic department or school may be taken by the academic department/school or program

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