

ARTICLE XIV: ACADEMIC RECONFIGURATION

SECTION A: DEFINITIONS AND CONDITIONS

XIV.A

Reconfiguration is a modification in the organizational structure of the academic units of the University. It may involve one or more colleges, schools, departments, programs, institutes, or centers. It may be induced by the addition of new academic programs or expansion of existing academic programs, as well as by program reduction or curtailment. There are three basic types of academic program reduction or curtailment: (1) consolidation of previously separate units, (2) reduction of an existing unit, or (3) elimination of an existing unit. If an academic program is curtailed or discontinued, normally it may not be reinstated for a period of at least five calendar years after the end of the academic year in which it was discontinued.

Reconfiguration may be stimulated by a variety of conditions such as societal changes that impact specific disciplines, the need for realignment to increase effectiveness, and the need to develop new programming by consolidation of existing programs. Whatever its origins, the purpose of reconfiguration must be to enhance the broad educational mission of the University. To this end, the proposed reconfiguration or organizational restructuring must be accompanied by evidence and a rationale that demonstrate that more effective use of resources for teaching, research, and service will be achieved and that it carries substantial faculty support. Regardless of the catalyst, faculty participation and the academic integrity of the University must guide the action.

The following criteria shall be considered in making reconfiguration decisions and for the purpose of determining the academic integrity of a reconfiguration proposal. These criteria are not meant to replace collegiate criteria used to evaluate programs or departments but to supplement them where appropriate.

1. **Coherence and Consistency of Mission.** The units should fit together as colleges or departments in a coherent fashion. The combination should allow the faculty to understand and work with each other's evaluation criteria. The mission of the newly created unit should be consistent with that of the University.
2. **Effectiveness/Efficiency.** The unit should be cost effective. The structure of the unit should enhance opportunities for external funding. The size of the unit should be appropriate for its mission.
3. **Societal Needs.** The mission of the unit and the educational programs offered should meet the contemporary and future needs of society and the state of Ohio. There should be employment opportunities for graduates of the programs. Relationships with external agencies or groups should be established, or the opportunities for the establishment of such relationships should be evident. The nature and direction of the programs should be made clear.
4. **Enhancement of Academic Quality.** The reconfiguration should enhance the quality of the University's academic programs. Students' experience should be enriched. Unnecessary program duplication should be avoided.
5. **Enhancement of Interdisciplinarity.** The reconfiguration should enlarge the potential for interdisciplinary programs and activities. Suggestions on how the reconfiguration might contribute to the development of such interdisciplinary programs and activities should be included in the proposal.

6. Sense of Community. The reconfiguration should enhance the potential for enriching the sense of community within the University's faculty. The proposal should foster or enhance opportunities for faculty to work together, for faculty development, and for research collaboration in new areas.
7. Realization of Academic and Intellectual Potential. The reconfiguration should be consistent with the long range trends in academic disciplines. The proposal should enhance the University's ability to maintain relevancy in terms of both the direction of each discipline and the needs of students.

SECTION B: INITIATING RECONFIGURATION

XIV. B

Proposals for reconfiguration may originate with any member of the University Community (as defined in *II.A* of this Academic Charter), after consulting with the affected units.

If the proposal for reconfiguration is limited to changes in the organizational structure, academic program or curriculum within a college, school, department, or other academic or research unit, the governing process, rules, and procedures for such changes established elsewhere in this Charter shall be followed (*IV.F.2, VI.C, VIII.C., VIII.F, IX.C. IX.G,IX.H, X.B, X.D, XI.C, XII.B*).

If the proposal for reconfiguration is limited to the creation of a new undergraduate college, the governance process, rules and procedures in *IX.I* of this Charter shall be followed; a new school, *X.H*; a new department, *XI.G*; and any other new academic or research unit, *XII.C*.

If the proposal for reconfiguration involves changes that affect two or more colleges, it shall be submitted to the Vice president for Academic Affairs (VPAA), and it shall include estimated costs and benefits. The VPAA shall then submit the proposal to the Committee on Academic Affairs (CAA) and shall call a meeting of the CAA to determine if the proposal appears to have academic integrity as defined by the criteria listed in *XIV.A* above.

If the proposal is determined to have academic integrity, the VPAA shall appoint a university-wide committee consisting of at least five regular faculty members [as defined in *II.C* and *B-I.C.2.c*) of this Charter]. Half of the membership of this committee shall include representative faculty from each of the units identified in the proposal. The remaining members shall include a representative (chosen by the Senate Executive Committee) from the Faculty Senate, a representative appointed by the USG, and a representative appointed by the GSS. The committee shall be designated as the Academic

Reconfiguration Committee (ARC). In the event that there is more than one reconfiguration proposal having academic integrity (as defined in *XIV.A* and *XIV.B*), the VPAA shall appoint more than one ARC. The VPAA, or his/her designate, shall be the chair of each ARC.

SECTION C: REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS FOR RECONFIGURATION PROPOSALS THAT AFFECT TWO OR MORE COLLEGES

XIV.C

The ARC shall consider each proposal affecting two or more colleges on the basis of its potential impact on the university community. ARC will meet with the academic units affected, appropriate collegiate advisory groups, deans of affected areas, students from the academic units affected, and others as appropriate. All proposals containing reductions in academic offerings shall also give appropriate attention to reductions or reassignments of related administrative staff, classified staff, and other support services.

The ARC will study and discuss the reconfiguration proposal which shall include, but not be limited to, a tabulation of the number of regular faculty members from the academic units affected who have voted for the proposal, the number who have voted against the proposal, the number who have abstained from voting on the proposal, and any rationale given by the faculty members for their votes or positions on the proposal. This information shall accompany the proposal throughout the review and approval process.

As part of the review process, a realistic resources requirement statement, including the proposal's estimated costs, shall be submitted to the Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPFA) who shall prepare a resource impact analysis of the proposal and request that the Faculty Senate Budget Committee and University Budget Committee (FSBC/UBC) review and comment on the analysis. This resource review and analysis, including the proposal's estimated costs, shall accompany the proposal throughout the review process as it is considered by the various bodies.

If the proposal appears to have academic integrity as defined by the criteria listed in *XIV.A* above, as indicated by a majority vote of the ARC, it shall go forward in the review and approval process. Reconfiguration proposals which do not have the support of the majority vote of the ARC shall be referred back to the initiators of the proposal with comments.

The recommendation from ARC shall be submitted to the affected colleges/units and the VPAA who shall forward the proposal, the recommendation from ARC, and the opinions and comments of the affected colleges/units to the Undergraduate Council or Graduate Council, as appropriate, for review and approval. After consideration by these bodies, the proposal along with their comments and recommendations shall be forwarded to the CAA for review and transmittal to the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate shall act upon the recommendation(s) of these bodies, and the established procedures for the implementation of Senate actions shall be followed.

If the reconfiguration is approved by the President and the Board of Trustees, the VPAA shall establish a timetable for the changes and develop appropriate budgetary transfers.

SECTION D: FACULTY RIGHTS UNDER ACADEMIC RECONFIGURATION

XIV. D

After the approval of a reconfiguration proposal, the following terms and conditions of appointment shall be in force for the regular (tenured and probationary) faculty of the academic unit(s) affected by the reconfiguration. Nothing in this Section *XIV.D* shall be interpreted as weakening or diminishing the rights of the faculty under the University policy on faculty appointment and tenure found in *B-I.C* of this Charter.

A. Tenured Faculty

The University shall not dismiss or terminate the employment of any tenured faculty member as a consequence of reconfiguration (as defined in *XIV.A*), or for any other reason, except University wide financial exigency (as defined in Appendix A) or for cause as established in *B-I.C.3*. This means that BGSU must offer comparable employment within the University to any tenured faculty member who is displaced by reconfiguration.

If a tenured faculty member is displaced because of academic reconfiguration as defined in *XIV.A* of this Charter and his/her area of expertise or field of study is eliminated, two options are available to the tenured faculty member:

1. The displaced tenured faculty member may be transferred to another academic unit within the same college or a different college within the University. The University shall find comparable employment for the displaced tenured faculty member in another academic program, unit or department in the same college or in a different college in the University, which is agreed upon mutually by the displaced faculty member and the VPAA. If retraining or additional education is necessary or advisable for transfer and placement, and if the tenured faculty member agrees, the University shall continue the displaced tenured faculty member's current rank, tenure, full-time salary and benefits and shall pay for all retraining or educational expenses for a period of up to two calendar years beyond the end of the academic year in which the reconfiguration becomes effective.

2. The displaced tenured faculty member may choose early retirement benefits, if the university is offering an early retirement incentive plan to all faculty at the university at that time and if the individual meets the requirements of the plan. The retirement benefits shall become effective immediately following the academic year in which the reconfiguration becomes effective.

In those rare instances where a comparable assignment cannot be arranged, the University reserves the right to negotiate an individual faculty member's resignation. Such resignation would be predicated upon a severance arrangement with the faculty member involving up to two years of special assignments and the maintenance of his/her full-time salary and benefits.

B. Probationary Faculty

If a probationary faculty member is displaced because of reconfiguration (as defined in *XIV.A*) his/her area of expertise or field of study is eliminated, two options are available to the probationary faculty member:

1. The displaced probationary faculty member may be transferred to another academic unit within the same college or a different college within the University. The University shall make a good faith effort to find comparable employment for the displaced probationary faculty member in another academic program, unit or department in the same college or in a different college in the University, which is agreed upon mutually by the displaced faculty member and the VPAA. If retraining or additional education is necessary or advisable for transfer and placement, and if the probationary faculty member agrees, the University shall continue the displaced faculty member's current rank, probationary status, full-time salary and benefits and shall pay for all retraining or educational expenses for a period of up to one calendar year beyond the end of the academic year in which the reconfiguration becomes effective.

If a probationary faculty member accepts transfer to a department, school or college where the criteria for tenure, promotion and salary increases are different from those previously extant in his/her original academic unit and he/she continues to teach and do research in the same general subject area as before, the probationary faculty member shall have the right to renegotiate up to two additional years of probation before the tenure decision is made. Postponing such a tenure decision must be reconciled with Section *B-I.C* of this Academic Charter (University Policy on Faculty Appointment and Tenure).

2. The displaced probationary faculty member may choose early retirement benefits, if the university is offering an early retirement incentive plan to all faculty at the university at that time and if the individual meets the requirements of the plan. The retirement benefits shall become effective immediately following the academic year in which the reconfiguration becomes effective.

If the loss of a specialization under reconfiguration is such that it becomes necessary to eliminate the position of a probationary faculty member, the elimination of the probationer's position must be consistent with the existing procedures described elsewhere in this Academic Charter (*B-I.C.2.c)(1)*. Elimination of a probationary faculty member's position shall carry the assurance of one year of employment beyond the contract year in which the reconfiguration becomes effective.

Any faculty member whose terms and conditions of employment are adversely affected by failure to follow due process or to conform to the academic reconfiguration procedures described in Article *XIV* of this Charter shall have the full rights of appeal under the rules and procedures of the Committee on Faculty Personnel and Conciliation (FPCC) established in *IV.F.4* and *B-I.E* of this Charter.