

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION	Academic Affairs
POLICY NUMBER	ACAF 2.02
POLICY TITLE	Establishment and Modification of Academic Administrative Units
SCOPE OF POLICY	USC System
DATE OF REVISION	August 21, 2025
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and Chancellors
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	Office of the Provost

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the chain of approval required to establish or modify an academic administrative unit, including mergers of multiple units and unit name changes. It applies to academic administrative structures or units only, not academic programs. If the proposed action pertains to the creation or modification of an academic program or major, including name changes, then University Policy ACAF 2.00 Creation and Revision of Academic Programs should be followed.

DEFINITION

Academic administrative units at the University include colleges, schools, departments, interdisciplinary programs, centers and institutes. Academic administrative units other than centers and institutes may offer academic programs that lead to formal degrees.

POLICY

A. Oversight and Approval Process

In most cases, the creation or modification of academic administrative units requires internal review through the faculty governance structure in the respective college/school, and approval by the campus, college or school dean (hereafter referred to as "dean"), the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or chancellor, the president and the Board of Trustees. External notification to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) is also required.

1. An Academic Program Liaison (APL) will be designated for each college/school on the Columbia campus, for each Comprehensive campus, and for the Palmetto College campuses. The APLs will serve as the main information resource on academic program actions and as the academic program liaison to the Provost's Office for their respective units. The list of current Academic Program Liaisons can be found at https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/planning/academicprograms/academic-program-liasons.php.

Draft documents and notifications may be forwarded to the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support by the APL, but all formal program actions must be forwarded directly by the dean or chief academic affairs officer.

2. The Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support is responsible for coordinating the approval process for academic actions on the Columbia and Palmetto College campuses. The chief academic affairs officer on each Comprehensive campus is responsible for coordinating the approval process for academic actions on each Comprehensive campus.
3. The Provost's Office is the sole liaison to the University Board of Trustees for all campuses and materials must be submitted to the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support for Board of Trustees review.
4. The Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support is the liaison to CHE for the Columbia and Palmetto College campuses.

The chief academic affairs officer on each Comprehensive campus serves as the liaison to CHE for all actions relating to the modification and establishment of academic administrative units on each Comprehensive campus.

B. Publications

University bulletins, brochures, websites and other internal and external materials may be updated to reflect the approved change only after acknowledgement is received from CHE.

PROCEDURES

A. Each campus should follow the internal approval processes outlined below:

1. Columbia Campus

Requests for new academic administrative units require a pre-authorization request be submitted to the provost for initial approval (see https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/planning/academicprograms/ to determine if pre-authorization is required).

Requests to establish new or modify existing academic administrative units must be reviewed by the faculty governance structure in the respective college/school and approved by the dean. The dean should then forward the request to Provost for approval through the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support.

2. Comprehensive Campuses

Requests to establish new or modify existing academic administrative units must be reviewed by the faculty governance structure on the respective campus. The academic unit head should then forward the request to the chief academic affairs officer for approval. The chief academic affairs officer will forward the request to the chancellor. After approval, the chief academic officer will submit the request to the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support.

3. Palmetto College Campuses

Requests to establish new or modify existing academic administrative units must be reviewed by the appropriate faculty governance structure, and approved by the campus dean. The dean will then forward the request to the Provost for approval, through the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support.

- B. After campus approval, the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support will submit the request for consideration by the President and Board of Trustees. Following Board approval, the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support or the chief academic affairs officer will notify CHE as appropriate by campus.

After acknowledgement is received from CHE, the Office of Academic Program Planning and Decision Support or chief academic affairs officer will notify the dean or academic unit head.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE, AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[ACAF 2.00 Creation and Revision of Academic Programs](#)

[ACAF 2.01 Establishment and Modification of Centers and Institutes](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
August 14, 2009	New policy approval
January 29, 2015	Policy revised to update system and campus name changes.
August 21, 2025	Policy updated to align with current practices.