

**Academic Affairs Policy #10**  
**Name Changes in the Division of Academic Affairs**

**Date of Current Version: March 2017**

**Responsible Office: Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs**

**1. PURPOSE**

This policy provides the procedures for changing the name of an academic program or an academic unit.

**2. AUTHORITY**

The Board of Visitors has the authority to enact policies for the university. Where this authority has not been exercised by the board, it is delegated to the president. The President has delegated to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs the establishment of policies and procedures in the Division of Academic Affairs.

**3. DEFINITIONS**

**Academic Program**

A course of study that involves any set of courses and experiences which have been identified by the university as satisfying curricular requirements. Includes majors, minors, concentrations, pre-professional programs and professional programs.

**Academic Unit**

An academic department or its functional equivalent.

**Academic Unit Head (AUH)**

An academic department head, school director, administrative program coordinator or functional equivalent.

**College**

The largest and primary administrative organizational unit within AA, composed of academic units.

**Department**

Generally, an academic discipline-based administrative organizational unit within AA.

**School**

An instructional organizational entity that has a special curricular or programmatic function and identity. A school may be the organizational and functional equivalent of an academic unit, an AIC or a college, depending on the circumstances.

**4. APPLICABILITY**

This policy relates to all name changes for academic programs and academic units within the Division of Academic Affairs.

**5. POLICY**

The Division of Academic Affairs recognizes that as fields evolve and research progresses, the name of an academic unit or program may no longer align with the area as it currently exists. The procedures in place for obtaining approval for changes in names help to ensure that appropriate oversight is pursued and that all administrative areas affected by the changes are informed.

## 6. PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Name Changes for Academic Programs

Changes to names of academic programs are governed by the university's established curriculum and instruction (C&I) process as outlined in the Faculty Handbook, IV.D. Curriculum.

- 6.1.1 Changes to the names of degrees and majors must be approved through the university C&I process, the JMU Board of Visitors and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. The Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Development will coordinate the submission of name change requests beyond the university level.
- 6.1.2 Changes to the names of minors, concentrations, pre-professional programs and professional programs are completed through the C&I process, concluding with university review.

### 6.2 Name Changes for Academic Units and Colleges

Name changes to administrative units within the division at the academic unit level and above require either notification to or approval by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

- 6.2.1 If the academic unit name change is made solely for the purpose of internal management and will not affect any curricular offerings or require additional funding, SCHEV staff must be notified in writing at least 60 days in advance of the change.
- 6.2.2 If the academic unit name change is made for reasons other than solely for the purpose of internal management, affects curricular offerings and requires additional funding, then SCHEV must review and approve the change. Time frames vary depending on the type of change.
- 6.2.3 To make a change to an academic unit name:
  - 6.2.3.1 The academic unit head submits a written request to the dean requesting the name change for the academic unit. The request must detail why the change is being requested, provide the justification for the change and address any anticipated impact on other units of the university.
  - 6.2.3.2 The dean notifies the provost of the proposed change by submitting the document prepared by the academic unit head along with his/her recommendation.
  - 6.2.3.3 The provost reviews the proposed change with Academic Council.
  - 6.2.3.4 After review by Academic Council, the provost notifies the vice provost for academic development (VPAD) that the modification has been approved.
  - 6.2.3.4 The VPAD coordinates the notification of SCHEV.
  - 6.2.3.5 When approval from SCHEV is received, the VPAD will notify the provost.
  - 6.2.3.6 The provost notifies the dean and academic unit head by letter with the decision.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic unit heads are responsible for reviewing, submitting and approving academic unit name changes and submitting those requests to the college dean. For academic program name changes, AUHs are responsible for providing appropriate review during the C&I process.

Deans are responsible for reviewing, submitting and approving academic unit name changes and submitting those requests to the provost along with his/her recommendation. For academic program name changes, deans are responsible for providing appropriate review during the C&I process.

The Office of Academic Development is responsible for verifying academic program names and ensuring that name changes are appropriately reconciled with outside agencies and accrediting bodies (i.e., State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges). For academic program name changes, the Vice Provost for Academic Development is responsible for providing appropriate review during the C&I process.

The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for final approval of academic unit and academic program name changes.

**8. SANCTIONS**

Failure to comply with this policy and referenced procedures may result in sanctions commensurate with the severity and frequency of the offense.

**9. EXCLUSIONS**

The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs may grant exceptions to this policy in the best interests of the institution.

**10. INTERPRETATION**

The authority to interpret this policy rests with the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Approved: A. Jerry Benson  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
March 16, 2015