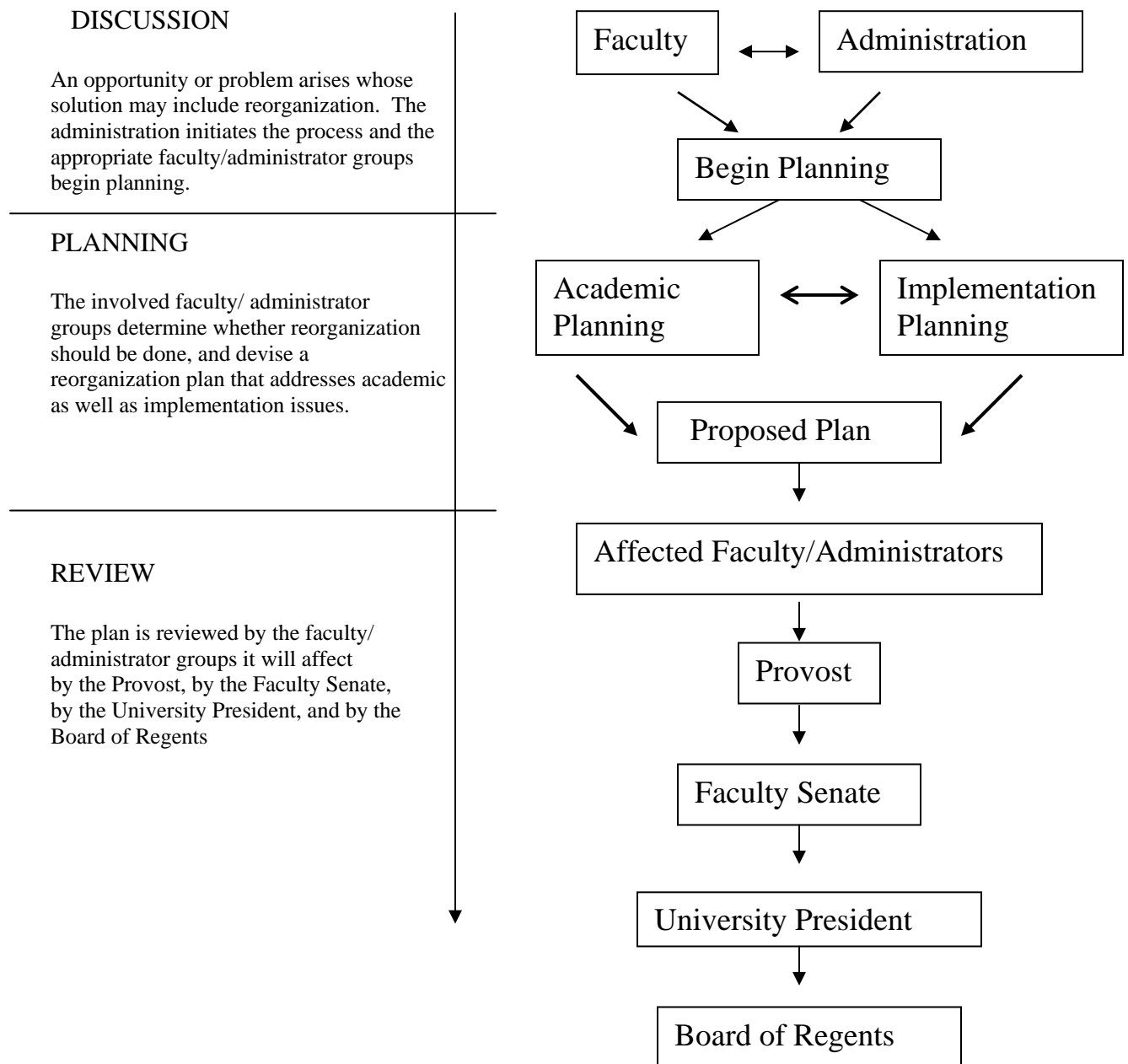


## A Policy for the Reorganization of Academic units

The reorganization of academic units (departments and colleges) is properly a part of University governance that is shared by the faculty and the administration. This policy for reorganization lays out a framework or guideline for a reorganization that includes timely, substantive interactions and input from faculty and administrators. The policy proposes that there be three steps or parts to reorganization: discussion, planning, and review.



## ACADEMIC REORGANIZATION

The organization of academic units (departments and colleges) is of great importance to the effective functioning of ISU. The organization of an academic unit affects all aspects of academic activity, including teaching, research, and extension/outreach. Reorganization of academic units is a part of University governance that is shared by the faculty and the administration. This policy for reorganization lays out a framework or guideline for reorganization that is based on, and requires, timely and substantive interactions between faculty and administration, and appropriate input from each. The policy proposes that reorganizations be done via a three-step process involving discussion, planning, and review.

### **Discussion.**

Reorganization begins with the recognition that a problem or opportunity exists whose solution may include restructuring one or more units of the University. While informal discussions may take place at any time, it is important to have a clearly recognized mechanism for moving from informal discussion into planning for a potential reorganization. The decision to begin planning is a commitment to formally explore possible solutions. This commitment is made with no assumption that reorganization will be the inevitable or even the preferred outcome. It may be that after thorough discussion and review of alternatives reorganization is the agreed upon outcome, but it may well be that it is not. This policy allows for exploring alternative possibilities prior to making a commitment to reorganize. Without this it will be difficult to have an open discussion, as faculty will be afraid that agreeing to discuss possible reorganization will be taken as agreeing to reorganize.

The decision to begin planning must be made by the appropriate administrator (Dean, Provost, President); in response to what he/she feels is compelling evidence. This decision should not be made lightly, as planning takes time, effort, and resources. The decision to begin planning should include a determination of which faculty groups/units are involved, what the opportunity/ problem is that is to be dealt with, and an estimation of the time frame for decision-making. It may or may not include a previously developed proposal for reorganization. At the time that the decision is made to begin planning

faculty in all involved units and the Faculty Senate will be notified. The faculty and/or administrators involved may seek input from the Faculty Senate to help decide on details of the planning process. The Faculty Senate will monitor the planning process.

**Planning.**

The goal of planning is the generation of a plan to resolve the problem or exploit the opportunity. Planning is a shared activity between the faculty and the administration. Like other aspects of shared governance, the faculty and the administration have different areas of primary interest. The faculty should have a dominant voice in academic planning, as it is the faculty research, teaching, and extension/outreach programs that the new structure is seeking to enhance. The administration must manage the new units so they must also be actively involved. In implementation planning the administration should have the dominant voice, as budgeting and management of resources are a primary function of administration. However, the faculty must also be involved in implementation planning. Since the purpose of the implementation plan is to support the academic functions of the reorganized units, it must reflect the needs of the faculty teaching, research, and extension/outreach programs.

The proposed plan needs to include a decision whether or not to reorganize. If reorganization is proposed, it must explain what reorganization is being proposed, how the reorganization will address the problem/ exploit the opportunity, how the reorganization will affect the teaching, research, extension/outreach of the involved units, and how the reorganization will affect other areas of the university. The plan must also contain details about how it will be implemented and what resources will be available. If new resources (faculty lines, space, equipment, support funds, etc.) are called for, how will these resources be obtained? It is critical that a plan for implementation be drawn up at the same time as the academic plan, and that these plans are considered together when making the final decision to reorganize. The academic plan cannot be assessed without knowledge of the implementation details. Without an assessment of resources available this can lead to unrealistic expectations. The plan should also include a description of the time frame for implementation. Not all reorganizations need to be

implemented immediately, and it may be reasonable to plan for a gradual growth/change that will take several years to complete.

### **Review**

Reorganization plans must be reviewed and approved before being put into action. Review begins with the affected faculty groups and administrators. The final plan for reorganization of departments and/or colleges must be reviewed by the faculty in these units, by the department chairs, and by the Deans involved. The faculty review of the plan should conclude with a vote on whether to recommend that the plan be adopted. The final vote on a reorganization plan must be clearly distinct from opinion polls, straw votes, votes on alternative versions of sections of the plan, or other measures of faculty opinion taken as part of the preparation of the plan. After the vote by the involved faculty and administrators the plan will be reviewed by the Provost, whether the faculty vote is favorable or not. The Provost will take one of three actions. The Provost may send the plan back to the affected units for further review and/or revision. The Provost may reject the plan and terminate the process, leaving the existing unit(s) in place. The Provost may submit the plan to the Faculty Senate for review with a recommendation that it be approved. The Faculty Senate, exercising its role in shared governance, will review the plan. The Senate's review may include discussions with the faculty and administrators involved, and/or with the Provost. The Senate may request further information and/or clarification from the Provost on the plan and on his/her recommendation. The information will be provided and the discussions will occur in a timely manner. After completing its review the Senate will prepare a recommendation on the plan and submit it to the University President. After reviewing the recommendations of the Provost and the Faculty Senate the President will take one of three actions. The President may return the plan for further discussion or revision. The President may dismiss the plan and terminate the process. This will leave the existing unit(s) in place. The President may submit the plan to the Board of Regents with a recommendation that it be approved. Final approval of the proposed reorganization rests with the Board of Regents. After receiving Regents approval, the plan will be implemented in a timely manner. The Provost and/or appropriate Dean will conduct follow-up reviews of units that have undergone reorganization.