



**Policies & Procedures for Establishing New Schools**

**RES 252643**

EC

**RESOLVED:** That the Academic Senate of California State University, Bakersfield, adopt the document entitled “Policies & Procedures for Establishing New Schools,” as submitted by the Criteria for Proposing New Schools Task Force.

**RATIONALE:** Currently, there are no formal policies governing the establishment of new schools at CSUB. The proposed guidelines address this gap by providing a comprehensive framework for the formation of new schools, modifications to existing schools, and the procedures required to establish such entities.

The Criteria for Proposing New Schools Task Force, composed of representatives from the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), Budget & Planning Committee (BPC), Academic Support & Student Services Committee (AS&SS), and Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC), conducted an extensive review of policies and procedures from other California State University (CSU) campuses to inform its work. The resulting document reflects consensus-based recommendations and establishes a formal policy to guide future decisions regarding the creation and modification of academic schools.

*Attachment: Revised\_Report\_Policies and Procedures for Establishing New Schools\_EC 20260507  
Report\_Policies and Procedures for Establishing New Schools-signed*

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Approved by the Academic Senate: May 7, 2026

Sent to the President: May 15, 2026

President Approved:

**Academic Senate**

California State University, Bakersfield  
9001 Stockdale Hwy. • 22 EDUC • Bakersfield, CA 93311

CSU Bakersfield  
**Policies and Procedures for Establishing New Schools**

I. Policy Purpose

- A. The process for creating new schools within the colleges should be uniform and transparent.
- B. A uniform system of school creation shall allow for fair and efficient mechanisms to be in place for interested parties to create schools.

II. Policy

A. Definitions and Operative Terms

- i. Principal academic sub-units are colleges at California State University, Bakersfield, whose chief primary academic/administrative officers are deans. Departments, schools, and programs are standard terms for units within colleges.
- ii. Departments and schools are each part of a college, reporting to a college dean. Schools may, but need not necessarily, include more than one department, division, or program, as well as centers and institutes.
- iii. Academic departments or schools serve as administrative units within the university's respective colleges and are organized around specific fields of academic inquiry and pedagogical outcomes.
- iv. Departments offer a major, minor, and/or credential, and may offer a certificate. Schools, and any subordinate departments located within the school, will offer majors, minors, and/or credentials, and may offer a certificate.
- v. Departments are led by department chairs, and schools by directors. In a school with multiple departments, department chairs will report to the school director. Both department chairs and school directors will be selected according to the University Handbook, and report to the dean of a college. The director of a school which has multiple departments from different colleges will report to the dean of the college in which the school is located.
- vi. Considerations that will normally apply in designation of one or more units as a school include professional accreditation, licensing, or certification requirements for graduates, size of the unit(s) and common practice in higher education of administratively referring to the discipline as a school.

B. Purpose of an Academic School

- i. The purpose of a school is to support the mission of the university by offering academic programs in the disciplines it houses, promoting academic inquiry and critical thinking within and across disciplines, and engaging in disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, scholarship, and creative activities.
- ii. To qualify as a school, the proposed entity must:
  - 1. Offer a set of academic programs, approved through the appropriate curricular review process (department, college, university, and CSU system levels), that lead to undergraduate or graduate degrees or credentials.

2. Ensure to its faculty the rights and responsibilities of Academic Freedom, as defined by the American Association of University Professors, to engage in free inquiry and dissent in both scholarship and instruction. This includes the rights of the school and units within to initiate curricular proposals, to make autonomous decisions on instructional materials, pedagogy, delivery mode, and grading systems/practices. The faculty unit is free to offer its own views and interpretations that may dissent from the received views of either the discipline or in any other arena of society.
3. Be mainly comprised of Unit 3 faculty, who are subject to the rights and responsibilities of the CFA-CSU collective bargaining agreement, the CSUB University Handbook, and other relevant university policies.

### III. Formation of New Schools, or Modifications to Existing Schools

- A. A new school may be formed as (1) an entirely new entity, (2) a result of dividing an existing school, (3) a result of combining two or more existing schools, or (4) a result of combining two or more departments from one college or from different colleges into a single school.
- B. Requests to change the structure of an already existing school should usually emerge from the concerns of the faculty, the school director and/or the dean directly involved. However, other individuals of the university may suggest that the faculty examine the effectiveness of the present school structure, especially as part of the Program Review process.
- C. If the change affects more than one college, then more than one dean will be involved, so any references to a dean in this policy statement implies more than one dean if the situation is so indicated.
- D. Collegiality is the fundamental principle upon which the governance of the university rests. At any point in this process, any of the parties involved may consult informally with anyone in the campus community whose contribution seems desirable.

### IV. Procedures for Establishing a New School

- A. Initiation of Proposal
  - i. Faculty members, departments, schools, colleges or administrative officers of the university may initiate discussion and consultation processes to consider the establishment of a new academic school.
  - ii. When considering a change in school structure, the relevant faculty, the appropriate college dean, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (P&VPAA) should engage in considerable informal discussion. These people should solicit advice from other potentially interested parties, possibly including faculty in other departments, schools, or colleges as well as the Academic Senate.
  - iii. When informal discussions appear to have elicited all relevant issues and concerns, the faculty who wish to form the new school should write a proposal that addresses all areas set forth below in New School Proposal: Contents.
  - iv. The initial request should be submitted in writing to the appropriate dean(s). Due to the potential impact on departments/schools/colleges/programs, faculty, staff, and students, the proposal must follow the guidelines and review process set forth below in New School Proposal: Procedure for Review.
- B. New School Proposal: Contents
  - i. Background and Introduction

1. The exact name of the proposed school and name(s) of individual(s) preparing the proposal;
  2. Description of the consultation process and informal discussions that occurred prior to the submission of the proposal (Initiation of Proposal);
  3. Description of possible consequences for not forming the new school;
  4. Statement of how the proposed school may advance the campus' vision, mission, and goals;
  5. Statement of how the proposed school will better serve the needs of institution, students, faculty and staff; and contribute to the recruitment and retention of a high quality and diverse faculty;
  6. Statement of how the proposed school will provide added value or benefits to CSUB, enhance the relationships of the college(s) where the school is housed, including its faculty, students, and the greater community;
- ii. Faculty Composition: Include the following information:
- (a) Regardless of whether the proposed school has one or multiple departments, include the name of each department, the name of the department chair, number of faculty in each department including the ranks (lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor), and current college or school affiliation. In the case of school restructuring, also include whether the listed departments will be moved to the new school or jointly appointed between their prior academic units and the new school.
  - (b) If the new school is breaking away or drawing members from existing schools/ colleges, list all foreseeable effects that this change would have on other department(s), school(s), or college(s) in terms of name change, number of faculty, support staff, curriculum, operating budget, or space, etc.
  - (c) Results of a vote from each college directly affected, including written comments from affected academic program chair(s)/director(s) and faculty. Anonymity, if requested, should be accommodated and respected throughout the process.
- iii. In the case of impacts on schools, colleges or programs with external accreditation, provide the rationale and justification for creating the school that aligns with accreditation requirements.
- C. Budgetary, Financial, and other Resource Considerations
- i. In general, creating the school should be completed in a budget-neutral manner. Release time for the director and staff time for the school office should be covered by reallocation from existing resources within the colleges, departments, and programs involved. The director should be a faculty member on course release, not an administrator.
- D. Planned Implementation and Timeline
- i. The proposed date of implementation and the appropriate timeline for the process of implementation.
  - ii. Include important milestones and dates for the development of the school.

## V. New School Proposal: Procedure for Review

- A. The proposal must pass through the following levels of review in the order indicated. The individual(s) at each level review the proposal, consult with others as appropriate, and then either forward it to the next level with a positive recommendation or provide a written explanation of the reasons for withholding approval. If the proposal fails to receive approval at any level, the proposal shall not proceed to the next level of review. The proposers may choose to revise and resubmit to that specific level of review. Any revisions of a proposal shall be communicated with previous levels of review. All levels of review must be documented clearly for subsequent review levels:
- i. The initial proposal must be submitted to the appropriate dean(s) for consultation and signature(s). The dean(s) shall provide written comments/recommendations to the originator(s) of the proposal.
  - ii. The proposal, including responses and revisions based on feedback from the dean(s), shall then be submitted to the P&VPAA, who shall consult with the Council of Deans and provide written comments/recommendations reflecting their own review and feedback from the council.
  - iii. The revised proposal, including responses and revisions based on feedback from the dean(s), P&VPAA, and Dean's Council, shall then be submitted to the Academic Senate, through the Executive Committee. If all prior levels of review are deemed to have been satisfied, the proposal shall be forwarded to the Standing Committees for review. Each Standing Committee will review the proposal and provide their comments/recommendations.
  - iv. If the revised proposal receives approvals from all prior levels of review, the proposal will then be sent to the full Academic Senate for review and final approval.
  - v. The approved proposal shall then be forwarded to the President for their final decision regarding the proposal.

## **Academic Senate Task Force**

### **School Formation Criteria**

During Fall 2024, the California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) Academic Senate Executive Committee requested that the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), Budget and Planning Committee (BPC), Academic Support and Student Services Committee (AS&SS), and Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) address the issue of school formation criteria. The standing committees elected representatives to an ad hoc task force to create new school formation policies and procedures, with representatives from the AAC, BPC, AS&SS, and FAC.

Since there are no existing policies on new school formation, the task force completed an extensive review of example policies from other California State University (CSU) campuses. The current document represents a consensus recommendation from the task force for a new policy document. We share this document with the standing committees and invite comments and suggestions, if any.

#### **Composition of Criteria for Proposing New Schools Task Force:**

Yangsuk Ko (Chair), Amber Stokes (FAC), Debbie Wilson (AS&SS), Heidi He (AAC), Rhonda Dugan (BPC), Deborah Cours (dean representative), and Laura Ann Bishop (staff).

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**Signature:**   
**Email:** yko@csub.edu


**Signature:**   
**Email:** lbishop@csub.edu

**Signature:**   
Deborah Cours (Dec 9, 2025 16:23:22 PST)  
**Email:** dcours@csub.edu

**Signature:**   
**Email:** rdugan2@csub.edu

**Signature:**   
**Email:** hhe@csub.edu

**Signature:** *Amber Stokes*  
**Email:** astokes2@csub.edu

**Signature:**   
Debbie Wilson (Dec 9, 2025 15:15:27 PST)  
**Email:** dwilson4@csub.edu