

Policy and Procedure for Creating, Suspending, or Eliminating Academic Programs

Rationale:

This document codifies the process and documentation needed for approving new academic programs or suspending or eliminating existing academic programs.

Part I. New Academic Program Review and Approval

New academic programs include a new degree (including an undergraduate or graduate certificate), a new major, a new stand-alone minor (no major associated with it), or a new concentration (if it is recorded on a student's transcript). If a proposed program will incorporate courses from more than one school (cross-school program), the process will begin within the school that will administer the program and will proceed in consultation with the other schools involved and the University Academic Program Committee (UAPC) of the University Faculty Senate (UFS).

If a proposed program will not incorporate courses from more than one school then the proposal does not need to go to the UAPC and UFS. See *Faculty Handbook*, VIII, Appendix II.

All new academic program proposals will include the following components:

1. A proposal to the Dean of the appropriate school from a faculty body (working group, committee, department, program, school)¹
2. A letter of intent from the Dean of the appropriate School to the Provost
3. An Assessment Plan Outline with Proposed Curriculum Map (for new degrees and majors only)
4. A Preliminary Faculty Credential Roster

Each of these components is described in more detail on subsequent pages.

1) Approval Process:

Faculty interested in creating a new academic program should prepare a proposal for submission to the Dean of the school in which the program will be administratively housed and supported. Cross-school programs must be situated in a school, generally the one in which the principal faculty member who will coordinate the program is located. Proposals for new cross-school programs must also be submitted to the Chair of the UAPC.

Once the proposal has been approved within any affected School, the Dean of the Home School will submit a letter of intent to the Provost and include copies of the faculty proposal, messages from Deans of affected schools conveying school approval, the Assessment Plan Outline with Proposed Curriculum Map, and a Preliminary Faculty Credential Roster. The Provost will consult with the Academic Cabinet and may request additional information from the Dean. If the program involves multiple schools, the

¹ In the case of cross-school programs, the appropriate school is the home school of the faculty member assuming primary responsibility for proposing the program.

UAPC will gather all documentation, including Provost's recommendation and make a motion to the University Faculty Senate for approval. Once approved by the faculty (via Faculty Senate vote or full faculty vote, pursuant to the University Faculty Senate Charter, the Provost and Dean will submit these materials to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, which will begin the process of preparing documents for submission to SACSCOC in keeping with requirements for notification or approval, depending upon the nature of the program.

A proposal for a new degree program must be approved by the Board of Trustees prior to notifying SACSCOC.

After the proposed new program has been approved by the Senate (or trustees for a new degree), the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will notify or seek approval from SACSCOC. In addition to SACSCOC, an individual school or program may need to seek approval from the program accrediting body if applicable (e.g., AACSB, ABA, ACS, or TEACA).

2) Timeline for New Program Implementation: In order to ensure sufficient time to review and seek necessary approval of new programs, including accreditation approval, it may take up to two years following the initial proposal to begin enrolling students in the new program. New programs usually begin in the fall semester.

Part II. Suspension or Elimination of Existing Programs

An existing program includes an existing degree (including an undergraduate or graduate certificate), an existing major, an existing stand-alone minor (no major associated with it), or an existing concentration (if it is recorded on a student's transcript). Proposals to suspend or eliminate a cross-school program will follow the process within the program's home school but in consultation with the other schools involved and with the UAPC and USF. The process will begin with a Letter of Intent from the Dean of the appropriate School (see detailed instructions below).

Freezing admission to an academic program is the same as suspending a program. Suspension of an academic program governed by SACSCOC must have a clearly defined timeframe (with a suspension start and end date) which cannot exceed five years (the time between accreditation reviews). Suspending a program indefinitely is the same as eliminating a program. (NOTE: If the program to be suspended or eliminated is at an off campus site and is the only program offered at that site, then additional approval and documentation will be required to close the site. In this case, consult with the University's SACSCOC Liaison for specific instructions.)

1) Approval Process: The process for suspending or eliminating existing academic programs within a School is described in the *Faculty Handbook*, VIII, Appendix II.. A flow chart of the review and approval process is appended to this document. After the School that houses and administers the program has determined that suspension or elimination is warranted, the Dean will submit a letter of intent to the Provost (see attached description). If the affected program is a cross-school program, the Dean will consult with the Deans of the other schools involved in the program and with the UAPC. The Dean will

also inform the Office of Institutional Effectiveness that a recommendation to suspend or eliminate the program is being made.

The Provost will consult with the Academic Cabinet and may request additional information from the Dean. If the program involves multiple schools, the UAPC will gather all documentation, including the Provost's recommendation and make a motion to the University Faculty Senate for approval. Once approved by the faculty (via Faculty Senate vote or full faculty vote, pursuant to the University Faculty Senate Charter, the Provost and Dean will submit these materials to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, which will begin the process of preparing documents for submission to SACSCOC in keeping with requirements for notification or approval, depending upon the nature of the program.

The elimination of a degree program must be approved by the Board of Trustees prior to notifying SACSCOC.

After the proposed elimination has been approved by the Senate (or trustees for a degree), the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will notify or seek approval from SACSCOC. In addition to SACSCOC, an individual school or program may need to seek approval from the program accrediting body if applicable (e.g., AACSB, ABA, ACS, or TEACA).

In those cases which may involve the possible dismissal of tenured faculty, Section III.E. of the *Faculty Handbook*, Procedures for the Discontinuance of an Academic Department or Program of Instruction Involving Possible Dismissal of Tenured Faculty” (http://facultyhandbook.richmond.edu/Ch_III/index.html#discontinuance) becomes applicable at this stage of the process.

2) Timeline for Suspending or Eliminating Programs: In order to ensure sufficient time to review and seek necessary approval for suspending or eliminating existing programs, this action may require up to two years to take effect; further, each program suspension or elimination may require an additional five active program years to allow students to complete the program. The timeline will be shorter if there are no students currently enrolled in the program. (NOTE: Per SACSCOC and federal requirements, the University cannot stop admitting students to a program prior to obtaining SACSCOC approval.)

Changes and Modifications to these Processes and Procedures

It is likely that the format, timeline, and review and approval processes for academic program changes will need to be modified or adjusted over time. Any changes to the University-wide format, timeline, or review process will be made after consultation with the appropriate faculty and administrative decision-making bodies but will maintain the University's compliance with state, federal, and accrediting body regulations. Each school may change its review and approval process at any time but must notify the Provost in writing of the change so that this policy may be amended, if necessary, to reflect the revised process. This document will be updated regularly to reflect review and approval elements required by state, federal or accrediting body regulations.

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Proposal from Faculty to a School Dean to Establish a New Academic Program.

The proposal should provide an overview of the new program including a description, justification, and estimate of existing resources as well as additional resources needed to launch and to sustain the program over time. The proposing faculty should consult with appropriate individuals/offices as needed to complete each section.

The proposal should be structured in three parts to provide the following information:

1. Description of the proposed new program
 - Name
 - Mission Statement
 - Possible or confirmed partnerships with other areas as relevant; e.g., other departments, programs, or schools
 - Requirements including courses as well as other academic and nonacademic requirements. [A proposal for a new degree (including undergraduate or graduate certificate) should also include specific information on admission requirements.]
 - Name, title and department of coordinator and a brief explanation of his/her academic or other qualifications relevant to the new program (not needed for a new concentration)
2. Justification for the new program
 - Explanation of how it fits into the School or University's educational mission
 - Explanation of external trends or needs in the program area as relevant
 - Estimate of potential student interest in the first five years of the program
3. Estimate of resources required to develop and sustain a high quality program (to be made in consultation with appropriate University offices).
 - Faculty positions
 - Library resources
 - Technology resources
 - Facilities (specialized classroom needs, lab space, office space, etc.)
 - Equipment
 - Financial aid (for new degree programs only)
 - Potential impact (positive or negative) on current programs

The proposal should be concise and should be accompanied by the completed Assessment Plan Outline (with curriculum map) and Faculty Roster in the materials submitted to the Dean (and to the UAPC, if applicable) for approval.

Letter of Intent from the Dean of the Appropriate School to the Provost to Establish a New Academic Program

After the School has completed its review of the proposed new program, the Dean will send a letter to the Provost indicating the School's support for the program. The letter of intent can incorporate information from the faculty proposal or include the faculty proposal as an attachment. However, it is expected that the Dean's letter of intent will include more refined estimates of the demand for the new program as well as the resources required to develop and sustain the program. In addition, the letter will reflect input from the offices of Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, Business and Finance, and University Facilities concerning the potential impact of the new program within each of these areas.

For cross-school programs, the Deans of each of the schools involved will submit a letter of intent to support the program. In addition, the Chair of the UAPC will submit a statement of the UAPC's endorsement of the program and its involvement in the development of the program proposal.

Assessment Plan Outline for Proposed New Degree or Major

Proposed Program Information	
Academic Program (Major)	
Degree	
Department	
School	
Contact Person	
Name	
Title	
Department	
E-Mail Address	
Extension	
Proposed Program Mission Statement	
Proposed Program Learning Outcomes	
1.	

Assessment Program Outline:

Proposed Curriculum and Program Map

Use this map to list all of the courses that will be required in the proposed major and confirm that the stated learning outcomes are in line with the proposed curriculum. Please enter the courses in the order that you expect students will typically complete them. For existing courses, enter the course number. For new courses, enter the course title and place an "x" in the new course column. Under each learning outcome, indicate the courses in which it is incorporated and how it is incorporated by using the following codes: I-Introduced in the course, R-Reinforced, E-Emphasized.

Course	New Course	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3
	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Preliminary Faculty Roster Form
Qualifications of Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

Name of Program:

Type of Program:

(e.g., degree, major, minor, concentration)

Name and Department of Program Coordinator:

School(s):

Date Form Completed:

1	2	3	4
FACULTY NAME (FT/PT) List the faculty who will be teaching in the new program and indicate whether the faculty member is full- or part-time. If new faculty will be hired, use NEW for the name and complete the rest of the columns based on your expectations for the position. Example: Steig Cederholm (PT)	PROGRAM COURSES Include the course number and title of the courses that will make up the new program for new and existing courses. Example: MUS 390 Music Composition	ACADEMIC DEGREES & COURSEWORK List the faculty member's academic credentials (including degree, field of study, and institution) that qualify him/her to teach the courses listed in column 2. If needed, list specific graduate coursework. Example: BM (Music Composition), University of Louisville	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS & COMMENTS <i>Complete this section only if the faculty member does not have sufficient academic credentials to teach the courses in column 2. If completing this section, only include information related directly to the courses in column 2.</i> Example: Formerly the composer in residence for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Letter of Intent from the Dean of the Appropriate School to the Provost to Suspend or Eliminate an Existing Academic Program

The letter should provide an overview of the reasoning and process for suspending or ending the existing academic program. Please consult with the appropriate individuals/offices as needed to complete each section.

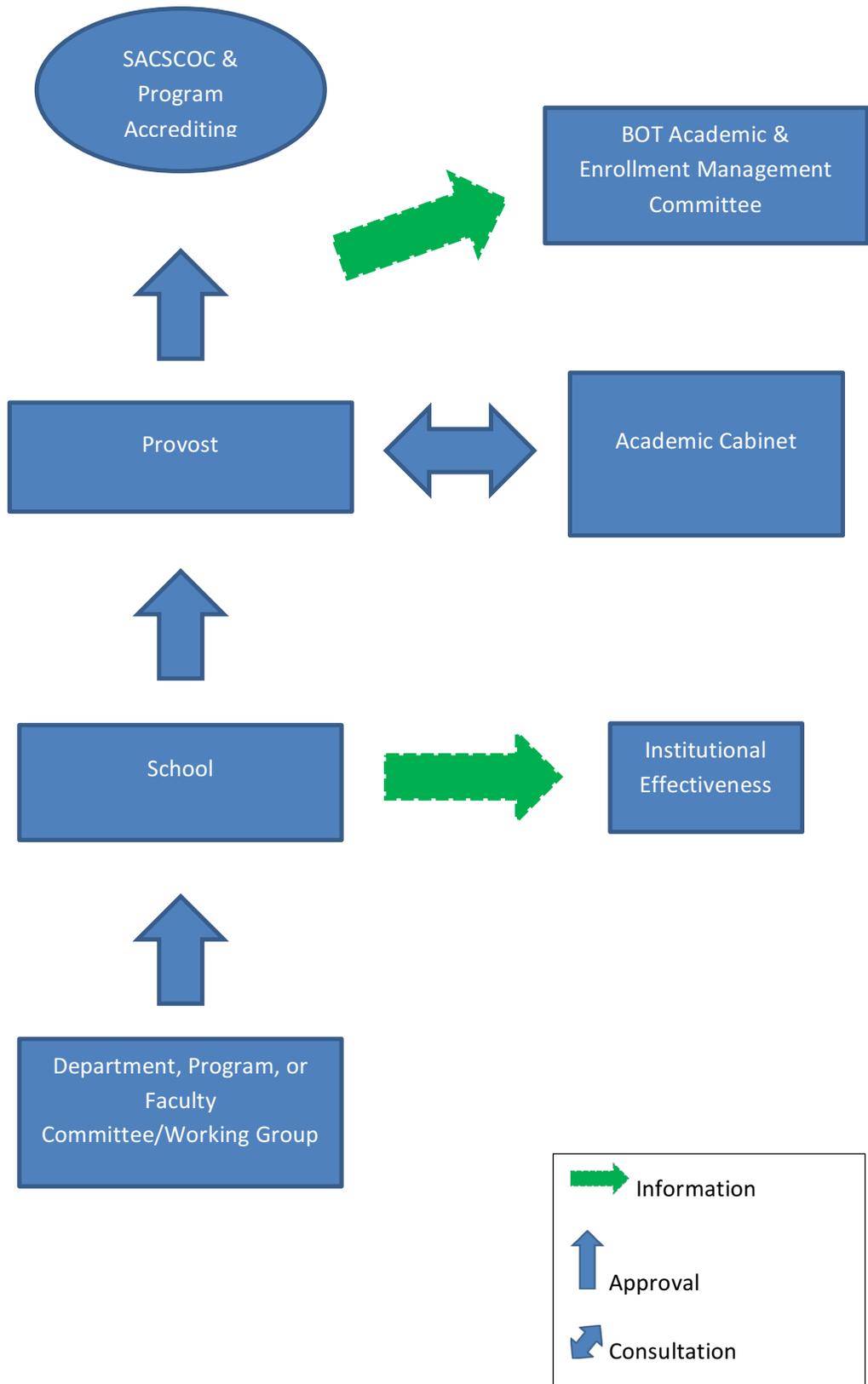
For cross-school programs, the Deans of each of the schools involved will submit a letter of support for the suspension/elimination. In addition, the Chair of the UAPC should submit a statement of the Committee's endorsement of the suspension/elimination and its involvement in the decision-making process.

The letter should be structured in four parts to provide the following information:

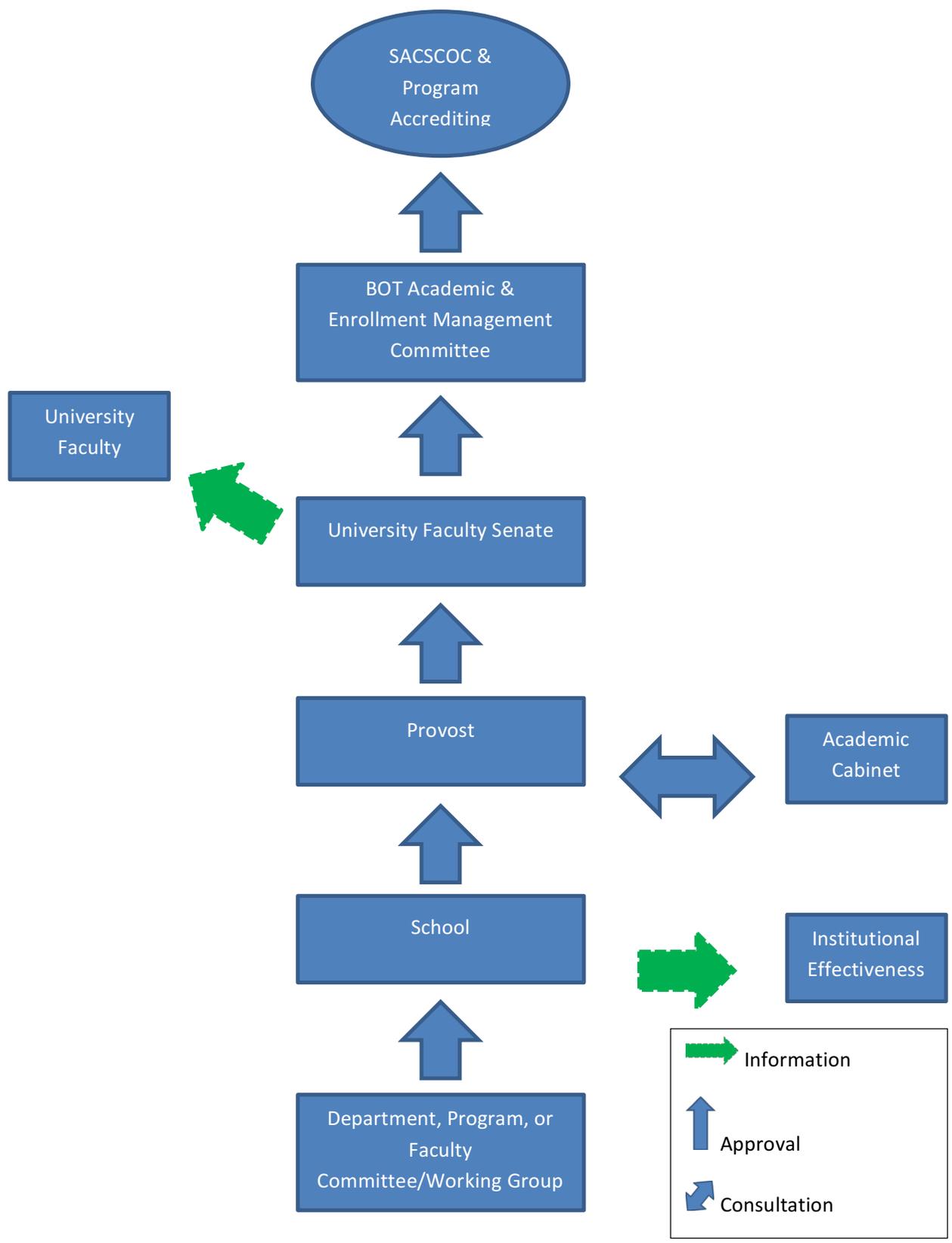
1. Description of the program to be suspended or eliminated
 - Program name
 - Program mission statement
 - Name, title and department of program coordinator
 - Proposed suspension start and end dates (not needed for eliminating a program)
2. Justification for suspending or eliminating the program
 - Explanation of why the program is being suspended or eliminated such as:
 - Lack of student interest
 - Changes in external trends or needs in the program area as relevant
 - Budgetary considerations
 - Faculty considerations
 - Other resource issues
 - Program quality issues
 - Strategic planning/University mission
3. Potential impact (positive or negative) of suspending or eliminating the program
 - Description of the potential impact on current faculty (specify full-time/part-time and tenure status)
 - Description of the potential impact on students currently enrolled in the program
 - Include the number and status of students currently in the program and projections for completion
 - Description of the potential impact on prospective students/applicants
 - Description of the potential impact on current staff (specify full-time/part-time)
 - Description of the potential impact on resources (such as facilities, equipment, etc.)
 - Description of the anticipated impact on net tuition revenue
 - Description of the potential impact on other academic programs (shared course offerings, shared instructional staff, shared resources, general education, etc.)
4. Teach-Out Plan
 - Detailed description of how currently enrolled students will be helped to complete the program with minimal disruption or additional expense

- Include a timeline for moving current students through program completion
- Include specific course requirements and when and how they will be offered to facilitate program completion

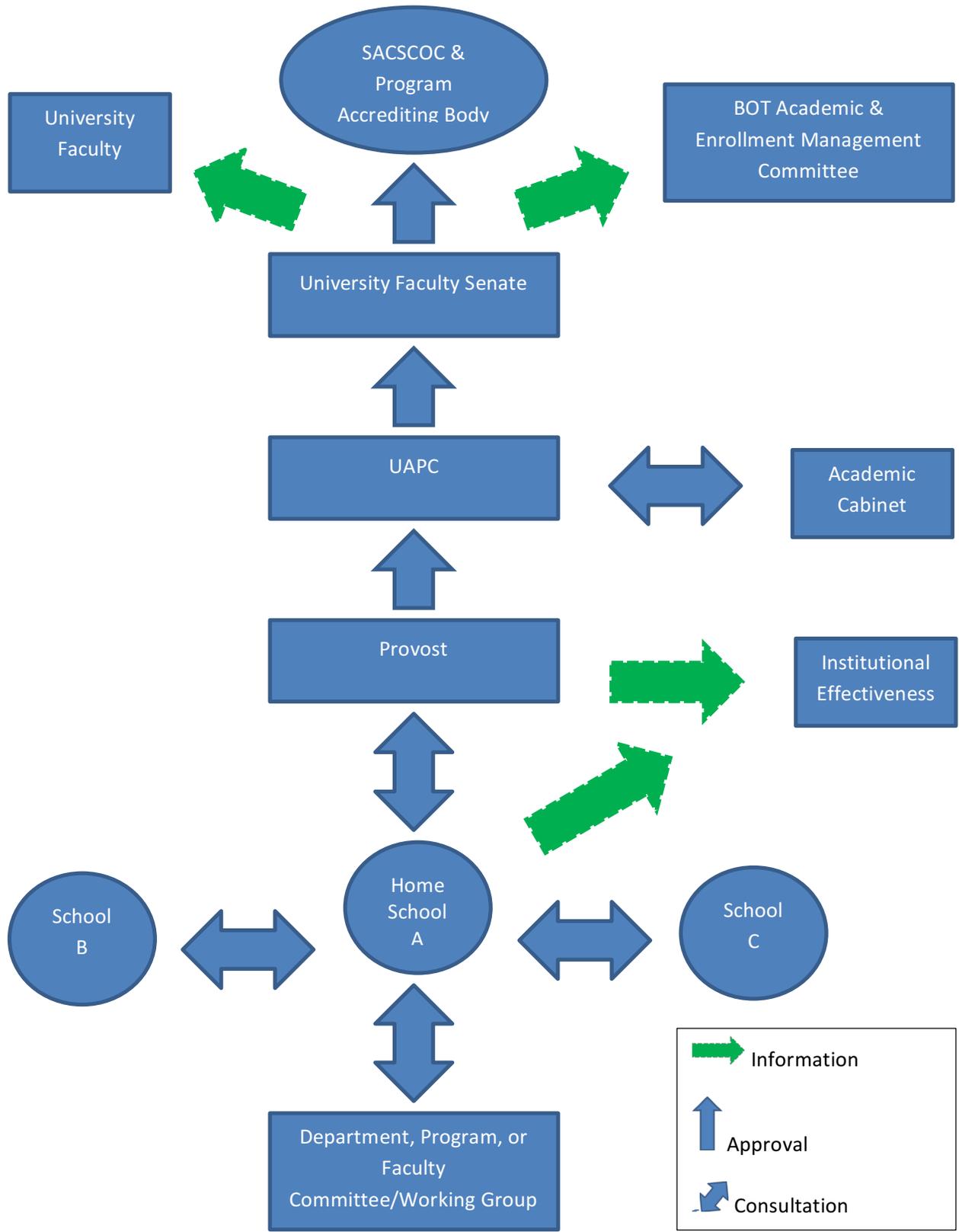
Approval Process for Adding/Eliminating Majors/Minors/Concentrations Involving One School



Approval Process for Adding/Eliminating Degree Programs Involving One School



Approval Process for Adding/Eliminating Majors/Minors/Concentrations Involving Multiple Schools



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Approval Process for Adding/Eliminating Degree Programs Involving Multiple Schools

