Impact of Changing a College’s Name & Acronym

This document details the impact on enterprise applications of a name and/or acronym change of an academic College. Generally, a name and acronym change can be implemented easily in non-academic systems. The Office of Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment (IRPA) can manage these changes as well, although historical records used for longitudinal studies may need to be changed. The issue becomes more complex for the Student Information System (SIS) because of the impact on transcripts, course prefixes, etc. Listed below is the high-level process and the impacts on UMCP application systems.

Overall Process:

- Colleges that want to make a substantive change in name need to submit a formal proposal to the Provost’s Office that ultimately requires Senate approval. Generally the discussion of an acronym change occurs at the same time. (Note: If a College is renamed to add a donor’s name, this generally does not involve an acronym change, and is facilitated by the President as part of the gift acceptance process.)
- Once the approval has been received from the Provost’s Office for a College name change, the following applications will be changed: PHR, Bridge, SCAT, KFS, SIS-Utility College Master (UCM), the SIS transcript program and ADVISE.
- If the approval is given for an acronym change only, the following applications will be change: PHR, Bridge, SCAT, KFS, SIS-Utility College Master (UCM), and ADVISE.
- The decision to submit a request to the Provost’s Office to change course prefixes to reflect the new acronym is up to the College. The College might offer courses in the future using the old acronym, or they might offer courses currently using the old acronym, under the new acronym. Requests for course prefix changes must be vetted by both Provost’s office and VPAC. Once approved, with proper coordination with the scheduling system, they could be offered to the students from that point on. These changes must be coordinated such that they all occur in SIS effective the same term. No existing or past courses on a student’s record will be changed.
- The decision to submit a request to the Provost’s Office to change the graduate program code to reflect the new acronym is up to the College. Same scenario as the course prefix, above. Using start and end dates facilitates this change with fewer impacts on student records.
Impacts to UMCP applications:

**PHR**
- The PHR Rules Unit table contains the unit code, long description and short description of a unit and is used to assign appointment and positions to units. The long description field contains the four-character acronym (e.g. BSOS) as well as the name of the unit (College of Behavioral and Social Sciences).
- If the acronym is changing, any department or sub-department using that acronym must be changed.
- The PHR Rules Unit table is date driven so the date of the change can be reflected in the system. (Note: Always coordinate the effective date of major reorganization changes with the appropriate service offices / application owners listed in this document.)
- PHR reports, screens and programs pull data from the PHR Rules Unit table, so once the table is updated, additional changes should not have to be made in PHR.

**Bridge**
- The UM Bridge application contains the unit/department names and codes, and is used to map our academic codes (course prefixes, majors, graduate program codes, etc.) to our organizational structure. Data from the Bridge are used extensively by IRPA in their Profiles application, frozen data, and Course Evaluation system.
- The Bridge is date/term driven so the agreed-upon effective date/term for the name and/or acronym change can be reflected appropriately.
- If the acronym only is changing, not every department/sub-department under a College will need to be updated in the Bridge. Only the College-level description contains the acronym and will need to be updated.

**SCAT**
- Standard Code Access Tables (SCAT) are used to maintain codes and their corresponding short and long descriptions for use with software applications.
- The change of a College name & acronym will affect these two unit level SCAT tables:
  - PHR SCAT 922 - Division level unit (VP or college)
  - PHR SCAT 942 - Departmental level unit
- DBAs must be notified and the above Oracle SCAT(s) must be updated. Beginning 2016, all the SCAT change requests are done through ServiceNow.

**KFS**
- FRS Database Dictionary (DBD)
  - The FRS Database Dictionary (DBD) contains the department code, long description and short description of a department/unit. The code
is used to assign a unit to an account number in the Master Chart of Accounts.
  o The FRS DBD is not date driven.
  o Per the Comptroller’s Office, the acronym change will require changes in the DBD to all departments and sub-departments that use the current acronym in the description.

- FRS accounts that have an acronym and/or unit name as part of the account title need to be changed to the new acronym/title.
- The FRS Web Reference Card needs to be updated for all departments and sub-departments that use the current acronym in the description.

SIS
- When a College requests a change in acronym only, the college abbreviation, contained in SIS-UCM, would need to be changed. In addition, ADVISE would be changed. When a College requests change in both acronym and name, the college abbreviation, college short, long, and transcript translation, all contained in SIS-UCM, will need to be changed as well as the transcript programs (RCD500U1, etc.) and ADVISE. The decision to submit a request to change program codes and course prefixes to the new acronym is up to the College. Requests for course prefix changes must be vetted by both Provost’s office and VPAC. Program changes must be approved by PCC, if applicable. The Office of the Registrar determines the need for changes in how the code is represented in SIS.
- See supplemental information on specific SIS changes at the end of this document.

IRPA
- Per Denise Nadasen and Eric Spear (2004), a change in acronym/unit name can be managed with few obstacles. Comments from Chris Giordano, 2004:
  - For OIRP’s purposes, the bridge (oirp_rpt_grp_bridge) can easily be changed. That’s all done internally so they can change it when they want, either directly or via the website tool. The same for the org star tables (minus the web tool part).
  - There are places where this string will appear in the frozen data. In the student data, these are in fields that we shouldn't be using in the first place (coll_of_maj, coll_adv). We would have to change these fields in the frozen data if we wanted historic records to appear consistent.
  - Many will use the division_sd field in programs to define limits or to enumerate colleges when processing or even to join tables. Changing the acronyms could break things in these cases. For example, if someone were doing some kind of historic analysis by college and joined two tables using division_sd rather than division_cd, or grouping longitudinal data by division_sd, not changing all instances of this would mean that the join would be "broken" or that we’d get two groups for the one division because the
values are distinct. These are instances where we should be using the codes since these presumably will not change, but haven't.

- To some degree, some of the same issues hold when names are changed as well. If programs have been written to avoid these issues (i.e., only group by and/or join on codes), or are built using current mappings (rather than the term-based ones in the star tables, for example), the issue doesn't arise.
- The overall difficulty is somewhat minimal; there is no doubt that OIRP will find cases where this change will have an effect, but these should be changed anyway so that the next time this happens they won't have to make further changes.
SIS – Supplementation Information

College Codes

- SIS College codes are 2-digit numbers that represent a SIS college. The data record that contains these codes also contains an abbreviation that is the 4-digit college acronym, short name, long name and transcript translation; they are stored in the SIS-UCM utility table and these records are not term dependent. There is no start or end date associated with the record. There is one record per college code in SIS-UCM and an example of a code and translations is:
  
  College code:  03  
  Abbreviation:  EDUC  
  Short Name:  EDUCATION  
  Long Name:  Education  
  Transcript Tran:  COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  

- College codes and their translations are used on many documents produced by the Office of the Records and Registrations. This would include student transcripts where the college's short translation is displayed as a header for each term and the college's transcript translation is printed when a degree is displayed on the transcript.

- The college and advising college codes are part of a term dependent current and historic record for each student (SIS-ECS & SIS-EHS). It is the advising college code that is used to query the SIS-UCM table in order to extract the short and transcript translation of the college for printing on a student’s transcript.

- The actual transcript programs (RCD500U1 etc.) have “hard coded” logic to handle the printing of the correct translation for a college for which a name change was processed. There are some college codes that have a translation in SIS-UCM, which previously had a different translation. This is necessary because SIS-UCM records do not have a start and end date/term to manage changes in the college data.

- If there is a need to change the translation for a college code the following outlines the steps that need to be taken in the past:
  
  o Change the SIS-UCM record for the college code to reflect the new translation.
  
  o Add "hard coded" logic to all of the transcript programs (RCD500U1 etc.) so they can accommodate the former translation when they encounter a student’s SIS-EHS record for a term prior to the term of the new college name. The transcript programs already handle several such cases. For example: college code “21” prior to the spring 2001 term was translated as “Journalism”. The SIS-UCM record currently translates as “Philip Merrill College of Journalism” and this translation is used for all terms beginning spring 2001. The transcript programs handle the translation for terms prior to the spring 2001 term so a
student’s transcript will translate “Journalism”, the name of the College at the time the student was enrolled.

- In the case of Journalism, the 4-character abbreviation (JOUR), which was stored in SIS-UCM, did not change.
- The college abbreviation can be changed in the current SIS-UCM record because the abbreviation is only used on current or future documents. As far as SIS is concerned there is no need to track a former college abbreviation for historic purposes. It is not printed on the student transcript which is the only document produced with historic information.
- The above steps can be accomplished with minimal effort, but they do require coordination since the change to SIS-UCM and the transcript programs must take place simultaneously.

**Program and Major Codes (undergraduate majors and graduate programs)**

- Undergraduate majors and graduate programs must be approved by PCC. Most changes are due to added programs or modified tracks. Once a program change has been approved by PCC, the Office of the Registrar examines the change to determine the need for changes in how the code is represented in SIS. On occasion, the Provost’s Office is consulted for advice or clarification.

- SIS undergraduate major and graduate program codes with their translations and other attributes are stored in the SIS-UMP utility table (Similar to a SCAT, but expanded).
- Undergraduate majors consist of 5 alphanumeric characters, ex: 0901X.
- Graduate programs consist of 4 alphabetic characters, ex: BMGT, ENGL
- SIS-UMP can have multiple records for the same major or graduate program code.
- Unlike other SIS utility tables the SIS-UMP table has start and end dates that make it easy to change information about the UG majors and graduate program codes. For example, if a major’s translation changes, when an application program references SIS-UMP to pickup a translation for a major code it compares the major code and the term of the major code with SIS-UMP and using the start and end dates in SIS-UMP the correct translation of the major can be extracted.

- UG majors and graduate program codes and their translations are used on many documents produced by the Office of Records and Registrations. This would include student transcripts where only the transcript translation (SIS-UMP.TRANSL-TRANS) is printed.
- The UG major and Grad program data for a student is stored in term dependent current and historic records (SIS-ECS & SIS-EHS).
- The actual transcript programs retrieve a student’s major or graduate program code from SIS-EHS and using SIS-UMP extracts the translation for printing on a student’s transcript.
There is no direct relationship between a 4-character graduate program code and a 4-character course prefix. In some cases the same acronym is used, but these act independently. Changing one does not necessarily dictate the other must be changed.

If there is a need to change a graduate program code or undergraduate major code to reflect a College acronym change, the old major/program code can be “retired” using the end date, and the new code can be utilized, effective with the start date.

Graduate Program and undergraduate major codes can be changed with little effort provided the old code has been inactivated.

Course Prefixes

Course prefixes need to have approval from VPAC. Course prefix naming is usually based on a recommendation from the Provost’s Office and making it easy for students to find the courses that they need.

If a new course prefix replaces an old course prefix (i.e. acronym change), it is NEVER retroactively changed. No existing or past courses on a student’s record will be changed.

Course prefixes are translated in SIS-UDM (Department Master). “School of” is not part of the translation.

SIS-UDM is not term dependent; there are no start or end terms.

There is one record per course prefix in SIS-UDM.

Courses that a student is currently registered for, or has completed, are stored in SIS-ECC for current courses and SIS-EHC for historic courses.

Course prefixes can be found on a student’s transcript as part of a course offering, ex: ENGL101. The course prefix will also be found in the Schedule of Classes and other documents from the Office of the Registrar.

It is not common for a course prefix to be translated. A course prefix can stand-alone without a translation. A course prefix only has meaning when connected with a course number to reflect a particular course offering with a course title.

Hence, rarely is there a case where someone will want to change the translation for a course prefix, since the translations are rarely used alone.

New course prefixes are added to SIS-UDM when a new acronym is needed to reflect a new course offering. If a new course prefix is “invented” (with approval by VPAC), check with OIRP to see if it should be equated to an existing/former course prefix for longitudinal studies. OIRP would track this relationship, not SIS.

When a course prefix becomes obsolete the “Active” flag in SIS-UDM will be set to “N” for no longer active. This will mean that there can be no more future course offerings using this course prefix. When a new course prefix is established, if a unit decides to offer their courses under a new course prefix, it does not necessarily mean that an existing course prefix is made obsolete. However, the same course cannot be offered under the old AND new prefix at
the same time. The two actions are independent. A course prefix that has been made obsolete is for future actions. Students who took courses with this course prefix will still have courses appearing on their transcript with the obsolete 4-character course prefix code.

- In the Schedule of Classes course titles are listed with a course offering, ex: ENGL101 “Intro to Writing”. The course prefix in SIS-UDM is translated as “English”, but this is rarely used anywhere. The course prefix is only important as it relates to a course number that makes it a unique offering with a unique course title.
- There is no direct relationship between the 4-character graduate program code, the 4 character course prefixes, and the abbreviation used as the short translation for the 2-character college code. In some cases the same acronym is used, but each of these elements acts independently and stands alone. Changing one does not necessarily dictate that another must be changed.
- Course prefixes can be changed with little effort provided the VPAC approves the new course prefix; OIRP would need to track this relationship.

**ADVISE**
Because the ADVISE security table pulls in the abbreviation field (contains the college acronym) from the College Code Table (SIS-UCM) to assign security, there is an impact in ADVISE. There are two options for handling this, one more resource intensive than the other:

- The most resource intensive option: Change all directories associated with the college acronym to the new one. This would involve changing all the directories holding data for that particular college, changing all of the directory linkages, changing all occurrences of the current acronym to the new one in the user authorization table, changing the group name to which all users reside from the old acronym to the new one, and changing the script that loads the SIS database to ADVISE to go to the new directory and newly named data files. The estimated time to program these changes is 40 hours.
- The less resource intensive option (estimated programming time is 5 hours) is to leave the old acronym as is behind the scenes and accommodate the change on the front/user end:
  - Do not change the acronym in the (1) internal table of users and the unit (acronym) to which they belong or (2) in the directory (/data/deans/<college acronym>) where their ADVISE data is stored. These are transparent to the users. For example, when SAS’ office acronym changed from ADS to SAS, ADS/SAS did not change the unit name or the directory name in DEANS/ADVISE. Likewise those can be left the same when a college acronym changes.
  - If the acronym is left as is in the above bullet, the only change necessary is to change the scripts that load the data files to the new acronym so that when the end users access ADVISE and are asked for the college, the new acronym will reference the correct data files.
When users apply for an ADVISE account under the new acronym, the OIT Help Desk staff would actually enter the old college acronym name OR the script that creates the internal table of users could be changed, so the user types in the new acronym but the program converts the new acronym to the old (original acronym) and the old acronym continues to be inserted for that user's unit.

- Acronyms in ADVISE can be changed with little effort provided the less resource intensive option is selected.