



**Provost and
Vice President for
Academic Affairs**

921 South 8th Avenue
Stop 8063
Pocatello, Idaho
83209-8063

November 17, 2009

ISU Faculty and Staff

Dear Colleagues,

As promised, I am writing to give you updates on the progress of the reorganization taskforces.

As you know, the discussions about uniting the colleges of pharmacy and health professions have been ongoing for some time now. These discussions have entailed several all-faculty meetings on both the Pocatello and Meridian campuses, some conducted by me and others conducted by task force chair Linda Hatzenbuehler. Dr. Hatzenbuehler's task force has also held several meetings, including an open forum held on Tuesday, November 17. I understand that the task force is now preparing a final report including their recommendations.

The Task Force for Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education has held three lengthy meetings and more meetings are scheduled following the Thanksgiving break. The committee members have been evaluating and discussing the merits and drawbacks of a proposed model. They have examined the pros and cons of the model and are generating a number of ideas for improving the model. After devising an appropriate acceptable model, the committee members intend to sponsor one or more public meetings to present the results of their deliberations and to engage the university community in discussion. The first public meeting is likely to be held in December.

The Task Force on Science and Engineering has held two productive meetings and is engaging in a similar process to that of the Task Force for Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education. When the committee members have reached a point where they are prepared to hold public meetings, they, too, will present the results of their deliberations and engage the university community in discussion.

Each task force has appointed members to serve as liaisons to the other task forces in order to facilitate discussions that pertain to potential reorganizations that affect more than one task force's area.

Once the task forces have held campus-wide discussions and arrive at their recommendations, they will submit reports to my office. I will then hold a joint discussion/brainstorming meeting with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Provost's Faculty Advisory Board, the President's Faculty Advisory Board, and the Council of Deans. Shortly thereafter, the Office of Academic Affairs will sponsor one or more campus-wide discussion sessions in which the task forces can present their models and field questions from the university community.

ISU Faculty and Staff

November 17, 2009

Page Two

I should note, too, that a task force is examining reorganizations within Student Affairs, and I will soon empanel a small task force to look at higher-level reorganizations within Academic Affairs.

As you can see, this process is meant to provide the maximum potential for input from all constituents, and I encourage you to become involved and participate in this interactive campus-wide process.

One final note: I want to make clear that while the dire fiscal situation has certainly played a significant role in initiating these discussions about reorganization, the larger and more important factors for reorganization relate to the factors that President Vailas and I have been discussing campus-wide: if we as an institution are to become self-sustaining and impervious to state budget fluctuations, and if we are going to operate more like the doctoral research university that we are classified by the Carnegie Foundation as, we need to become more streamlined. We need to reduce the number of departmental commitments—both curricular and service—so that we have the flexibility to implement a true variable course load in which research-productive faculty are afforded the time to do their work and so that we can best serve our students' academic needs. The proposed reorganizations and the various permutations being examined by the task forces will help us achieve those goals.

As usual, I will keep you apprised of any new developments.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary A. Olson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being the most prominent.

Gary A. Olson

Provost and Professor

GAO/cmt