



**Provost and
Vice President for
Academic Affairs**

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December 4, 2009

ISU Faculty and Staff

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing with another update on the progress of the reorganization taskforces.

The task force for the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education has met a total of four times. At its most recent meeting, the committee members spent 3 hours developing a draft model that incorporates units assigned to the task force. Today, the task force will meet again to discuss further improvements to the draft model and how administrative duties could be distributed within the structure of the proposed model. At future meetings, the task force will develop a proposed implementation plan. Once the task force has completed its initial work on the model, it will host public forums and solicit input on the draft model and implementation plan.

The Science and Engineering task force has held 3 in-depth meetings and will meet again next week. The committee members have considered the proposed college model and have generated feedback on the strengths and drawbacks of the model, as well as suggestions for overcoming the drawbacks. The committee has also prepared recommendations for the implementation of the model, should it take place. Finally, the task force has prepared a list of values to consider in the organization and operation of the proposed college. Future meetings will further address current challenges that may be improved through organizational change, and will address the needs of science and engineering faculty, staff, and students in the ISU outreach centers. At that point, the task force will hold an open forum and solicit input on the draft model and implementation plan.

The task force on Pharmacy and the Health Professions has met 4 times and has agreed to pursue six goals: to strengthen ISU's health mission both on and off campus; streamline administrative structure and procedures; maintain core faculty and accreditation status; decrease curricular overlap; increase research and opportunities for collaborative research and practice opportunities; save money and other resources. One of its first activities was to develop an organizational chart that demonstrated the unification of the two colleges. This original draft org chart was vetted by faculty, students and staff and several suggested changes were incorporated into a second and now a third working draft of the chart. In addition to demonstrating integration of the two faculties and streamlining of the administrative structure, the org charts have attempted to address the importance of

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increasing research, enhancing intra-professional education, and increasing clinical services. The task force has also begun a process of reviewing curricular overlap to determine if the merging of curricula may direct some of the decisions concerning organizational change.

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 the Office of Academic Affairs. 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 discussions where the university community can discuss the overall reorganization recommendation.

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 once the forums are announced.

A fourth task force has been examining reorganizations within Student Affairs, and just today it has submitted a final report to President Vailas.

I would like to remind you of what I wrote in a previous update: 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.

That being said, saving money through reorganization is and always has been an important consideration, especially since the alternatives (pay cuts, furloughs, etc) are so undesirable. Arriving at an intelligent and well-conceived reorganization that

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helps us meet our academic goals while also helping us meet our fiscal obligations is certainly a win-win scenario.

Finally, I would like to address one additional point. As you know, President Vailas has authorized Vice President Fletcher to initiate a shortened version of the usual budget cycle, to take place between now and the end of January 2010. This mini-budget cycle will deal with the possibility of an additional holdback in January. Colleges have been asked to outline plans to cut 2% and 4% from current budgets and reflect those in budgets for next year. The deans were asked to try to avoid straight across-the-board cuts and instead to be "strategic" in how they develop a give-back plan. The good news is that there may be no need to follow through with all or part of the 2%/4% scenario if we are able to get some significant savings from the reorganization, and if there are no additional state-mandated cuts or unexpected losses in our funding requests.

For your convenience, I am attaching a timeline of the reorganization efforts. As usual, I will keep you apprised of any new developments.

Cordially,



Gary A. Olson
Provost and Professor

GAO/cmt

Timeline of Reorganization Efforts

1st three weeks of December

- Task Forces complete their reorganization models

2nd and 3rd weeks of January

- Task Forces sponsor open forums to discuss models

4th week of January

- Task Forces will submit final reports to Provost
- Provost constructs unified plan

1st week of February

- Provost presents reorganization plan to a joint meeting of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Provost's Faculty Advisory Board, the President's Faculty Advisory Board, and the Council of Deans.

1st two weeks of February

- Provost sponsors one or more university-wide open forums to discuss plan.

March 1

- Presentation of recommended plan to President Vailas.