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Office of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Campus Box 7101 / 109 Holladay Hall
Raleigh, NC 27695-7101
919.515.2195
919.515.5921 (fax)

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 16, 2012

TO: W. Randolph Woodson, Chancellor
North Carolina State University

FROM: Warwick A. Arden, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

RE: **Review of the Administrative Structure for Academic Science Programs**

The Recommendations for Strategic Realignment to Increase Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness, accepted by you in March 2011, included a recommendation to review the administrative structure for academic science programs, particularly in the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS), Natural Resources (CNR) and Physical and Mathematical Sciences (PAMS). This recommendation was made because we "have an institutional responsibility to provide efficient, flexible and dynamic structures, which continue to support historic mandates while encouraging natural synergies between faculty and disciplines."

A Task Force, chaired by Dr. Margery Overton and composed of faculty representing CALS, CNR, PAMS, the other seven colleges, the Graduate School and the Division of Undergraduate Academic Programs, was formed and charged by me in May 2011. The Task Force committed extensive time to exploring, discussing and debating current challenges to and possible improvements for the overall quality and delivery of NC State science programs. Additionally, the Task Force gathered input from the campus community via listening sessions with deans and faculty and by soliciting comments online. The Task Force interim report was received on November 14, 2011 and their final report was received on March 2, 2012 (see attached). This report was posted on the Provost's website and additional feedback solicited.

Final Task Force Report

While I will not repeat all of the final report's key findings in this memorandum, the Task Force clearly identified several issues of concern beyond administrative structures that it felt produced "barriers to improving the overall quality and delivery of science programs" and strongly emphasized "that the implementation of any of the proposed changes to academic structures without corresponding attention to issues of leadership, culture and resources will not lead to successful outcomes."

The Task Force recommendations regarding administrative structures are presented in two parts. The first part addresses the need to develop "horizontal structures" across

colleges to "encourage and reward faculty for cross-college productivity." The second part focuses on structural solutions to "address the growth in the biological sciences and facilitate its interactions with other sciences on campus." Indeed, the failure of the university to adequately develop and support the biological sciences during a period of unparalleled growth and opportunity is integral to the many themes of the report. Three possible models are then presented to address these concerns regarding the biological sciences.

Recommendations

After significant reflection regarding this report and ongoing faculty input, I am making the following recommendations to you.

1. As determined following the interim report, **the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Natural Resources should not be combined**. Both have a long and proud history of serving their constituencies and the possible gains from enhanced synergies and efficiencies do not outweigh the risks of potential disruption of academic and outreach programs at this time. Dean searches for both colleges are currently underway.

2. The development of cross-college horizontal structures holds significant long term potential to enhance interdisciplinary scholarship across campus. I believe these **horizontal structures should be further investigated and appraised** following

    a. A more comprehensive assessment of our current university center and institute programs and understanding of how these may interact with and influence the formation of such "academies,"
    b. Completion of the current academic program efficiency and effectiveness review, also initiated under Strategic Realignment,
    c. Review and assessment of academic resource allocations as indicated by the current Strategic Plan: Pathway to the Future and
    d. Successful implementation of the current Chancellor's Faculty Excellence (interdisciplinary cluster hire) Program. It is clear that many academic policy issues will need to be considered in light of this program and such consideration will play an important role in laying the foundation for the potential establishment of a horizontal "academies" structure.

3. **The College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences (PAMS) should be replaced by a broader, more comprehensive College of Sciences.** Such a college will include the physical/chemical sciences, the mathematical and statistical sciences, earth system sciences and the biological sciences. I believe such a **College of Sciences (COS)** could successfully provide much of the core of undergraduate instruction in these disciplines while capitalizing on NC State's growing expertise and reputation in the quantitative biological sciences and the national trend in convergence science. Moreover, development of a strong, comprehensive College of Sciences will be

integral to NC State's objective of developing a national leadership position in science and technology disciplines.

Considerations Regarding a College of Sciences

1. Movement of the biological sciences to a College of Sciences is not as simple as moving whole departments from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences as appropriate faculty are found across multiple life-science departments within CALS and indeed other colleges, and many life-science faculty within CALS conduct agriculturally related research and are best served by remaining within the CALS academic environment. While the undergraduate biology program should move to the College of Sciences, along with faculty predominantly charged with delivery of that mission, movement of many faculty will need to be assessed on an individual faculty level taking into account scholarly alignments, existing and future collaborations and faculty preference.

2. Many biological sciences faculty within CALS are funded from multiple sources including budget codes intended expressly for benefiting NC agriculture (16031 and 16032 codes). When those faculty move to the COS, the funds associated with these budget codes should remain within CALS and be replaced by new academic affairs (16031) funds dedicated to the COS. As such, the movement of faculty and responsibility without accompanying budget should lead to a reinfusion of available agricultural budget code funds into CALS to further its ability to enhance its agriculturally related programs and support the many extraordinary faculty and activities of that college. The addition of new academic budget code funds to the COS should enable it to aggressively pursue its mission of developing cutting edge instructional and research programs in the biological sciences. Although the cost of this structural change is not yet known I consider it one of the most important areas for strategic investment over the coming years.

3. The College of Sciences will already have core strength in marine, earth and atmospheric sciences. These may be enhanced by movement of faculty whose scholarship clearly synergizes with and complements these strengths within the realm of earth system sciences. It is possible that faculty may relocate from multiple colleges to achieve this aim.

Next Steps

It is clear that formation of a new College of Sciences is a major step in our academic evolution and not one that is taken lightly. Successful implementation will require a clearly defined process and involve extensive faculty consultation and HR, budgetary, space, development and academic policy considerations.

First, I recommend the formation of a **College of Sciences Steering Team**, composed of the deans (or representatives) of CALS, PAMS, CNR, ENG, TEX and CVM. The initial

charge to the Steering Team will be to recommend the most appropriate administrative structure for the new College of Sciences and to recommend a process for identifying which faculty will move to the COS.

Second, I recommend the formation of **implementation teams** focused on budget, human resources, space and development issues integral to implementation of this initiative. All elements of the transition and oversight of these teams will be managed by the Office of the Provost.

It is my intention to appoint the steering team prior to the end of this semester and have their report by the end of the fall 2012 semester. Implementation teams will be appointed in the fall 2012 semester. **The new College of Sciences will be initiated by July 1, 2013.**

Dr. Dan Solomon, dean of Physical and Mathematical Sciences has agreed to continue to serve as dean of that college through July 1, 2013 and as the inaugural dean of the College of Sciences for an initial period.

As noted in the task force report, and as necessitated by the potential movement of a number of faculty and programs from CALS to COS, the **College of Agriculture and Life Sciences should undergo an internal process to optimally configure the college's departments and programs for long-term success**. This process should be led by the incoming dean of CALS, who is expected to be in place this summer, and include extensive consultation with CALS faculty and input from collaborating colleges. The timeline for such internal restructuring should parallel the above COS timeline. Final authority for approval of a revised CALS internal structure rests with the Provost and Chancellor.

Leading for Another 125 Years

In the report's closing comments, the Academic Science Program Task Force notes that it "is fully cognizant that with change comes the risk of disruption. On the occasion of our 125th anniversary celebration, it is also clear that business as usual will not allow the University to seize the opportunities to grow and thrive for another 125 years." I also recognize the potentially disruptive nature of the above recommendations I have made to you. With that being said, I genuinely believe that this proposed academic realignment, coupled with the appropriate strategic application of new resources, will have a significant and lasting positive impact that will outweigh such disruptions. Making these changes will capitalize on the strengths and collaborations developed by our extraordinary faculty and allow them the capacity to explore natural synergies and further develop a leadership position in this age of interdisciplinary and convergence science.