



*College of Natural and Health Sciences
School of Earth Sciences and Physics*

September 3rd, 2010

Dear Academic Structure Working Group of NHS,

In 2009-2010, the School of Earth Sciences and Physics proposed to split into two independent departments. The proposal received the endorsement of the NHS Academic Structure Working Group, but not the endorsements of the NHS Leadership Team and Dean. As a result, our choices are now to become a single department, the Department of Earth Sciences and Physics, or to remain a School. Both alternatives must demonstrate cost neutrality. The restricting guidelines, http://www.unco.edu/provost/pdf/Final_restructuring_Guidelines.pdf, indicate that department chairs have, at maximum, a 10.5 month appointment, while school directors have 11 – 12 month appointments. The Director currently has a 10.5 month appointment. We request to remain a school headed by a director with an 11 month appointment.

The arguments in support of the school structure follow:

- 1) Academic programs in the two disciplines are independently scheduled, offered, administered, and reviewed. The budget lines of Earth Sciences and Physics are completely separate. There is no sharing of resources or curricula that would normally occur within an academic department.
- 2) The locations of the units, including instructional, research and office space, are completely separate.
- 3) Each unit has its own administrative assistant. There is a shared Laboratory Coordinator, but there is no overlap in the duties the coordinator performs for the two units.
- 4) Faculty and staff believe that if the structure choices are restricted to a school or a single department, the school structure better represents the functions of the units -- that of two distinct programs within a larger management unit. Combining the units into a single department would contribute to the external perception that we offer something less than a full and rigorous program in each field. This perception would be detrimental to both programs with regard to undergraduate student recruitment, external peer review of publications and proposals, and hiring of new faculty and technical personnel, and would move us even further away from the widely adopted and accepted norm for the organizational structure of the sciences within a university.
- 5) Given that a director has an administrative appointment and a chair a faculty appointment, the cost of the department structure is potentially higher since authorized leave is not subtracted from the chair's salary. In fact, based on current funding, the

department structure doesn't appear to be cost neutral. The following spreadsheet compares the administrative cost of both structures for a hypothetical nine month base salary of \$75,000.

COMPARISON OF CHAIR AND DIRECTOR MODELS					
A 9 month base base salary of \$75,000 has been assumed.					
Both include a monthly stipend of \$200 per month, which is the middle of the range for Tier II units.					
10.5 month Chair					
9 month base	1.5 summer	10.5 mos w/ benefits	Stipend @ \$200 X 10.5 mos w/ben	Total with benefits	Total w/o benefits
75,000.00	12,500.00	110,950.00	2,662.80	113,612.80	89,600.00
11 month Director					
9 month base	2 mos. Summer - 11/12 mos leave*	11 mos w/ benefits	Stipend @ \$200 X 11 mos w/ben	Total with benefits	Total w/o benefits
75,000.00	9,027.78	106,547.22	2,789.60	109,336.82	86,227.78
*if the leave is not used, then it is paid out to the individual when he/she leaves the position					

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

The Director, faculty and staff of Earth Sciences and Physics.