

UNIVERSITY of  
NORTHERN COLORADO



*College of Natural and Health Sciences  
Office of the Dean*

MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** NHS Faculty and Staff

**FROM:** Denise A. Battles, Dean

**DATE:** March 11, 2009

**RE:** NHS Academic Structure

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As you are likely aware, the campus's academic structure, which was put into place as part of the Charting the Future process, was recently studied by the President's Planning Council. That body issued a report based on its examination (available under the "President's Planning Council" tab at <http://www.unco.edu/provost>) which included recommendations regarding potential changes to the structure. The Provost subsequently issued a memo, available at the same URL, that provides guidance on the criteria and process for considering reorganization proposals. Among these are the following overarching tenets:

1. Any changes must maintain the quality of academic programs.
2. Changes must support the Academic Plan.
3. The changes that are proposed must not require new funding.

In his memo, the Provost called for each college to undertake a two stage process. The first is to develop restructuring procedures that "are inclusive, transparent, and provide an ample opportunity to the college personnel to provide input and deliberation." These procedures will require approval through the Provost's level. The second stage is to engage in cross-college discussions regarding the structure, leading to recommendations that will be forwarded from the Dean to the Provost and, ultimately, the President.

The purpose of my communication is to describe an approach that will enable the College of Natural and Health Sciences to address the Provost's charge. This approach was developed following consultation with the NHS Leadership Team and the Policies and Procedures Committee.

- We will identify a college-wide representative Academic Structure Working Group that will consist of one faculty representative from each NHS school, selected by the faculty of that school; two School Director representatives, selected by the NHS Leadership Team; and, in *ex officio* capacities, the NHS Dean and Business Manager. Once these members are identified, the

Working Group, at its discretion, may select one additional “at large” representative to address any issues of inadequate representation by a key stakeholder population.

- The tasks of the Working Group will be twofold. First, this body will develop and recommend “stage one” procedures for the generation, discussion, and review of restructuring proposals. These procedures will require approval by the working group, NHS Leadership Team, Dean, and Provost and should address the elements identified below.
- Once the “stage one” procedures have received provostial approval, the Working Group’s second task will be to implement those procedures to review and discuss restructuring proposals and ensure they are consistent with the Provost’s charge.
- As it undertakes the above-mentioned tasks, the Working Group will be expected to facilitate the inclusive and transparent communication specified in the Provost’s memo. Working Group members will be asked to ensure that the body’s activities are fully disseminated across the college, including faculty and staff; engage in two-way communication between their NHS colleagues and the Working Group; and post key materials, including all restructuring proposals, on the college website.

Elements that should be addressed by the Working Group in its procedures include the following:

- An opportunity for each school to discuss whether it is a potential candidate for restructuring
- Instructions for developing restructuring proposals, allowing for the possibility of proposals that extend beyond the college
- An opportunity for feedback from and responses to the Working Group, including responses from units that did not initially submit a restructuring proposal
- A timeline consistent with the full implementation of any new academic structures by July 1, 2010
- Consistency with the restructuring parameters articulated by the President and Provost, with particular attention to establishing an inclusive, transparent, and consultative process
- A recommendation on each restructuring proposal from the Working Group, Leadership Team, Dean, Provost, and President
- An opportunity for the Dean to review college proposals and confer and deliberate with the affected units as needed before submitting her recommendations to the Provost
- An opportunity for the Provost to review college proposals and confer and deliberate with the affected units as needed before submitting his recommendations to the President

I ask that each school initiate the selection of its Working Group representative and notify me of its designee by no later than **Friday, March 27**. We will then seek to convene this body promptly, with the goal of completing “stage one” by the conclusion of the current semester.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important conversation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

C: Abe Harraf, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs