

UNIVERSITY *of*
NORTHERN COLORADO



Office of the Provost

February 16, 2009

To: College Deans
From: Abe Harraf, Provost
Subject: Criteria and Process for Restructuring

At the request of President Norton, the restructuring that occurred in 2004-05 as part of Charting the Future was reviewed last year by a subcommittee of the President's Planning Council (PPC). The members of the subcommittee solicited comments and proposals on structure from all academic units on campus and submitted a report on May 30, 2008. The findings of the review indicate that the structural changes under Charting the Future have led to improved quality, productive collaborations, and successful initiatives in several areas; however, it is also clear that in some cases restructuring resulted in unintended difficulties. As a follow-up to the report, the President met with the PPC subcommittee and academic deans on January 22, 2009 and invited proposals from each college for changes to the current structure. Subsequently, the Provost was asked to work with deans to engage a broad cross-section of each college in a collaborative process for generating proposals that will meet college needs and support continuous quality improvement of our academic programs.

While no single structural model is appropriate for all academic units, our common goals will be more easily accomplished by observing several jointly held principles and guidelines as we engage in the process of restructuring. The latitude that our discussions afford when considering different structural arrangements should also contribute to the focus provided by our mission as a university. This focus is embodied in our Academic Plan to enhance research and creative scholarship opportunities and connect the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation programs.

Three overarching tenets must be observed when developing restructuring proposals:

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 addition, the following points are intended to inform and assist the process of restructuring:

4. The entire process consists of two stages. Stage one is to develop college procedures that are inclusive, transparent, and provide an ample opportunity to the college personnel to provide input and deliberation. Once the procedural stage is approved by the Provost, the second stage will encompass discussions and participation on the best structure that satisfies above-mentioned criteria 1-3 and is consistent with the academy's best practices.
5. In order to insure that our recommendations for restructuring are not school and program centric, input and impact analysis from the college faculty, as well as from college administrators and school directors, must be sought and deliberated on to avoid any sub-optimization that could adversely affect the operations of the other units and the college.
6. The college's recommendations should be developed according to the circumstances and needs in each college. The Dean will review proposals derived from this collaborative process, add his/her recommendations and forward them to the Provost.
7. The Provost will review college proposals and confer and deliberate with the affected units as needed before submitting his recommendations to the President.
8. Proposals should be forward-looking. The changing needs of each college, including circumstances that may have arisen since the implementation of Charting the Future, may recommend proposals that differ not only from current structure but that also seek to strategically position the academic units and programs for growth and enhanced quality. Proposals for structural changes that cross current college boundaries and other innovative ideas will also be considered. Decisions about structure should focus on considerations of quality, mission, and cost, as noted above, rather than on the particular personnel who are currently in place.
9. The PPC has received several suggestions for hybrid models and other structural possibilities that include academic departments. It will be necessary for any recommended stand alone programs to be viable academic and administrative units that meet threshold criteria. These criteria may include student credit hour generation, number of full time faculty and staff, number of graduates, number of majors, number of degree programs (graduate and undergraduate), overall budget, potential for growth and academic distinction, and other factors that may be recommended by the Dean in consultation with faculty and approved by the Provost.
10. For existing and recommended administrative roles there will need to be an approved uniform set of expectations and responsibilities for leadership of units and management of resources that match each position title. To adequately address the varied needs of the programs, differences in size, scope, and complexity of the unit must inform the teaching load, compensation, contract length, and any added expectations, as appropriate, for these leadership and management positions.
11. Different circumstances and needs among academic areas across campus may mean that dates recommended for the implementation of changes will vary. While academic areas may need to operate with different timelines, they are encouraged to complete the proposal process with July 1, 2010 as an optimal target for commencing operations under a new structure. Earlier or later implementation dates may also be recommended to meet specific needs.
12. In the event that cost savings result from restructuring, the resources that are identified for reallocation will revert to the Division of Academic Affairs with priority allocation to the attendant college, if applicable, to be invested in the academic mission of the university.

13. The work of the PPC in reviewing the Charting the Future structure is much appreciated. The subcommittee's report to President Norton is available for perusal at <http://www.unco.edu/provost> or in hard copy upon request from each college Dean. Members of the PPC subcommittee are asked to serve as a resource to their colleagues as needed, in order to provide information or advice during the development of proposed structural changes. Those PPC members who have been involved in the review of Charting the Future are listed below for your reference.

I hope that these points are helpful in your discussions. Thank you for your ongoing efforts in support of our academic mission and for your thoughtful contributions to this process.

Members of Subcommittee 1 of the President's Planning Council:

Mark Anderson, Joan Clinefelter, Rhonda Corman, Marcus Embry, Cynthia Galovich, David Gilliam, Brian Luedloff, Stan Luger, Michael Mills, Francie Murry, David Pringle, Michelle Quinn, Thomas Smith, and Robbyn Wacker