

## University of Missouri – Kansas City

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From: Barbara A. Bichelmeyer, PhD  
Interim Chancellor and Provost  
Professor of Management, Henry W. Bloch School of Management

To: Faculty Senate  
Academic Council  
Executive Council  
Staff Council Executive Committee  
SGA Executive Committee

CC: President Mun Choi  
Chancellor-Designate Mauli Agrawal  
Vice President Steve Graham

Dear colleagues –

As you know, in my role as Provost, and for the purpose of better advancing the vision and mission of the university, I met with Faculty Senate in January to lay out a number of possible moves for our collective consideration to reorganize and right-fit the academic operations of the university.

The purpose of this email is to detail my current rationale, understandings and considerations regarding academic reorganization. First and most importantly, please know my intention is that this will be an inclusive conversation, held in the spirit of respectful dialogue and shared governance. Our goal should be that, upon conclusion of this process, we will have a revitalized academic structure that strengthens the academic operations of the university, our academic programs, and the learning experiences of our students. Our likelihood of success will be greatly enhanced by bringing all perspectives to bear in a structured and disciplined manner as we collectively consider alternatives.

We simply must take active control over our own future. The purpose of this process is to engage the entire academic community at UMKC in collaborative engagement to become the best possible comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and inter-professional institution of higher education we can be, maximizing our strengths and minimizing our weaknesses. External pressures as outlined below compel us to change; we will do so in ways that put us in charge of the process and the results, and provide substantial potential benefits to our students, our faculty, our staff, and our administration.

It is very clear that we need to become more academically efficient. We are in an excellent position to do so at this time because our overall understanding of our operations at UMKC has been greatly enhanced as we have engaged in a number of strategic initiatives outlined below. The re-organization of administrative services we are undertaking necessitates a thorough review of academic structures, in order to take advantage of great opportunities for increased collaboration between and among academic disciplines that are currently separate from each other. Each decision we will consider has the potential to create major benefits to students and faculty across the university, and to improve our cost of operations.

Simply put, we are taking on this work because it is our responsibility as the faculty of UMKC to make positive decisions about our future as teachers and researchers, and to create the best possible environment for learning and discovery for each and every student we have the privilege to serve.

## *1. Impetus for considering academic reorganization*

Many critical events and initiatives have occurred or are now occurring which make it necessary for us to consider academic reorganization at this time. The most important of these are highlighted below:

- A. Our financial position has changed significantly, and we are in an unsustainable deficit situation.
- Cuts in State appropriations – At the end of FY17, UMKC experienced a \$7 million withhold from the State. In FY18, UM System took a \$110 million cut in state appropriations. These cuts come after 17 years of stagnation in the amount of appropriations we receive from the State of Missouri, coupled with a legislatively mandated cap on the amount we can increase tuition in a given year. Given recently implemented State tax cuts, plans for further cuts, and the State’s current budget challenges, there is no scenario in the foreseeable future in which the State will be able to restore appropriations to previous levels, which means that we simply can no longer afford to operate as we have in the past.
  - UMKC financial position and FY18 budgets – Due primarily to cuts in State appropriations, UMKC started FY18 with a budgeted deficit of \$4.5 million, which almost immediately increased to an \$8 million deficit due to lower Fall semester enrollments than projected and scholarshiping that was higher than budgeted. This means that UMKC is currently funding operations by spending through our reserves, which is simply not sustainable. Currently we have only 63 days of reserves, while expected accounting practice is that we have 90-120 days cash on hand.
  - The Governor’s proposed FY19 budget includes a cut of \$70 for higher education. Given previous cuts, the current budget deficit, and proposed cuts, UMKC is currently working to solve for an anticipated \$24 million gap between revenues and expenses as we plan our FY19 budget.
- B. We are currently engaged in a number of strategic initiatives that require us to reconsider the structure of our academic organization, in order to make critical decisions that better position the university for success in the future. Each will be completed by the end of the Spring semester:
- Academic Portfolio Review – which indicates that we are not always using our course scheduling efficiently, and that with a small increase in class size—especially for those classes that are lower enrollment—as well as rethinking how often certain classes are scheduled if they are not essential to accreditation, and offering more courses online, we can increase our production of student credit hours and total enrollments without increasing cost to the university. This is good news, because the best way we can help ourselves and the best possible solution for our financial challenges is to organize to better promote our growth.
  - Administrative Services Review – along with UM System and our sister campuses, UMKC is currently engaged in a review of administrative services, for the purpose of improving service and reducing cost of operations by identifying inefficiencies caused by poor organization and duplication of services. Initial findings indicate that we have significant opportunities to improve both effectiveness and efficiency of service by realigning our organization.
  - Financial Model Redesign – We currently have a team of about 15 representatives of academic and administrative units from across the university who are recreating all aspects of our financial model (including budget rules and responsibilities, resource investment model, costing model, reserves policy, and F&A formulas). These changes will change the way dollars flow to and from units, and will create new incentives for interdisciplinary courses and programs. We are now in the process of modeling the impact our new fiscal system will have on academic units, and therefore it is an appropriate time to consider which organizational structures improve our financial position and help us to regain financial health and sustainability.
  - New Strategic Plan – Under the directive of President Choi, all UM campuses are currently developing new strategic plans to align with the newly-articulated Missouri Compacts and their associated metrics. A new strategic plan challenges us to reconsider our organization, so that we

manage our work to ensure that everyone employed at UMKC are well-supported in serving our students, each other, and the Greater Kansas City community.

- HLC Reaccreditation – Over 50 of our faculty, staff and administrators are working diligently at this time to prepare for our next review from our campus accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, with the site visit scheduled for December 2019. In order to position ourselves in the best possible light for our re-accreditation, we must demonstrate that we are making significant progress in organizing to provide innovative and highly engaging academic programs and services that meet the needs of our students. This work will provide additional evidence that the institution is engaged in looking closely at existing structures, processes and functions for opportunities for quality improvements
- C. At least five critical questions regarding organization of academic programs were presented to me when I started as Provost at UMKC in Fall 2015, and had been lingering for some time prior to my arrival. I have consistently stated that we cannot address the reorganization of any single unit unless we are willing to consider reorganizing across multiple units, because when we make one move, there are cascading and downstream effects. Every academic unit in the university will be impacted by the moves that have been proposed. Therefore, we must consider each move in light of all moves, and their impact on the entire university. Further, during my initial conversations with Faculty Senate about academic reorganization, it became clear that we did not have a well-articulated, transparent process in place for considering academic reorganization. This was rectified last year when the Senate developed such a policy. With this policy now in hand, and given other initiatives, it is time to engage in conversation, because lack of resolution regarding these matters means we are not able to move forward with academic innovations that best meet the needs of our students and allow us to keep up with peers and competitors. The five critical questions that have been presented to me include:
- The need for a structure to support and grow interdisciplinary programs
  - The need for a stand-alone School of Biological Sciences
  - The need to revitalize our School of Education, which is critical to our urban mission and community commitments
  - The appropriate home for General Education
  - The need for staffing of Interprofessional Education in the Health Sciences
- D. Over the past 18 months, the Office of the Provost has been heavily engaged in its own reorganization, with additional changes still forthcoming. These changes have downstream effects on academic units, and therefore we must consider whether changes in academic units are required in response. Provost Office reorganization involves:
- Restructuring and Position Eliminations
    - Merger with Office of Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
    - Restructure of Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Dean of School of Graduate Studies
    - Restructure of Institutional Research to Institutional Planning and Decision Support
    - Elimination of 4 senior leadership positions and 3 finance-related staff positions
  - Moving Administrative Functions from Provost to Chancellor’s Office
    - Information Services
  - Planned change: bring academic programs in Provost Office into a Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (CIS)
    - Move Dean of Honors College into CIS
    - Move Director of Interdisciplinary PhD program into CIS (previously in Graduate Studies)
    - Move Director of General Education 2.0 into CIS

In sum, and to paraphrase Robert F. Bruner, (University Professor, Distinguished Professor of Business Administration and Dean Emeritus of the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia), *organizations transform because standing still is not an option.*

At UMKC, at this moment, standing still is definitely not an option. Therefore, I ask faculty and academic leaders to join me in considering how to best organize our academic structure to address the challenges we currently face, to radically improve our students' experience and our financial security as soon as possible, and to build a sustainable future for the university.

## ***2. Appropriate reasons for reorganizing and right-sizing academic structure***

Ultimately, the purpose of any reorganization should be to strengthen and support UMKC's vision, mission, goals, and to sustain its operations. Eight specific reasons for academic reorganization and right-sizing are listed below. These factors must be considered as we determine what benefits are to be gained and what risks are to be minimized or avoided in any possible academic reorganization.

### **i. Improve operational efficiencies**

- Save dollars by increasing efficiency and avoiding duplication of work
- Remove inefficient policies and systems, reduce waste, eliminate unnecessary processes, eliminate duplication of work to reduce costs of programs, services, and administration
- Develop economies of scale and opportunities to scale up programs and services to use resources more effectively.
- Share resources for similar programs, services, and administrative operations

### **ii. Sharpen strategic focus to better achieve goals**

- Improve alignment between structures and resources, and mission, goals, priorities of UMKC
- Better promote student recruitment, access, engagement, retention, credit transfer, completion
- Enhance the student experience, provide more support and more flexible options for learning
- Better promote productivity of faculty in discovery, research, and creative activity
- Better promote community engagement and innovative service

### **iii. Clarify unique value and competitive distinction**

- Simplify students' and constituents' experiences of the organization
- Eliminate confusion about the organization by potential students and constituents
- Improve perceived value of the organization by students and constituents
- Improve interactions with students and align structures to better meet their needs
- Clarify distinctiveness of UMKC programs as compared to peers and competitors
- Make UMKC programs, services, and tuition more competitive in Greater KC Region
- Provide more and better opportunities for students to engage in research with faculty
- Create more opportunities for interdisciplinary programs and research

### **iv. Improve quality**

- Foster a culture of caring through supportive communication and timely responses to students
- Become more attractive to students by designing experiences to match their needs and interests
- Improve learning experience by creating highly engaging curricular and co-curricular activities
- Provide engaging and supportive experiences for alumnae/i to build ongoing connections to UMKC
- Honor donors with appreciation and recognition of donor intent

### **v. Improve the work experience and bring out the "better" in faculty and staff**

- Grow awareness among faculty and staff of the personal impact they have on student success and success of the university
- Wisely allocate people for better use of time and talent to improve likelihood of job success
- Improve communication, teamwork, engagement, responsiveness, transparency

- Provide clear expectations about responsibilities and regular feedback for accountability
  - Improve opportunities for faculty productivity in research
  - Increase accountability for student learning and achievement through structured academic programs and faculty-designed learning opportunities
  - Ensure quality learning experiences and student achievement by expanding and enhancing faculty development support
- vi. **Empower academic leaders by providing greater support and accountability**
- Make unit sizes more manageable to better support academic leaders - to be more focused on academic program quality, innovative and collaborative within and across academic units, provide more manageable oversight and leadership, increase communications and engagement with members of the academic unit faculty, staff and students
  - Clarify and align authority and decision-making responsibilities to advance strategic priorities
  - Align leader interests with university and unit success, and ensure attention to core operations
  - Improve control and monitoring of finances, operations, and results
  - Improve unit reporting to produce better feedback
  - Increase accountability for specified performance outcomes
- vii. **Take advantage of new ways to learn, teach, and work**
- Organize work differently to better align with changing needs and expectations of students for more flexible options for programs and services outside of the traditional workday, workweek, and semester cycle
  - Provide faculty and staff opportunities to take advantage of more flexible work arrangements (flexible reporting relationships, shared services, part-time roles, technology-enabled processes, and other innovations)
  - Utilize new technologies and teaching methods to provide more personalized and highly engaging learning experiences
  - Ensure clear communication of expectations for achieving learning outcomes and work results, and emphasize good practices of performance management
- viii. **Take advantage of new opportunities for knowledge creation and knowledge transmission**
- Develop programs to address needs for new kinds of knowledge creation and transmission
  - Develop programs to address new workforce needs and develop new competencies
  - Develop programs to take advantage of new interdisciplinary opportunities
  - Create opportunities to grow new programs and better link related programs to provide opportunities for synergy and collaboration within and across units
  - Increase opportunities for innovation

### ***3. Process to be used for considering reorganization***

As per precedent in the University of Missouri System, the Chancellor has decision-making authority to bring forward to Curators recommendations for reorganization and subsequent changes to by-laws.

Process B of the Standard Operating Procedure adopted by Faculty Senate on March 7, 2017 outlines key stakeholders to be appointed by the Chancellor and Provost to form a Reorganization Study Committee, including Deans of affected units as well as partner Deans, representatives from Faculty Senate and faculty budget committees from affected units, representatives from the University Budget Committee.

I request that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee identify a Reorganization Study Committee, or multiple committees, to address the various moves by creating a list of committees to be convened with

suggested members, including recommendations for Chair(s). The committee(s) and members may be modified by the Provost in discussion with the FSEC prior to sending requests for participation.

With regard to process, I respectfully suggest the process outlined in the SOP operate with the following guidance:

- 1) Reorganization Study Committee(s) shall use the eight factors specified above to document the benefits and risks associated with reorganization. The list of justifications in the SOP serving as complementary and additional factors.
- 2) Reports and recommendation of Reorganization Study Committee(s) shall thoroughly document both the benefits and risks associated with at least each of the eight factors and provide a summary recommendation, but shall *not* vote or report a vote tally in the document.
- 3) The only official votes required for reorganization will be from faculty whose tenure-lines are affected by the merge or move, and of voting faculty in departments that will merge or move. There will be no official vote or tally recorded by Study Committee(s), the Implementation Committee(s), or by faculty whose tenure-lines or reporting lines are not affected. Each of these groups may file a narrative, summary recommendation to the Provost and Chancellor. Faculty Senate may vote on proposed reorganization, with the vote serving as a recommendation to the Provost and Chancellor.
- 4) The target date for the Reorganization Study Committee(s) to submit reports will be the last Faculty Senate meeting of the Spring 2018 semester. While the process outlined here projects a semester-long timeline, any affected unit wishing to expedite the process is free to convene meetings, request necessary data through the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and take their vote early. In such cases, the units are expected to send the vote tally to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, along with the summary of how the eight criteria for reorganization laid out above were considered prior to the vote.
- 5) Should recommendations supporting reorganization proceed out of Study Committee(s) and receive Chancellor approval, a Reorganization Implementation Committee (or committees) will be charged by the Provost to commence work as soon as possible, with a target date for reporting by end of Fall 2018 semester, in order to be appropriately included in FY20 budget planning.

#### **4. Possible moves for consideration**

Since late Fall 2015, I have been engaged with Deans and faculty in a variety of discussions about how to best organize the academic structure of the university to create the best possible experiences for our students, to better organize work for faculty and staff, and to increase efficiency and cost of operations. The possible moves outlined below have been the subject of numerous discussions, including: faculty of the School of Biological Sciences; faculty in the Departments of Chemistry, Geosciences, and Physics in the College; Faculty Senate; Faculty Senate Executive Committee; General Education 2.0 task forces; department chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences; the Academic Council; and academic leaders of departments and schools that will move and merge. I have tried my best to ensure no one who has responsibility for the academic units included in any of the possible moves outlined below is surprised by their inclusion. Since the first presentation of moves to Faculty Senate in January, I have received a number of requests for consideration of additional moves, and have indicated that I am willing to bring these forward to faculty at a later time, as rationale and support for such moves are further developed.

##### **Move #1: Merge Department of Chemistry into the School of Biological Sciences**

- This move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
- Many students dual major and/or take courses across these units
- Change name to the “School of Natural Sciences”
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #2: Rename remaining related programs in the College into an appropriate unit**

- Move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
- Formally recognize Astronomy, Geosciences, Math, and Physics as the “Physical and Computational Sciences”
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #3: Merge School of Education Division of Counseling and Educational Psychology into College of Arts and Sciences Department of Psychology**

- Move relates to considerations 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 listed above
- Both programs are APA-accredited
- Move creates synergies for teaching
- Move creates synergies for clinical experiences
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #4: Move School of Social Work to School of Education**

- Move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
  - Move removes professional program from College, which clarifies focus of academic programs
  - Move creates unique opportunities to highlight and focus on Social Justice in human development
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #5: Move Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology into School of Education**

- Move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
- Move strengthens theoretical underpinnings for School and provided foundation for social justice
- Move creates unique opportunities to highlight and focus on Social Justice in human development
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #6: Rename School of Education to School of Education and Social Justice**

- Move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
- Move creates unique opportunities to highlight and focus on Social Justice in human development
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #7: Move Department of Theatre into Conservatory and rename to Conservatory of the Performing Arts**

- Move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
- Move removes professional program from College, which clarifies focus of academic programs
- Move removes confusion of prospective students and constituents
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #8: Change the name of the College of Arts and Sciences to include “Humanities”**

- Move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
- Elevate profile and recognition of the importance of humanities
- The title of the Dean of College will be changed to “Executive Dean” to establish the foundational place of Humanities, Arts, and Sciences within the academic structure of the university
- To be voted on by all voting faculty from College of Arts and Sciences

**Move #9: Merge School of Pharmacy Division of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Division of Pharmacology and Toxicology into a single unit**

- Recommendation of Accreditor during most recent review
- Vote by faculty whose tenure-lines are affected and voting faculty in departments that merge or move

**Move #10: Bring all interdisciplinary programs, including those in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Inter-Professional Education program in Health Sciences into a School of Interdisciplinary Studies**

- Move relates to all 8 considerations listed above
- For purposes of reorganization, interdisciplinary and inter-professional programs are defined as credit-bearing academic programs that generate a certificate or diploma with no designated faculty lines associated with the program
- This move extends the organization of interdisciplinary programs into the planned School of Interdisciplinary Studies beyond those currently in the Provost's Office. The School will have a Dean, which will be created by converting the Dean title from the Honors College
- The School will have a dual reporting line, solid line to the Provost, and dotted line to the College of Arts and Sciences
- The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will take the title Executive Dean, and will also take the additional title "Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies"
- The Dean and the School of Interdisciplinary Studies will have a dual reporting line, solid line to the Provost and dotted line to the Executive Dean /Vice Provost.
- The Provost will serve as the Chief Executive Officer for the School, the Executive Dean/Vice Provost will serve as the Chief Academic Officer, and the Dean will serve as the Chief Operating Officer for the School of Interdisciplinary Studies
- The School of Interdisciplinary Studies will have a Governing Council made up of Deans and the Deputy Provost, with Co-chairs (permanent co-chair will be Executive Dean / Vice Provost and second co-chair to rotate on an annual basis between Deans of Schools on Health Sciences campus)
- Each Interdisciplinary program that has an advisory council will continue to convene the council (I.PhD, Honors College, General Education, Inter-professional Education, LatinX Studies, etc.)
- The Resource Investment Model team is currently developing a resource allocation model and a revenue sharing model which will apply to all interdisciplinary and inter-professional programs
- Academic administrative roles for interdisciplinary programs will be standardized as Director titles, with a template position description to define expectations for academic leadership of programs
- A standard template for a Memorandum of Agreement will be developed for use between participating units in each interdisciplinary program
- This is an administrative move, with no associated faculty lines affected. A Study Committee will review and make a recommendation. In this special case, the recommendation will be voted on by both the Academic Council and the Faculty Senate. The votes will be considered by the Chancellor in making final decision.