



THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON

TO: Faculty and Staff in the Division of Academic Affairs
FR: James J. Winebrake, Ph.D., Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
RE: Update on Our Organizational Alignment Efforts
DT: 8 April 2021

Communication in Brief

This communication provides an update on the ongoing organizational alignment efforts within the Office of the Provost. In brief, the communication:

- Provides background on these efforts.
- Presents a summary of the comments received after the March 26th town hall meeting.
- Outlines next steps in the process.
- Identifies several administrative leadership positions to be filled through national searches.

Background

The organizational alignment began last summer as an effort to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and clarity of roles and responsibilities of the central offices that report to the provost. An independent review of the structure by EAB (which included 25-30 interviews with UNCW staff, six interviews with provosts at other institutions, and an assessment of 23 peer institutions) identified opportunities to review our structure for efficiency, clarity, and functional alignment. That assessment informed my own analysis, validated some of my own observations, and led to a rethinking of the structure of our central office so that we can deliver academic services and support to faculty, staff, and students more effectively and efficiently.

Town Hall Meeting and Comments

I presented a proposed structure to the division via a town hall meeting on March 26th. A recording of that town hall meeting is available [here](#). After the town hall meeting, faculty and staff were invited to complete a survey to provide input and feedback about the proposed organizational structure, the implementation of the structure, and future assessment of the organizational structure.

I have read and considered every comment submitted. A summary of the comments is included as Appendix A of this memo. In short, the comments were very favorable and expressed an optimism that the new structure will likely facilitate effective, efficient, and transparent workflow in our division. The comments were also informative in terms of identifying potential challenges of implementation and strategies for future assessment.

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I presented a summary of comments and engaged in conversation at the most recent Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting. Given the positive nature of the comments – and being respectful of people’s time as we work to finish the academic year – I believe that another town hall on this topic is not needed. However, if faculty or staff have additional thoughts regarding the proposed structure, please send them to my attention. I will also discuss this topic at our April 16 Coffee Hour co-sponsored with Faculty Senate.

Next Steps of the Process

As we move forward with implementation of the new structure, I will be particularly interested in understanding from affected units how we best operationalize these changes. The devil is truly in the details, so we will engage in robust conversations on those details. Therefore, I will meet with each of the central sub-units over the coming weeks to better understand any concerns folks have about implementation and discuss ways we can best address those concerns.

A Note on Leadership Positions

I am committed to building a diverse leadership team in Academic Affairs. This topic was expressed in forums since my arrival, surfaced in the EAB report, and was highlighted in the survey comments. To this end, we will conduct searches for two new positions: (1) an Associate Provost for Student Engagement, Enrollment, and Retention; and, (2) an Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Faculty Affairs. More information will be shared as those search processes move forward. We currently have two senior leadership searches underway: (1) the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; and, (2) the Executive Director for the Center for Marine Science. More information about the status of those searches will be provided in future communications.

Conclusion

Thank you for your participation in the town hall and input through the feedback survey. As I stated at the town hall, an organizational structure will not “solve all of our problems.” Indeed, operationalizing our academic services to support our faculty, staff, and students in a manner consistent with our culture and reflective of our values is critical to our success. I am committed to working with the dedicated professionals across Academic Affairs in the pursuit of excellence through our developmental journey.



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Appendix A. Summary of Survey Responses with Frequency Counts – 4/8/2021

Survey Results for Organizational Alignment							
As of 4/8/2021							
Q2: Opportunity to...	n	Q3: Challenges to consider...	n	Q4: Assessment in future...	n	Q5: Other thoughts...	n
Enhance integration	7	Splitting of CTE/CFL (integrated)	4	Surveying and focus groups	7	Overall very good changes	7
Support faculty	6	Hiring diverse leaders	4	Conduct annually	3	CAS too large	3
Increase efficiency	6	People's resistance to change	4	Cost-benefit analysis	2	Appreciation of transparency	2
Increase diversity	5	Operational details	3	Seeing if additional barriers or silos	2	GS details (admit/reg)	2
Improve clarity	4	Clarifying roles/responsibilities	3	Asking whether things are "better"	2	Impact on OAP	2
Improve focus	3	Meeting staffing needs	2	Assessment bloat	1	Like focus on faculty	2
Streamline communication	3	Moving UC	2	Obtaining sub-unit input	1	Appreciation of details	1
Be innovative	3	Independence for Office of the Arts	1	Getting "inside" faculty perspective	1	Need graduate coordinator handbook	1
Support students	2	Committee/council bloat	1	Tying to strategic plan	1	Recognizing where we are with R2	1
Create opportunity in LTL	2	Library grouping	1	Ask if perceived problems reduced	1	Integration with college staff	1
Bring enrollment and retention together	2	Identifying backups	1	Conduct independent review	1	Identifying backups	1
Create opportunity in GS, CE, OLLI	2	Integrating new student orientation	1	Asking about accountability	1	College advising duties need restructure	1
Create opportunity in HIPs	2	Integrating GS, CE, OLLI	1	Shorter time to solve problems	1	Better staff support needed	1
Be strategic	1	Creating shared governance process	1	Asking sub-unit strategic plans	1	Subcategorization of Arts a problem	1
Evaluate and improve policy	1	Space planning	1	Keep being transparent	1	Integration of AA and OIDI	1
		Integrating HIPs across colleges	1	Keep communicating	1	Fewer ITS platforms	1
		Administrative bloat	1	Comparing employee satisfaction survey	1	Transfer student retention needs	1
		Supporting committee/council	1	Assessment Council for Committee of Senate	1	AARM bottleneck must be addressed	1
		Supporting curriculum delivery	1			Reduce bureaucracy overall	1
		Role of COS and COM	1			ED CMS report question	1
		Curriculum management	1			Community engagement support	1
		Ensuring resources allow folks to succeed	1			Terminal degrees for Aps	1
						Leadership academy opportunity for faculty	1
						Get Aps to identify one goal	1
						Restructure colleges needed	1
						Mark&Comm should be director level	1
						Better support of Humanities needed	1
						SASS to Student Affairs	1
						Ensure curricular program move forward	1
						"Graduate and Continuing Studies" as an area	1