Tips for Considering and Proposing
Departmental Restructuring
Draft
February 14, 2013

Contents:

- Discussion questions to help you consider restructuring
- Some Restructuring options to consider
- Examples of restructuring efforts on campus
- The proposal/approval process
- Components for a proposal
- Links to exemplary proposals
- Who to contact for assistance
The Conversation: Should We Restructure?

Sample discussion questions to help you consider restructuring

▪ Has your discipline evolved so that new boundaries or combinations or names could enhance potential?
▪ Do you have critical mass for achieving strength?
  ✓ Recruiting and retaining excellent faculty, staff and students: Do they see a vibrant department where they can do their best research and teaching/learning and collaborate with peers?
  ✓ Attracting research funding, taking on complex research issues, engaging in interdisciplinary collaborations.
  ✓ Providing depth and excellence in undergraduate and graduate education opportunities that will attract the best students.
▪ Do you have critical mass to fill leadership roles and functions:
  Chair, Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies, Budget, Curriculum, Communications, Events, Planning, Self-studies, Merit/Promotion/Personnel, Planning, Fundraising…
▪ What other benefits or opportunities are possible?
▪ What information/data do you need to help assess your current state and compare with others? Who can help provide that data?
▪ Who will provide the leadership needed?

Want Help?

For assistance in facilitating conversations to consider and plan restructuring efforts:
Contact: OQI - Maury Cotter, mcotter@wisc.edu
Some Restructuring Options to Consider

1. Merging of small departments and/or programs.
   - Comparative Literature and Folklore Program – L&S
   - Forest and Wildlife Ecology – CALS

2. Reconfiguring of existing departments
   - Three departments: Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology restructured to form:
     - Two departments: Cellular and Regenerative Biology, Neuroscience - SMPH
   - Orthopedic Surgery pulled out of Surgery and merged with Rehabilitative Medicine – SMPH

3. Merging a department into another department
   - Engineering Mechanics with Nuclear Engineering to create Engineering Physics. Undergraduate and graduate programs from both departments were retained.

4. Converting a program into a department
   - Biomedical Engineering
**Campus Examples of Restructuring**

**Example A:**

**In the College of Letters and Science -**

The Department of Comparative Literature and the Folklore Program merged to form The Department of Comparative Literature and Folklore Studies.

“*Intellectual reasons have to be primary - improving the ability to achieve the academic mission of the unit: improving a department’s ability to successfully engage in teaching and research, serve its students, and make significant contribution to the field.*”

Mary Layoun
Department Chair, Comparative Literature

**Challenges of being too small - difficult to:**

- Provide the breadth of intellectual needs
- Compete on a national scale; reputation; grants
- Recruit, hire and retain the best faculty and graduate students
- Fill leadership roles and functions:
  - Chair, Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies, Budget, Curriculum, Communications, Events, Planning, Merit/Promotion/Personnel, Planning, Fundraising…
- Take sabbaticals
- Provide breadth of services to students

Approved proposal:
Example B

In the School of Medicine and Public Health

Three departments: Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology restructured to form:
Two departments: Cellular and Regenerative Biology, Neuroscience

“The new structure features research priorities as opposed to traditional teaching disciplines. The new departments formed reflect the strengths of the departments dissolved. It made the focuses stronger.”

Rick Moss, Associate Dean, School of Medicine and Public Health
Interview: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGyri6DfxRE&feature=youtube

“Optimal size and strength go hand in hand. We are seeking optimal size.”

Optimal Size Allows:
- Goal of collaborative, programmatic research
- Need critical mass to develop focused research areas
- Recruit and retain – people want to be part of a program of research by its mass, achievements, synergy, collaboration
- Administrative functions strengthened; Better positions and career ladder for staff

Approved Proposals:
Example C:

In the School of Medicine and Public Health –

Seeking Optimal Size:

Too Big and Too Small to…

More Examples and “Why”:

College of Engineering

Engineering Mechanics merged into Nuclear Engineering
  ▪ Formed Department of Engineering Physics
  ▪ Undergraduate and graduate programs were retained for both departments

A Program converted to a Department: BioMedical Engineering
  ▪ High interest in BME Masters Program
  ▪ Funding and collaboration opportunities

College of Agricultural and Life Science

Merged to form Forest and Wildlife Ecology

For assistance, contact APIR - Jocelyn Milner, jmilner@wisc.edu
How to Do It: The Approval Process

1. Faculty discuss in their departments
2. Department(s) develop proposal(s)
3. Discussions at dept., S/C, campus levels
4. Faculty vote in their executive committees

S/C APC Votes

UAPC Votes

Faculty Senate Reviews/Approves
Components for Proposals for Departmental Restructuring
DRAFT January 16, 2013

Approvals and endorsements
- Approval from S/C APC
- Letter from the dean to the Provost outlining the requested changes
- Faculty permission to pursue reorganization
- Memorandum from department Executive Committee requesting permission to restructure
- Additional letters of endorsement

History/Background/Rationale
- Decision process
- Intellectual soundness of the change
- Anticipated impact/interactions

Scope
- Academic and research structure and affiliations
- Departmental Members - List of faculty expecting to participate in new department

Strategy
- Mission and purpose of the new unit
- Vision for research and teaching

Action Plan for Establishing the New Structure
- Timeline
- Physical facility requirements
- Financial resources
- Governance procedures
- Policies and Guidelines
- Committee structure & duties
- Redistribution of participating faculty and staff
  - Faculty rank and percentage & location of FTE lines
  - Teaching commitments and assignments
- Allocation of faculty attention to key aspects of departmental life
  - Budget and finances
  - Merit, promotion, and personnel decisions
  - Committees attending to internal and external communication

Anticipated Curriculum/Academic Program Changes
- Timetable adjustments/approvals
- Redistribution of courses
- Proposed course subject listings and departmental designations
- Undergraduate and graduate program curricular issues
- Review & Assessment Plan

Exemplary Proposals:
http://apir.wisc.edu/uapc/2012-13UAPCdocuments/UAPC2012122017CompLitFolklStu.pdf

For assistance, contact APIR - Jocelyn Milner, jmliner@wisc.edu