

Report on Academic Restructuring

Academic Restructuring Task Force Final Recommendations

The Charge

On March 1, 2013, Provost Toro, pursuant to the Chancellor Anderson's request, formed two task forces to consider the optimal structure for the Academic Affairs division: a Chairs Task Force and a Faculty Task Force. They received the following charge:

- Enhance interdisciplinary collaboration to facilitate UALR's timely response to the changing needs of the city, state and nation in terms of curricula, community engagement, and research.
- Implement an efficient academic structure that will result in cost savings allowing UALR to match available resources to strategic priorities.

The two task forces submitted their plans to the provost on May 15. The provost then appointed the Academic Restructuring Task Force to receive the reports of the Chairs Task Force and Faculty Task Force and to submit at least one plan by August 15 for reorganizing the Academic Affairs division.

Academic Restructuring Task Force

The Academic Restructuring Task Force (ARTF) was comprised of a representative from each academic college, three vice chancellors (representing the foundation, advancement, and student affairs), two representatives from the Board of Visitors, and the President of Student Government. The members were:

John M. A. DiPippa
Chair of Task Force
Dean Emeritus and Professor, School of Law

Jerry Adams
Board of Visitors

Bob Denman
Vice Chancellor for Development

Shannon Collier-Tenison
Associate Professor, School of Social Work

Lanny Fite
Board of Visitors

Ben Fry
General Manager, KLRE/KUAR

Matthew Gifford
Assistant Professor, Department of Biology

Logan Hampton
Interim Vice Chancellor for Educational, Student Services and Student Life

George H. Jensen
Chair, Department of Rhetoric and Writing

Joni Lee
Interim Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

Lauren McNeill
President, Student Government

Thomas R. Tudor
Professor, Department of Management

Elizabeth Vaughn-Neely
Chair, Department of Educational Leadership

Andrew Wright
Associate Professor, Department of Systems Engineering

Sarah Beth Estes
Ex-Officio
Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology and Sociology

Bob Denman provided important information about the implications of gift agreements, Joni Lee provided important information on community engagement programs, and Logan Hampton was an important spokesperson for retention issues. The ARTF wants to acknowledge the important contributions of Lauren McNeill, whose comments shifted the direction of the committee at an important juncture.

The Process

The ARTF began its work on May 15, meeting weekly for two hours, except for July 5th. Subcommittees were formed to address important issues (advising, interdisciplinary research and programs, the graduate school, and online education). In addition to the weekly meetings of the

entire ARTF, the subcommittees met and prepared reports, which are presented in this report as appendices.

During initial meetings in late May and early June, the ARTF exhaustively considered the plans submitted by the Chairs Task Force and Faculty Task Forces; the ARTF also developed one additional model for consideration. As much as allowed within our short timeframe, the ARTF reviewed data on programs and sought input from campus members.

Early in our research and discussions, the ARTF recognized the importance of the recent restructure of Arizona State University (in this report, we will use AzSU to refer to Arizona State University to avoid confusion with Arkansas State University). Because the committee was particularly impressed with the innovation and scope of AzSU's reorganization, accomplished during a time of financial exigency, we asked Dr. Duane Roen, who was involved with the restructuring process at AzSU and has served in a number of positions at AzSU, to serve as a consult. Dr. Roen reviewed the ARTF's models, visited campus to meet with the task force and the provost (on July 11 and 12), and wrote a report on the ARTF's initial decisions.

After Dr. Roen's visit to campus, the ARTF settled on three plans and a set of related recommendations. It presented these plans at the Chancellor's Leadership Retreat on August 2. The ARTF met two additional times to review the feedback it received and to make its final recommendations, which are presented below.

A Culture of Change

Early in its discussions, the ARTF came to the conclusion that

- Structure is important, but it is secondary to vision and culture, and
- Structure facilitates, but it does not create change.

The goal of any restructuring must be to create the conditions under which excellence can flourish. The university exists to generate and disseminate knowledge. It must be organized so that students receive an excellent education and faculty can pursue their research, engage with the community, and teach their students at the highest level. Thus, structures and policies should facilitate the excellence to which the university and its faculty aspire.

As the ARTF sifted through the various plans, we realized (with the help of our student member) that students relate to the university through their courses, programs, or departments. College and university level structures are largely invisible to them – until they become obstacles. In the end, changing the academic culture must happen at that level. In other words, the academic points of contact for students must be reorganized so that they and the faculty can fully achieve their potential. That is why we are calling for a second level reorganization within each college as a second phase of reorganization, regardless of which plan is adopted. We are further recommending that reorganization, rather than status quo, become the new normal. Significant evaluation of structures and reorganization should occur on a three-year cycle.

Establishing a culture of change has direct benefits and can net immediate results. This was evidenced in the recent summer bridge academy, faculty and staff from academic affairs, student affairs, the Department of Math, and the Department of Rhetoric and Writing began work in April 2013 to develop a new three-week residential program—primarily targeting minorities—to eliminate the need for developmental work in math, writing, and reading. With no agenda other than increasing student success, the faculty and staff worked tirelessly and across the boundaries of academic units to recruit, orientate, and prepare forty-four students for their first year at UALR. Among these students, forty-one of forty-four tested out of at least one developmental course. Eighty-eight percent tested out of pre-core math, and seventy-eight percent tested out of developmental composition. Amazingly, twenty-five percent tested into Honors Composition. The program was an example of what is possible when faculty from diverse disciplines, staff from divisions across campus, administrators, and student leaders work together with the common goal of student success.

Structure is Secondary to Vision and Culture

Structure serves vision, but culture enacts vision. Now is a propitious moment for UALR to reorganize with a new provost and several vacancies at the vice chancellor and dean levels. At the same time, we are faced with significant challenges—declining state support, soft enrollment, competition with other institutions, and a lingering economic slowdown.

Business as usual is no longer sufficient. To serve our students, we must not only rethink our structure but also reorient our practice. These challenges present an opportunity to become a better institution. The challenges present us with a rare constellation of circumstances to change not only our structure but also the way we carry out our work.

The university must fully embrace its mission as a metropolitan research university located in Arkansas' capital city. That mission and our location provide opportunities to engage in significant interdisciplinary work and meaningful community service. Moreover, our student population challenges us to work diligently at communicating our disciplines in the classrooms. But none of this can happen unless the institution reorganizes itself and refocuses its efforts.

Academic reorganization is the first step, but structural change will be meaningless unless accompanied by other substantive and procedural changes. That is, unless we make it easier for faculty to do interdisciplinary work, engage with the community, and serve the students, academic reorganization will amount to little more than moving boxes on an organization chart. While there may be other changes necessary to shift our culture, the ARTF recommends the following to begin the process of change:

- Reorganize the colleges at the department and program level,
- Move to 12-month non-faculty professional advising,
- Reorganize online education,
- Remove barriers to interdisciplinary work,
- Create a culture of goal-setting and accountability,

- Completely revamp the campus data systems,
- Revise the reward/incentive structure, and
- Increase the number of international students.

We will address each of these topics in the sections below as well as provide specific recommendations in the appendices to this report.

Departmental Reorganization

True change and efficiency will only occur if the colleges, in whatever form they eventually take, restructure themselves. The real work of the university in teaching, research, and service happens at the level of the department or program. That is where faculty members have their intellectual homes and students receive their education. This is where the culture of the university is created, enacted, and experienced.

This is hard and important work. The ARTF considered undertaking this task, but it quickly realized that it should not be done in a top down process by people removed from the immediate situation. Rather, the task of establishing the best structure and culture for colleges and departments must be done by the faculty and students who will be the most affected and who are in the best position to make the kind of prudential and academic judgments necessary.

The goals should be

- Increase the effectiveness of departments,
- Increase interdisciplinary work,
- Reduce the overall number of departments, and
- Improve departmental and college efficiency.

When the ARTF met with Graduate Coordinators, we were particularly impressed with their desire to serve students. We believe that this focus on student success is common across the UALR community. We were also concerned that the Graduate Coordinators expressed a number of policies and procedures drew their attention to paperwork and away from students. This experience is also common on our campus.

In all areas of restructuring, but perhaps especially at the departmental level, we must streamline policies and procedures so that faculty, coordinators, and chairs can direct more of their attention to student success.

Models for Colleges and Departments

One of the central charges given to the Academic Restructuring Task Force was to consider structures that will lead to more interdisciplinary collaboration. In the ARTF's research, the model that seemed to produce the most significant increase in collaboration across disciplines is the school model at Arizona State University. To avoid potential confusion, we should state that

this model is very different than the conception of schools within colleges, as presented by the Chairs Task Force on Restructuring last May.

Our description of the school model at AzSU will be drawn from Elizabeth Capaldi's "Intellectual Transformation and Budgetary Savings Through Academic Reorganization" (*Change* July-August 2009) and discussions with Dr. Duane Roen, our consultant from AzSU.

At AzSU, the formation of schools was based on the "recognition of the fact that increasingly research is shaped by problems" and that the best way to solve problems was through research that cut across traditional departmental boundaries. One of the schools that emerged from AzSU's reorganization was the School of Life Sciences. Capaldi described the school in this way:

The School of Life Sciences at AzSU created six flexible faculties from five different departments with differing cultures, modes of working, and resources. The merged school produced 11 separate degree offerings, giving a broad and comprehensive menu to students who wish to either generalize or specialize in their undergraduate careers. There is no direct relationship between the six faculties and the 11 degree offerings. Individual faculty with specialties needed for a particular course are spread across the school. For example, there are microbiologists in at least four of the six faculties and conservation biologists in at least three out of six.

The basic approach to forming schools at AzSU was to combine departments into larger structures (which increased the possibility for more cross-disciplinary collaboration), move most of the administrative tasks to a central office (reducing the clerical work of departments), form faculty groups with faculty leaders (as opposed to departments with chairs), and share faculties to support degree programs that are housed in the school rather than in departments (undercutting the importance of comparing program SSCHs and allowing for a more efficient use of faculty expertise and support staff).

The decisions that are typically most important to faculty are still initiated within faculty groups (hiring, promotion and tenure, annual evaluation of faculty, etc.). The tasks that are centralized tend to be the clerical and administration duties.

With the school model, AzSU seems to have overcome many of the barriers that lead to duplication of courses and restrict cross-disciplinary collaboration. As Capaldi writes:

Many universities fund departments based on majors or credit hours, which encourages the duplication of required courses across departments. Examples include statistics and methods courses; mathematics courses designed for particular majors, with little differences in content; writing courses; and other courses that could be taught more generally and more efficiently without the disincentives created by departmental interests. At AzSU we fund enrollments, with money going to whichever unit paid the person teaching the course, regardless of the topic. This treats interdisciplinary and disciplinary teaching the same. This model enables interdisciplinary schools such as the School of Sustainability, which crosses all units on campus, to teach its courses.

Our consultant described some other examples from Arizona State University:

At Arizona State University some schools have been formed by merging departments. For example, the School of Social Transformation was formed by combining the former departments of African and African American Studies, Asian Pacific American Studies, Justice and Social Inquiry, and Women and Gender Studies. Elsewhere at AzSU, multiple departments merged to form the School of Life Sciences. All of the former language departments merged to become the School of International Letters and Cultures. Three other former departments became the School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies.

We are *not* suggesting that the AzSU model of schools is the only approach to improving interdisciplinary collaboration. However, the AzSU school model provides principles that should be part of UALR restructuring at the college and department levels. UALR should adopt departmental structures (1) that encourage rather than restrict interdisciplinary collaboration, (2) that will be in larger units, whether they are titled departments or schools, and (3) that will require a redefinition of departmental boundaries and role of chairs (*e.g.*, length of contracts based on academic and administrative responsibilities).

Microsoft provides another recent example of reorganization. The company used to be organized along product lines, *e.g.*, the Office division or the Internet Explorer division. Each product division had its own head. To remain competitive in a changing marketplace, the company recently reorganized along the lines of its “services and devices.” Instead of thinking and working in product silos, it now thinks and works in the way that its customers consume its products, that is, through its services and devices. This breaks up “turf.” Former divisions now work together and the company more efficiently conducts its business.

We suggest that the colleges also reorganize themselves along these lines. Disciplines might not provide the best means of structuring academic units. Colleges and departments should ask themselves how students approach their education and how the university serves its community as they restructure to better serve these needs.

Of course, this analogy is not perfect. Rampant consumerism in education or the adoption of a business model will not work. But the functional approach that Microsoft took helps us see new possibilities that are sometimes blocked by the existing silos. If each college explored the functional overlap among their disciplines, the functional way that students experienced their programs, and their functional connections to the community, then UALR will be well situated for the coming years of change and adversity.

Goal-Setting as an Essential Part of Restructuring

The UALR culture is one of “let’s try something to see what happens” instead of setting written specific public numerical goals, asking what is needed to reach these goals, and then holding individuals accountable. High public goals and accountability encourage innovation and priority setting. It makes obvious what is more important and less important as far as funding and time allot. It requires turning persistent problems into solutions. Praise is a part of progress and

continuous improvement. Goal-setting theory has documented validity and substantially increases outcomes.

AzSU uses goal-setting at all levels. As one example, departments have recruitment and retention goals that are shared campus-wide along with real-time outcomes. Administrators and department chairs meet at least monthly to share results, brainstorm, and trouble-shoot. As another example, goals are set for how many international students are desired on campus, the resources are made available to meet these goals, and then accountability is enforced.

Data Availability and Data User-Friendliness as an Essential Part of Successful Restructuring

Administrators and faculty consistently complain that it is difficult or impossible to find the data necessary to make sound decisions, and this often prevents proper goal-setting. Typically, a request must be made to get a report. Then, the reports come after weeks or months, and they are often incomplete or inaccurate. Raw data can be accessed, but this is time consuming and also has questionable accuracy. In short, critical data needed for making strategic decisions is often lacking or not collected.

UALR has not taken advantage of user-friendly technology with the availability of real-time click on reports. This is a strategic disadvantage that prevents proper goal-setting and hurts recruiting and retention.

AzSU uses PeopleSoft and easily accessible Dashboards for real-time data reports that improve advising, retention and recruitment. UALR must reallocate the large resources that are already devoted to technology services towards collecting the right data and making it user-friendly and immediately accessible. Reports should be just a click away, and critical information with action needed should be flagged for immediate action.

For example, AzSU flags any student that requests a transcript because that student may be in the process of transferring to another institution. This student is contacted to see what the university can do to help. As another example, students that do not log into the AzSU network for weeks are flagged as disengaged and their advisors intervene. Retention data is tracked weekly for every course, major, and college. Their data tracking includes graphs for each student; goals and accountability are part of their culture. There are various automatic warning systems to immediately identify students that are more likely to drop out or are at-risk. All data points are available real-time without having to request reports. All advising is tracked in an online, paperless database that is available to faculty, advisors, and administrators. It is not surprising that AzSU's first-year to second-year retention rate is ninety percent.

ARTF recommends that PeopleSoft or a similar system be adopted. ARTF also recommend the consultant from AzSU demonstrate how that institution uses data to improve retention and graduation rates.

Restructuring to Support the Growth and Retention of International Students

The number of international students on campus is low at the undergraduate level. There were 276 undergraduate and 215 graduate international students in spring 2013. Ideally, UALR should try to increase undergraduate international students by 200 by fall 2014. This is a reasonable goal if resources are put towards this effort and accountability is enforced. UALR uses no international recruiters while the University of Cincinnati uses over 100 screened recruiters around the world. UALR employs two employees to support international students while UAF employs ten. UALR lacks services for current international students and lacks formal opportunities for international students and American students to interact and learn from each other compared to other universities.

The Intensive Language Program, the Division of International Studies and Second Language Programs, and Office of International Services should cooperate to recruit and retain international students. Faculty members and student volunteers should be involved in helping to recruit and retain international students. While these activities happen at times informally, they need to be more formalized.

Services to help international students and make them feel more welcome and valued could be improved (field trips, international culture team, cross cultural mentors, dinners in American homes, friendship family programs, friendship partners, housing available during breaks, airport pickup, flag carrying during graduation to recognize all countries represented on campus).

UALR loses millions in revenue by not better recruiting and retaining international students. Further, the presence of international students on our campus provides opportunities to internationalize our American students. During the last academic year, the budget for support of international students was \$127, 527, which included the salary for two employees. It is difficult to find any service unit or any unit on campus with such a low budget.

ARTF recommends the further discussion of creating a “Center for International Engagement” to improve the recruitment and retention of international students.

The Models

The three models that the ARTF selected to forward to the provost follow.

Model A is a slight revision of one of the models recommended by the Faculty Task Force.

Model B is a slight revision of one of the models recommended by the Chairs Task Force. All of the models in the Chairs Task Force report had a Center for Community Engagement within one of the colleges. After a lengthy discussion, the ARTF felt that the placement of community engagement programs would be best handled as part of the reorganization of administration.

The ARTF deliberations included significant discussion on the community engagement mission of UALR and the goal to have an elevated focus on that mission as a result of restructuring.

Since its inception, the university has been an institution focused on the needs of its community and has served that community through partnerships, research programs, outreach initiatives, service learning opportunities, and economic development projects. Community engagement is part of the UALR fabric and follows the model of many universities in metropolitan areas that have developed from the educational and economic needs of their communities.

The ARTF has followed the various discussions occurring throughout the restructuring process about the community engagement function and has debated how the function would best be administered at UALR. The ARTF agrees with the concept of having the community engagement function given a priority under the academic administration of the university. The idea of embedding the community engagement function within a college (as a center, school or program) was debated. Concern for this approach was raised in regard to making community engagement the responsibility of only one particular area of the campus. The concept of a community connections center, that resulted from a planning exercise of the deans and was announced at the Chancellor's Leadership Group retreat in early August 2013, was viewed as a positive direction for the possible administration of community engagement functions. The committee is aware that community engagement as a function is a focus in the administrative restructuring discussions as well. The ARTF endorses the idea coming from those discussions of making the community engagement function a key priority under the academic administrative area, with the specific form that might take to be decided as further deliberations occur within the overall restructuring process at UALR.

The ARTF developed **Model C** during the summer to present an option that maintains the separation of the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology and the College of Science. In both Model A and Model B, EIT and Science are combined into a STEM college.

KLRE/KUAR remains within a college in all three models. While KLRE/KUAR provides educational opportunities through internships for university students, high school students, and community members, it is primarily a public service unit rather than an academic unit. The public radio stations fit within Academic Affairs because they require the same type of freedom that educational programs enjoy in order to maintain their editorial integrity.

With all of the models, the ARTF recognizes that the names of colleges and other units may need to be changed. We felt that this work would be best done within the colleges.

ARTF further recommends that, as decisions are made on restructuring, all reports should be reviewed, including the Faculty Task Force Report, the Chairs Task Force Report, and Dr. Roen's report. Many of the valuable insights in these reports could not be included here.

Furthermore, the limited timeframe that ARTF had to review and extend the work of the Faculty Task Force and the Chairs Task Force meant that we could not examine all of the issues inherent in a comprehensive restructuring. As the process of restructuring unfolds, additional insights will need to be embraced.

Option A

Revision of Model from Faculty Task Force

William H. Bowen School of Law

College of Business

- Department of Accounting
- Department of Economics and Finance
- Department of Management
- Department of Marketing and Advertising

College of Education and Health Professions

- Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology
- Department of Health, Human Performance, and Sport Management
- Department of Nursing
- Department of Counseling, Adult and Rehabilitation Education
- Department of Educational Leadership
- Department of Teacher Education

College of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences

- Department of Art
- Department of Music
- Department of Theater Arts and Dance
- Department of Psychology
- Department of English
- Department of International and Second Language Studies
- Department of Sociology and Anthropology
- Department of Philosophy
- Department of Political Science
- Department of History

College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

- Department of Computer Science
- Department of Construction Management and Civil and Construction Engineering
- Department of Engineering Technology
- Department of Information Science
- Department of Systems Engineering
- Department of Applied Science
- Department of Biology
- Department of Chemistry
- Department of Physics and Astronomy
- Department of Mathematics and Statistics
- Department of Earth Sciences

College of Professional Studies

Department of Criminal Justice

Institute of Government

Department of Rhetoric and Writing

Department of Speech Communications

School of Mass Communications

School of Social Work

KLRE/KUAR

Option B

Revision of Model from Chairs Task Force

William H. Bowen School of Law

College of Business

- Department of Accounting
- Department of Economics and Finance
- Department of Management
- Department of Marketing and Advertising

College of Health, Education, and Social Sciences

Division of Health

- Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology
- Department of Health, Human Performance, and Sport Management
- Department of Nursing
- Department of Counseling, Adult and Rehabilitation Education

Division of Education

- Department of Educational Leadership
- Department of Teacher Education

Division of Social Sciences

- Department of Criminal Justice
- School of Social Work
- Department of Psychology
- Department of Sociology and Anthropology
- Institute of Government
- Department of Political Science
- School of Mass Communication
- Department of Speech Communication
- KLRE/KUAR

College of Fine Arts and Humanities

Division of Arts

- Department of Art
- Department of Music
- Department of Theater Arts and Dance

Division of Humanities

- Department of English
- Department of History
- Department of International and Second Language Studies
- Department of Philosophy
- Department of Rhetoric and Writing

College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

Division of Engineering and Information Technology

Department of Computer Science

Department of Construction Management and Civil and Construction Engineering

Department of Engineering Technology

Department of Information Science

Department of Systems Engineering

Division of Science

Department of Applied Science

Department of Biology

Department of Chemistry

Department of Physics and Astronomy

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Department of Earth Sciences

Option C

Academic Restructuring Task Force Model

William H. Bowen School of Law

College of Business

- Department of Accounting
- Department of Economics and Finance
- Department of Management
- Department of Marketing and Advertising

College of Education, Health, and Professional Studies

- Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology
- Department of Health, Human Performance, and Sport Management
- Department of Nursing
- Department of Counseling, Adult and Rehabilitation Education
- School of Social Work
- Department of Speech Communication
- School of Mass Communication
- Department of Educational Leadership
- Department of Teacher Education
- Department of Criminal Justice
- Institute of Government
- KLRE/KUAR

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

- Department of Art
- Department of Music
- Department of Theater Arts and Dance
- Department of English
- Department of History
- Department of International and Second Language Studies
- Department of Philosophy
- Department of Rhetoric and Writing
- Department of Psychology
- Department of Political Science
- Department of Sociology and Anthropology

College of Engineering, Information Technology, and Science

- Department of Computer Science
- Department of Construction Management and Civil and Construction Engineering
- Department of Engineering Technology
- Department of Information Science
- Department of Systems Engineering

College of Science

Department of Applied Science

Department of Biology

Department of Chemistry

Department of Physics and Astronomy

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Department of Earth Sciences

Implementation

Phase One: Reorganizing Administration and Colleges

The first phase of reorganization will occur in year one, initiated at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1, 2014). This phase will include the reorganization of the university at the vice chancellor level and their direct reports (as specified in the Chancellor's Administrative Reorganization Proposal) and the reorganization of colleges (as specified in this report by the ARTF).

To prepare for this phase of reorganization, we recommend the creation of a Phase One Task Force that should include the Chancellor's Chief of Staff, a representative from the Provost's Office, one vice chancellor, a member of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, one dean, one department chair, the chair of ARTF, and the Director of Digital Strategies.

Also during phase one, we recommend the provost charge Information Technology Services with adopting software that will allow for better data collection and reporting. The goal should be to have a system with dashboard applications for enrollment, retention, and advising that report real-time data that is as good or better than the system used by AzSU.

The work of this Task Force will occur between the release of the chancellor's recommendations and July 1.

Phase Two: Reorganization within Colleges

As soon as phase one is completed on July 1, 2014, colleges will begin to reorganize their internal structure and prepare for a transition to professional advising. The specific nature of this phase of reorganization will depend, in large part, on the revision of these recommendations by the provost and chancellor. This phase will be implemented by July 1, 2015.

If the chancellor's final report recommends maintaining a traditional college structure with formally defined departments, phase two will focus on evaluating departmental structures within each college, including considering the elimination of departments, combining departments, and even deconstructing departments into components or programs in order to form new departments.

If the chancellor's final report recommends a college structure that is more like schools at Arizona State University, phase two will focus on moving most administrative tasks into the

dean's office and forming faculty groups (which, in some colleges, might be minor revisions of existing departments) that will focus on research problems and house programs.

During phase two, we recommend the chancellor form the Policy Revision Committee (PRC), a permanent committee. The PRC will be a small committee that will review existing policies and procedures (such as, approval of ePAFs, hiring procedures, etc.) with an eye to streamlining and simplifying them.

Similarly, the Faculty Senate will form the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee (ISC), another permanent committee. The function of this committee will be to establish policies that facilitate team teaching and the administration of interdisciplinary programs, examining issues like how team teaching affects faculty load, sharing faculty across departments and colleges, and allocating SSCHs for interdisciplinary programs.

Phase Three: Space Issues

Phase three will begin as soon as phase two is implemented. Once colleges have been reorganized, the provost will form a task force to investigate the physical location of colleges and departments to improve communication and cross-disciplinary work.

For some colleges, such as the College of Business, the School of Law, and the College of Engineering and Information Technology, this process might occur within the college. For colleges that are spread across multiple buildings with departments split into several locations, the evaluation of space issues will have to occur on a university level.

Some reallocation of space might happen fairly quickly, but many aspects of this phase will spread across several years.

Phase Four: Evaluation and Revision

In the summer of 2016, the chancellor will reform the ARTF with some members of the original ARTF and some new members to evaluate the first two phases of the university's restructuring. We further recommend that a similar committee be formed every three years to reinforce a culture of change.

Appendix 1

Interdisciplinary Programs and Research

UALR has a number of interdisciplinary programs: Donaghey Scholars (Earl Ramsey, director); Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (Angela Hunter, program coordinator); Minor in Information Technology (Catherine Lowry, director); Minor in Gender Studies (Sarah Beth Estes, director); BS in Computer Science (Game Option, Department of Computer Science); Technology Innovation Graduate Certificate (Gary Anderson, contact); Applied Science graduate program (Tansel Karabacak, graduate coordinator); Engineering Science and Systems doctorate (Gary Anderson, chair); Integrated Computing doctorate (Ningning Wu, graduate coordinator); and Bioinformatics doctorate (Liz Pierce, graduate coordinator). However, these programs are not widely known in the state, nor is UALR known as an institution that promotes interdisciplinary programs and research.

ARTF recommends the creation of a Division of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research with a director. The division will not house degrees; it will provide support for degrees. It will be responsible for creating a portal (similar to “Arizona State Online,” as discussed in Appendix 4) that showcases the university’s interdisciplinary programs and research. This division would also assist in the creation and institutionalization of interdisciplinary curricula and research. Too often programs or collaborations have been the creation of a small group of faculty. If these faculty retire, leave, or lose interest, the collaborations disappear.

Team teaching is an important part of building interdisciplinary collaboration. Any existing university policies that become barriers to team teaching (faculty load, evaluation of departments by SSCHS, etc.) should be evaluated and revised.

AzSU views interdisciplinary programs as an important academic pathway that supports retention and graduation. Their interdisciplinary programs have sufficient flexibility that transfer students, students who have changed majors several times, or students with unusual career goals can, with the assistance of advisors, construct degrees. The BA in Interdisciplinary Studies and similar programs could be viewed in this way.

The BA in Interdisciplinary Studies already combines several minors to allow students a path to graduation that may not be present in disciplinary degrees. Other programs should be encouraged to develop a similar option to expand the opportunities for students who have taken a large number of credit hours to have a path to completion.

The use of space can have an important impact on interdisciplinary work. Dr. Roen, our consultant from AzSU, made this point:

Locating faculty in close physical proximity to potential collaborators will increase the opportunities for casual hallway conversations that help to build relationships that foster interdisciplinary research and team teaching. At the very least, it would be helpful to locate departments with similar interests next to one another. Faculty in a department usually occupy a group of offices located at a single site—e.g., one floor in a building. Faculty from other disciplines rarely occupy offices at that site. However, to encourage interdisciplinary work, it can be helpful to mix faculty from several disciplines on the same floor of a building.

In *A Pattern of Language*, architect Christopher Alexander reiterates this point with data from a study of space and university departments: “People knew 12.2 per cent of the people from other departments on the *same* floor as their own, 8.9 per cent of the people from other departments *one* floor apart from their own, and only 2.2 per cent of the people from other departments *two* floors apart from their own” (410).

Specific Recommendations:

1. A Division of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research with direct report to the provost should be created to facilitate the *creation* and *institutionalization* of interdisciplinary curricula and research. This division should have a budget and should have a role in managing and rewarding faculty. It should have governance structures in place to handle all standard academic governance issues. This budget should be usable for both the development of curricula and the promotion of research. Each interdisciplinary program should have an advocate, without which enrollment into the program and maintenance of the program cannot succeed. The division should also maintain a clearing house of expertise to facilitate the creation of research teams as well as bring together graduate and undergraduate students to collaborate on senior projects, theses, and dissertations.

2. Incentives should be established to provide interdisciplinary work. The Division of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research should provide funding for departments to buy out faculty time and allow departments to hire temporary faculty; provide funding for faculty members who choose to develop a team-taught course; provide a pathway to institutionalizing the resulting program/certificate/minor/course, so as to validate faculty members' participation in such an effort; encourage pilot programs (short-term, quick-response efforts) to determine whether ideas are worth developing further; provide matching funds, start up funds, and mini-grants for interdisciplinary research efforts could be managed out of this office; and provide professional development

3. The Division of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research should coordinate with ATLE to develop workshops (“So, you want to work on interdisciplinary projects?”) and other professional activities as well as round-tables and for a for discussion.
4. The Division of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research should assist in the development of policies to promote interdisciplinary work, including governance policies to reward good work and disincentivize poor performance.
5. Banner needs to be changed to allow multiple instructors to be listed on each course
6. Learning Communities and Linked Courses are currently offered in specific areas at UALR. These approaches lead to increased student retention due to their community-building characteristics; they also provide opportunity for enhanced interdisciplinary collaborations. The Division of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research should provide an organizing structure for creating additional learning communities and inked courses.

Appendix 2

Advising

Because "student advising" means different things to different people, we recommend that a clear definition of advising at UALR be developed. This definition should take into consideration the broad spectrum of student needs and resources, beyond just registration, beginning at admission and following student through their UALR career. UALR needs to develop transparent policies that determine where the responsibilities for the different aspects of student advising lie. Ultimately, strong academic advising and faculty mentoring should show clearly defined links to student retention.

To provide comprehensive advising, the ARTF recommends the development of a system of professional advisors based within each college. The system of advisors should be supplemented with a formal system of faculty mentorship.

Student advising should be viewed as a web rather than a sequence. Students have different needs and resources, dependent upon majors, career paths, life experience, and year in school. Advising on this campus must be responsive to these needs. Many entities play a role in student advising, including the Offices of Academic Advising, Student Counseling, Transfer Student Services, and Career Services, as well as faculty advisers. This makes the hand-off between the various components of advising critically important.

There must be good communication between the various entities engaged in student advising and someone needs to coordinate and be accountable for the whole web. To this end, we recommend that UALR move to a system of professional advisors in each college. This would enable students easy access to academic advisers who are very familiar with the major requirements of programs within each college. This would also allow faculty to shift to more of a student mentoring role as well.

Student advising begins with admission to the university. In order to better serve students from the point of entry, all official documentation presented to the student (acceptance letters, web site, brochures, available services documents, undergraduate catalog, etc) should be revised and reviewed from the perspective of the student so that the "UALR is opaque" phenomenon is reduced to the smallest realistic lack of transparency.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the ARTF recommends that UALR institute a system of "paperless" advising, which would allow all of those involved in advising any individual student to view the student's path through the advising system, to see where the student has been, what advice has been provided and what roadblocks have been, or might be, in the way of student

graduation. An electronic advising file would contain notations from each person or office that interacts with the student in an advisory capacity.

Sample Path for Advising (First time, Full-time Freshmen):

1. Student is admitted to the University.
2. Student is initially referred to Academic Advising within the appropriate college and registered for a standard set of credits (up to 15) based on the common core, test scores, and intended major. Student works with Academic Advising and other university resources in the first semester for further advising (which for the student may include determining “who I am,” career aptitude, interests and strengths, etc.). Career counseling (front end) gives student some idea as to what majors will lead to what professional outcomes. Student determines area of interest and is referred to the appropriate college. Placement tests and calculations based on test scores are done.
3. A professional advisor in the college takes over in advising the student, particularly from semester two. A primary role for the college-level professional advising resource is assisting the student in determining a major within the college. Student is referred into the department of “best fit,” where the student will receive more focused academic counseling. Goal is for student to declare a major by the end of this first semester.
4. Student declares major and moves to that department or school, where student is assigned to a faculty adviser. Faculty adviser/mentor takes on advising for remainder of career, years 2-4.
5. Final career planning at the university level in years 3.5-4.

Appendix 3

Graduate School

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) should be separated from the Graduate School and the position of Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the School be eliminated. The Director of ORSP and the Dean of the Graduate School should be separate positions that report to the provost.

The work of ORSP and the Graduate School are fundamentally different, and combining these two organizations under a vice chancellor has been problematic. It has proven difficult to hire a VC with the appropriate skill sets to manage grants and provide leadership for the Graduate School, and leadership for the Graduate School has suffered.

We further recommend that some of the functions now handled within the Graduate School be moved to existing divisions that handle these functions for undergraduate programs. In too many areas, the separation of undergraduate and graduate services has led to inefficiency and duplication.

Moving these functions, however, will not necessarily improve the service offered to graduate coordinators and graduate students. Each process (submitting applications, processing applications, recruitment, processing Graduate Assistantship positions, etc.) must be reviewed with an eye toward (1) reducing the amount of clerical work required of graduate coordinators and graduate students, and (2) eliminating unnecessary levels of approval and oversight.

Once ORSP and the Graduate School are separated and the responsibilities of the Graduate School are reduced, the Graduate School should be better able to serve graduate coordinators and graduate students in the following ways:

- Advocate for graduate programs, graduate faculty, and graduate students within the UALR community and advocate for graduate programs with stakeholders in the community of central Arkansas,
- Provide support to graduate coordinators in regards to the planning and management of graduate programs,
- Create and review policies related to graduate programs,
- Support the retention of graduate students,
- Assist in the development of new programs, and
- Process graduate assistantships.

These should be the primary functions of the Graduate School, and primary among these must be providing service to graduate coordinators and graduate faculty so that they will be able to provide better service to graduate students.

We further wish to acknowledge that, throughout the university, graduate coordinators are overworked, under-appreciated, and poorly compensated. This is particularly true for the coordinators of larger programs.

Recommended Changes:

1. ORSP and the Graduate School should be separated. The position of Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School should be eliminated.
2. A search should be opened for the position of Dean of the Graduate School.
3. The processing of applications to graduate programs be moved to Admissions and assigned to a point person who focuses on graduate application. An important task to accomplish in this area is streamlining the admission process.
4. The processing of applications to graduate be moved to Records and assigned to a point person who focuses on graduate programs.
5. The IT functions currently handled within the Graduate School be moved to Information Technology Services and assigned to a point person who focuses on the website for the Graduate School and other IT needs. An important need in this area is the creation of an electronic admission process.
6. The primary responsibility for recruiting graduate students should be moved to the Office of Enrollment Management and assigned to a point person who focuses on recruiting for graduate programs.
7. The certification of Graduate Faculty Status should be moved to the graduate committees within each college.
8. The work and compensation of Graduate Coordinators should be reviewed.
9. Similarly, the support functions connected with the Graduate School should be evaluated to ensure that they are adequately staffed.

Appendix 4

Online Programs

The delivery of online education is a rapidly evolving market, which is filled with opportunities and threats.

In the early 1990s, UALR was the leader in developing online education for the state. Since that time, For-Profits have expanded rapidly, Massive Open Online Courses have appeared, and consortiums have developed across universities.

Recently, UALR established a partnership with Academic Partners (AP) to develop and market accelerated online programs in Business, Nursing, and Criminal Justice.

While it is unclear at present which models will be sustainable, it is clear that most institutions will have to offer robust online programs to remain viable. In terms of the reorganization of UALR, it is imperative that the university build a centralized infrastructure to support online education. In building a centralized infrastructure, it will be crucial to respect faculty control over its own curriculum and assessment.

We recommend the development of a centralized office, the director of which will report to the provost. All online offerings, including those associated with AP, should be centralized within this office. The two key functions of this division would be marketing and providing tech support.

In terms of marketing, the online division should create a web portal for all online programs, which might be similar to ASU Online (<http://asuonline.asu.edu/#1>). Students wanting to explore UALR online programs, register for online programs, or gain access to their online courses would begin with this web portal, which must be accessible with one click from the UALR homepage.

In addition to creating and maintaining the web portal for online programs, the online division should provide twenty-four hour tech support, assistance with instructional design, and training for the course management system. The division should also manage a video studio for recording lectures and assist faculty in uploading lectures to online course shells.

The division should also market online programs, including marketing programs to business, industry, and the military.

Instructional designers in this division should assist faculty in designing online courses; however, the development and control of curriculum must remain within the academic units. Similarly, academic units must remain in control of hiring faculty, adjuncts, and other instructors (such as, “coaches” in AP offerings). While the online division will assist in administering

assessments of online programs, the evaluation of faculty and the methods used for assessment will remain within the control of departments.

Recommended Changes:

1. Eliminate the current Extended Programs.
2. Centralize online offerings under a division titled “UALR Online” with a Director of Online Programs. The function of the division will be to support, coordinate, and market online programs. The division will assist in the development of online programs, but curriculum and staffing will remain the responsibility of departments and colleges.
3. The administration of the Benton Center will be separate from UALR Online.
4. The administration of accelerated face-to-face classes and programs will remain within departments.
5. While the division will include what is now Accelerated Online Programs, the division should continue to develop more traditional online programs and explore the possibility of marketing and administering these programs in house.
6. The division should explore developing online certificate programs, similar to those at UCLA, that could be combined to form a major, as with the current BIAS degree.
7. The division should also be encouraged to assist in the development of an online continuing education program. For this program to be successful, the university would need to develop a policy that would allow members of the community to take noncredit courses without having to go through a full admission procedure (submit transcripts, shot records, etc.).
8. Eventually, the staff should include twenty-four hour tech support, trainers in the course management system, course designers, and recruiters, including a recruiter dedicated to military personnel.