



Pittsburg State University

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

December 16, 2008

To the Academic Community:

As you may recall, during the 2007-08 academic year a study was conducted to examine the organizational structure of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Orville Brill led this effort, and he submitted his final report to me in the spring of this year. At that time, I shared Dr. Brill's report with the campus through my web site and requested feedback regarding the study's findings. My intentions, as described in an e-mail to the campus in April, were to make a decision over the summer on what changes (if any) would be made in the way the college is organized. That timeline has been seriously disrupted and delayed by the budget problems that we have encountered—initially this summer, and more dramatically this fall. The purpose of this communication is to update you on this effort.

In summary, the report submitted by Dr. Brill described three possible changes in the structure of the college: 1) Create two associate deans roles, with each overseeing a set of departments within the college; 2) Create two associate deans roles, but not 'split' the departments into two subgroups of the college; and 3) Create two colleges from the current set of departments, requiring the appointment of another dean. From my consideration of the study and from the campus feedback I have received, options 2 and 3 appear to warrant further consideration. I am no longer considering option 1. Of course, an additional option that has always existed is for us to make no changes and continue to operate as we have in the past.

Two critical factors should be kept in mind as you read this update:

1. The college continues to be managed very well by Dr. Olson, and the review of the college's organizational structure should in no way reflect on her. Her leadership of the college is, and has been, outstanding. Dr. Bobby Winters, in his role as Assistant Dean, has provided the kind of assistance and support that the college has long needed. Clearly, the effectiveness of this team, along with the support of the department chairpersons, faculty and staff, has eased my perceptions that changes to the college should be implemented immediately. Any sense of urgency to act has diminished since the initiation of the study.
2. The budget developments of recent months are serious for many reasons, but they are of particular concern when one considers the options available to support a reorganization of the college. We have been asked to reduce our current budget by over \$1.1 million and next year's budget by at least \$2.7 million.

Given that I do not feel a heightened sense of urgency to act and that our financial situation over the coming months looks troubling, I have decided to indefinitely postpone the decision to reorganize the College of Arts and Sciences. I am disappointed that this process has not come to closure, and I am sure those closest to this issue will be frustrated by this decision. I cannot justify increasing the university's expenditures on administrative activities at this time. I was hoping that the additional costs associated with any reorganization plans would be modest; in fact, I had initially hoped to keep this an expense-neutral initiative. But the more in depth the options are explored, the more one realizes that each one leads to additional costs. There is just no way around that fact.

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For those of you who participated in this study, I want to thank you for your involvement and your willingness to explore this very important issue. Should you have questions or concerns about the process or about my decision to postpone the resolution of this matter, please contact me directly. I always welcome your comments and feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. A. Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Steven A. Scott, Ed.D.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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