

APPENDIX 3

CALS Structure Workgroup—Full Report

The CALS Structure Workgroup was charged with identifying departments where restructuring may be desirable, making recommendations concerning options, and defining criteria to assess whether CALS is organized in a way that best supports our long-term goals. UW-Madison Faculty Policies and Procedures defines the structure and function of departments, and provides processes for change. (The relevant parts of FP&P are paraphrased beneath this report.) In executing our charge we elaborate on these elements, in particular describing the broad range of departmental roles, functions and responsibilities and their connection to structure and the potential for restructuring.

■ Premises:

1. The goal of restructuring is to build or maintain strength and better use scarce resources by cooperating/collaborating/merging with other units with allied and/or complementary missions. Restructuring is a process that allows us to align our resources with the college's priorities and strengths and build units that are more than a collection of individuals.
2. Restructuring is done to help individuals flourish, to help flexible groups form as appropriate for common interests and as needed to address challenges, and to maintain core disciplinary expertise and pedagogy. Individual interests and expertise evolve over time, and rigid departmental structures may constrain innovation and personal growth. The cogent challenge in restructuring is balancing the stability of departments and the specific missions they serve with the flexibility that looser alignments provide.
3. College departments, teaching, and processes largely follow patterns established decades and in some cases, over a century ago (Attachment 1 provides a brief overview of relevant portions of UW Faculty Policies and Procedures that affect department function and stability). In many situations these have served well, especially in times of growth. However, in times of resource shrinkage, the dominant process that has shaped departments is attrition, and this is not strategic. It is unlikely that the number of state-funded faculty positions within the college will increase in the near future, and a continued decline is possible. Restructuring should complement the identification of and support for core strengths and strategic priorities. Our vision is that the structure of the college and its processes should be subject to a process of continuous review and change, and that no unit has achieved a perfection that permits its isolation from this process.
4. Budget necessities might require college administration to directly force restructuring. However, any unit is better served if its members are themselves able to identify the need for restructuring their unit, and are able to fashion that restructuring in a way that helps them best achieve excellence. We recognize that departments have long and proud histories and that reforms are difficult. However, the likelihood of returning to past glories is extraordinarily unlikely, and we must instead find ways to build strength in new ways.
5. Restructuring should not be premised on a belief that merging two (or more) small units will result in one stronger department. Although this may resolve issues of "critical mass," it should be done only if it also results in new complementarity and synergism. Other arrangements, including merging a small department into a larger one should also be considered.
6. Restructuring that leads to a reduction in the number of units within the college will benefit both administration (e.g., fewer units to track and oversee) and the remaining units (e.g., better access to limited administrative staff).
7. Current structures and processes leave departments in the position of competing, and not cooperating (allocation of resources, credit follows instructor, approval of faculty positions, etc.). Instead, structures and processes should be shifted to reward cooperation among departments, as well as rewarding activities that benefit the college as a whole but are not specifically attributable to a department (e.g., contributions to trans-departmental majors). In the long term, this leads to a culture where there is a focus on intellectual communities and cooperative units that allows us to better pursue integrative, interdisciplinary, and mutually beneficial activities.
8. To the extent feasible, the college should find ways to support structure initiatives, including identifying benefits of creative restructuring and rewarding initiatives that generate savings, reduce inefficiencies, provide a higher level of benefit to college stakeholders, or promote more effective research and instruction. To the extent that monetary

savings or efficiencies are realized, these should generally flow back to the generating departments to support their innovations. Other means of support include facilitating cross-departmental and cross-college discussions, working with departments on issues of space and facilities, and supporting personnel shifts. Clear and consistent benchmarks and metrics will be necessary both for departments to know what college goals are and for the college to reward excellence.

9. The committee has not delineated specifics with respect to outreach and extension, though this is also a consideration in departmental function and structure. UWEX recently adopted a policy document concerning the evaluation of individual state specialists. While this does not address their role in and contribution to college departments, it provides a clear indication of the kinds of activities valued by Extension. It will be in the best interest of the college and UWEX to extend these rubrics so they can be used in departmental level evaluation of contributions.

It is also important to recognize that Extension has its own separate mission and agenda, though a significant amount of Extension work is integrated into the college. The orientation of Extension is to invest in people and programs that will:

- address important needs of stakeholders (businesses, communities, families, etc.);
- provide clear evidence that impacts have occurred;
- use holistic approaches such as multi-disciplinary teamwork and linkages to clusters of disciplines.

In the long term, it will be helpful to compare Extension expertise with new and emerging CALS themes to determine how Extension teams, centers, and other structures fit the themes.

■ Types of Restructuring:

- Sharing some facilities or administrative services (e.g., some departments share IT services)
- Sharing all administrative services (i.e., forming a “hub”)
- Sharing instructional programs (e.g. Community and Environmental Sociology and Sociology, Microbiology Doctoral Training Program)
- Sharing courses, cross-listing courses, co-teaching courses, teaching across departments and programs
- Sharing faculty positions (affiliate, or joint appointments)

- Forming collaborative units (e.g., but not exclusively, centers) with shared vision, goals and timeline
- Blending with departments in other colleges (e.g., Genetics)
- Combining departments (e.g. Forest Ecology and Management with Wildlife Ecology)
- Dissolving department and moving faculty to appropriate homes (e.g., Continuing and Vocational Education)

■ Reasons to consider restructuring:

- If disciplines have evolved to a degree that new boundaries or combinations could enhance potential.
- Stakeholder needs, interests, or support have changed such that new alignments might better serve them.
- Restructuring allows departments to recruit and retain excellent faculty, staff and students; to maintain a vibrant department where members can do their best research, teaching/learning, outreach, and service.
- The size of the department has shrunk or is approaching critical size thresholds wherein its performance may be impaired:
 - Departments need sufficient size to provide depth and excellence in undergraduate and graduate education opportunities that will attract the best students.
 - Administrative systems require a level of expertise, training, and retraining impossible for resource-limited support staff members in a small department to provide.
 - Shared governance requires sufficient faculty resources to be involved in hiring, mentoring, preparing tenure dossiers, leadership (e.g. department chair, associate chair), participation in college and university governance, etc.
 - Departments require sufficient numbers of faculty and support staff to manage undergraduate and graduate programs, graduate recruitment, fundraising, communications, planning, assessment.

■ Factors in Consideration of Restructuring:

We have identified a set of broad indicators about when it is appropriate for a department to consider restructuring (solid squares). However, it is challenging to define universal and specific measures of scholarly activity and productivity in the evaluation of a department for several reasons. Some measures of departmental performance should be judged relative to norms in their field, though the norms will vary widely across the college. Measures such as extramural funding in a department merely tabulate the results of a collection of individuals who could be

organized in other ways, not how effectively they function as a unit. We may come to different conclusions about the measures of departmental performance if they are looked at as simple aggregate values versus aggregate values divided by its number of faculty FTEs or state support for a department. This dilemma exists for most of the readily determined metrics of departmental performance, shown below as open squares.

Broad Indicators

- Inadequate department infrastructure/administrative support due to size
- Inability to address governance, instructional, outreach, service needs
- High allied programmatic strength exists elsewhere on campus or regionally
- Duplicative facilities, redundant activities
- Low stakeholder interest and demand for research, education, outreach
- Department has experienced movement of significant numbers of professors from the department to another with similar disciplinary orientation

Specific Metrics (in comparison to similar departments and/or other college units)

- Number of majors or advisees (grad, undergrad, non-departmental programs)
- Number of credits (grad and undergrad) taught
- Federal and nonfederal funding; generated indirect costs
- Alumni and industry support (e.g., unrestricted gifts)
- Scholarly output, as expected for the discipline (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, citation indices, national rankings)
- Number of person-contact hours resulting from extension/outreach activities

Recommendations

1. The number of state-supported faculty FTEs is an important indicator of department viability. Any department with low numbers should periodically review both the general indicators for restructuring (solid bullets) and specific measures of performance (hollow bullets).
2. CALS should encourage and reward cross- and multi-departmental initiatives by supporting cooperation between departments and creation of interest-area groups that transcend departments. Cooperation between individuals in the college and on campus is ongoing and active. To the extent possible this should be expanded and rewarded.
3. CALS should support new structures by facilitating discussions and, to the extent feasible, providing restructuring incentives that generate operational efficiencies or enhance the college’s ability to fulfill its mission within a land-grant university.
4. This workgroup and this document are focused on departments. However, many of the issues considered here are relevant to centers, institutes, and other elements of the college, and we recommend conducting a similar study of those structures.

Paraphrase of relevant portions of Faculty Policies and Procedures

Chapter 5 – Departmental Faculties

- 5.01. **Department:** A department consists of a group of faculty members... having common or closely related scholarly interests
- 5.02. **Departmental Restructuring:** Broad guidelines for restructuring... shall be developed by UAPC. Each college shall develop its own criteria.
- 5.11. **Functions:** Departmental faculty... has jurisdiction over all the interests of the department... and shall be responsible for teaching, research, and public service.
- 5.13. **Affiliations:** An affiliation allows a faculty member or a member of the academic staff to be associated with a department without governance rights or a continuing departmental commitment.
- 5.14. **Faculty Transfers Between Departments:** A faculty member may request transfer of his or her department’s continuing commitment in his/her tenured appointment on professional or academic grounds.