

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to share with you my decisions concerning academic restructuring. The changes announced today and taking effect Fall 2010 will organize units in ways that optimize their current strengths and position them to excel in the future. I am confident that present and prospective students, faculty, and staff will be well served by the realignment of these units.

I deeply value the culture and traditions of this institution. I also believe that structures created by layers of past history must sometimes give way to structures that have stronger strategic and academic potential in a changing external environment. The changes to be made allow for the refocusing of one college, the augmentation of another college, and the establishment of a multidisciplinary entity that has the potential to help us better fulfill some of our obligations to our communities and the state.

My decisions draw directly on a process that I began on my arrival in July. I knew of the work that had been done by the deans in the creation of the white paper. I also heard from faculty and staff that they wanted a greater role in guiding the next steps. To that end, I asked each of the programs involved in the proposed restructuring to create committees of faculty and staff that would respond to a two-part template designed to provide specific information needed to make evidence-based decisions. I want to acknowledge the hard work and the time commitment that the templates required. I also would like to thank the many individuals who participated in face-to-face meetings with me or sent their thoughts by email. Your valuable insights informed my decisions.

I have decided to proceed with the establishment of an Academic Health Center. The work of the Academic Health Center Steering Committee and my own knowledge of the advantages that these centers carry for educational opportunities, quality health care provision, and research convinced me that this was a necessary and appropriate entity to establish. A significant amount of work remains to take the concept from drawing board to a fully functioning center, but my decision to refocus the College of Health and Human Services should provide strong impetus to move the project forward.

The College of Health and Human Services will reorganize as the College of Health Sciences and Professions. It will become a major academic driver in the Academic Health Center and is expected to become a leader in the state for high demand health programs and innovative, interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, student success, and research in the health sciences and professions. My expectation is that this refocused college also will become a major recipient of grant and contract funding.

My vision is that the College of Health Sciences and Professions will become a center of excellence for Ohio University and that it will continue to evolve as conversations continue with other units with a health and wellness orientation during Phase Two of the academic restructuring process. This phase will involve exploration of further

program alignments and possibilities for new programs as the Academic Health Center refines its mission and identity.

Conversations need to take place as well about the new college's internal organization. I believe that the college needs a different structure that will better augment its new focus. I have asked Interim Dean Randy Leite to develop a transition team for the purpose of forming recommendations for me on what that structure should look like and how other elements of the university might be incorporated in the future to strengthen the college and the Academic Health Center.

The health-related programs that participated in the template process—Nutrition, Exercise Physiology, Athletic Training, and Family Studies—have important roles to play in shaping the future of the new College of Health Sciences and Professions. Each of these programs will contribute significantly to the new college's potential for national prominence.

During the course of its history, the College of Health and Human Services developed academic strengths in disciplines dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities. As with their colleagues in health-related fields, the faculty, staff, and students in those programs need academic homes that will sustain the excellence of their programs and enhance what they can accomplish in the future. In order for this to take place, I have authorized the following moves:

The Interior Architecture Program will join the School of Art in the College of Fine Arts. The addition of Interior Architecture's outstanding faculty and students to a nationally known school will draw increased attention to the program's academic offerings and allow for new and sustained interdisciplinary collaborations.

The Sports Administration Program and the Center for Sports Administration will join the College of Business as a separate department--the Department of Sports Administration. Having the premier program in this field join a college that is nationally recognized will provide significant benefits to both parties.

The following programs will join the College of Education, which will change its name to reflect the expansion of its academic mission to encompass the field of human development. The College of Education is known for its excellence and efficacy in training professionals who provide important human services through teaching, leadership development, and counseling. The programs becoming part of the college will allow for increased opportunities for students to study physical, social, and community development. The expansion of the college also will permit it to become even more entrepreneurial in its approach to serving the state of Ohio and meeting the needs of local communities.

The Early Childhood Program in Health and Human Services will be united with the Early Childhood Program in the Department of Teacher Education in the College of Education. The Child Development Center also will become part of the College of

Education. Bringing these entities together will strengthen the work that they already do together and will allow for the development of greater opportunities for collaboration in the future.

Physical Education, Recreation Studies, and Coaching Education will join the College of Education as a separate department—the Department of Recreation and Sports Pedagogy. These units will bring to the college new opportunities to offer a broad range of education programs for children, adolescents, and adults of all ages.

Restaurant, Hotel, and Tourism; Retail Merchandising; and Family and Consumer Sciences Education will also become part of the College of Education. The faculty in these programs are known for developing innovative hands-on-learning experiences and for their exceptional commitment to their students. They will bring expertise and energy that will fuel the expanded mission of the college and allow it to encompass the education of consumers and their communities.

Two other parts of the restructuring remain in process. First, the alignment of clinical programs across colleges into the “practice” arm of the developing Academic Health Center is underway and making good progress. Second, I anticipate that within a week I will have the information that I need to make decisions on the proposed restructuring involving University College and Regional Higher Education.

The changes that I have outlined establish a new strategic structure that will enhance academic quality, facilitate offering new high demand degree programs, create new opportunities for marketing programs to prospective students, and enable the establishment of new services and outreach opportunities. I anticipate seeing the results of the restructuring through strong student demand, increased faculty and student success, and additional university revenues.

Having recently left a place that I called home for over twenty years, I understand that exchanging familiarity for new prospects can be unsettling. Yet if my own experiences are any indication, finding a new academic home can be a source of creativity and renewal. Given the talent and the dedication of the individuals who will be involved in the restructuring, I am confident that we will have every cause in the future for marking this moment as the beginning of an era of enhanced academic quality and institutional opportunities.

Information about next steps involved in the restructuring can be found at <http://www.ohio.edu/provost/Academic-Restructuring-NEW.cfm>

Sincerely,

Pam Benoit  
Executive Vice President and Provost