

Feedback (November 20-December 1): Revised Proposals of the Academic Restructuring Working Group

Submitted through [this form](#) between November 20-26, 2020 and [this form](#) between November 26-December 1, 2020.

College Model

In Favour - College Model

I do think Executive Deans are needed to take over some of the decisions the Dean's make and to actually tie the various faculties in a college together. Otherwise we don't need academic restructuring, we just needed SET.

I like the current composition of the college model; it is fine and will work. We do not need an executive dean however because we already have a provost, who is to serve as the executive dean. What I do recommend is that only one dean preside over the faculties within each college, with each faculty within the college being run by a vice-dean. This would actually remove expense rather than take it away, as two or more deans would either serve as vice-deans (their contracts re-negotiated) or new vice-deans chosen. This will serve the intent of the current proposed college structure without adding an executive dean for each college. This is possible (considering labour law) during a re-structure. Finances and administration actually cannot effectively be administrated separately, although we would very much like that, and so an academic dean should still be running the administration. I would recommend that the Provost make the most of this opportunity and seriously consider this suggestion. It would be welcomed by many I suspect and solve some now very apparent human resource issues that the Provost appears to be facing with his deans.

I believe the college model is best.

I prefer it over the hybrid model for two main reasons: 1) it appears to provide substantial savings compared to the hybrid model, and 2) it keeps Arts and Science separate (combining them into one faculty seems very strange to me).

The main reason I support the college model over the consolidation model is that it retains several important faculties. The most important, to me, is the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation, which is unique in its combination of disciplines and strong collegiality, not to mention its world-class reputation. I am very proud to have received my BPE, MA, and PhD from this faculty and for it to be downgraded to a school would be a real shame.

I would be happy to move forward with the college model as proposed.

If I had to choose, I would go with the College model. It still gives Faculties the ability to revel in their own prestige and remain proud of their area of work/study all while propping the University (as a whole) higher. The other models are exclusionary and reduce the university to appear as a degree mill on paper (and therefore eventually in practice). I just don't under the use of the word "college"? It appears many colleges are seeking university status but we're presenting ourselves as an established university with mini-colleges within.

College Model, Scenarion B, #2. CSJ is well placed based on language and location. As well, Camrose location as a separate Unit makes sense, manage their own affairs out in Rural Alberta. The 3 colleges appear to be aligned strategically. Would be great to see further integration of Indigenous units on campus.

While a sacred cow for the U of A and all other Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions, I believe that limiting the Executive Dean Roles to Academic Faculty members is not actually in the best interests of the U of A. This was the standing mindset for the VP portfolios until the mid 90's when the first non-academic VP (F&A) was appointed and I believe there has been highly successful non-academic VP (F&A)s and VP (F&O)s since then. As these roles will be administration/operations focused, allowing true professionals in these areas to take on these roles would be beneficial. And, there are certainly administrative experts who have spent their careers at the U of A or with other institutions that completely understand the vision, mission and detailed inner workings of academic institutions, leaving behind the 18 months to two years it often takes academics to fully comprehend these roles. Perhaps to calm the concerns of academics, the title of these roles could be changed to College COOs to align more appropriately with the non-academic activity/responsibilities of the roles.

U of A for TOMORROW

Academic Restructuring and SET are opportunities to be truly transformative with significant outside the box thinking. If there was ever a time to opening the Executive Dean/COO positions to non-academics, this would be the time. This will be a defining moment - whether the U of A holds onto the archaic thinking of the past or whether it will truly move into the next stages of the evolution of post-secondary institutions - it just depends on how genuinely transformative the U of A leadership is willing to be.

Faculties retaining their "faculty" status and power over internal management is crucial to academic and teaching success. Organization around Tri-Agency lines will assure that common functions are administered by a body with some minimal shared assumptions respecting research priorities and demands.

College Model Proposal. I am in Faculty of Education, and my work is much more humanities focused than it is connected to business and law. Whatever decision is made, please consider that many of us in Faculty of Education align ourselves more fully with arts and humanities.

College or Hybrid - I think it is essential for smaller faculties to retain their identity as faculties and the control that that entails. Although the proposal for the Consolidation model states that professional programs would maintain academic autonomy for the purposes of accreditation, I'm hesitant to believe it.

Of the choices available, I favour the college model because it retains the entity of the faculty of science. For me, this is a more natural grouping for the FoS than with arts. If either of the consolidation or hybrid models are adopted, I don't see why Art and Sciences can't remain as faculties within them as other faculties do within their blocks. I don't think there's been adequate explanation as to why large faculties (like science) have to be combined at all.

The College Model Proposal because I believe the groupings make the most sense in that they combine faculties with similar academic goals and outlooks. I strongly believe that combined the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Science without any level of control underneath is risky and could easily lead to conflicts between the best interests of different programs. If the two faculties

are to be combined, greater power must be given to the departments (possible consolidated) to ensure the interests of all programs are still met.

Of the three models, I believe the college model is most likely to serve the university well - hopefully permitting consolidation and savings, while also retaining faculty identities, reputations, and independence/responsiveness to local needs. The college model may also offer benefits in terms of interdisciplinarity. I am concerned that the consolidation model would be substantially more disruptive to the faculties, while ironically achieving lower cost savings. Given its disruptiveness, I also see definite potential for demoralization and confusion.

My personal preference, however - having listened to the GFC meeting yesterday - would be for the so-called invisible college model. While I certainly appreciate the need for consolidation underpinning the college model, I believe all the gains - including enhanced interdisciplinarity - can be achieved without the addition of a new layer of governance, and while also reducing front-facing disruption and confusion.

College Model because administrative fees are not duplicated and administrative services would be minimal, allowing the The 3 stand-alone faculties would also remain autonomous.

I like the college model as it is described here (Nov 30):
<https://www.ualberta.ca/uofa-tomorrow/academic-restructuring/revised-proposals.html> I think it's important to keep humanities/social sciences together as we have different philosophies for teaching courses than sciences.

Concerns - College Model

No to executive deans - too expensive. Rethink FEC - this is a costly process when you consider how much human power and time are expended.

The faculty of arts should share a college with like-minded faculties such as law and education. Science is too different in scope and funding requirements.

UofA for TOMORROW

An executive dean's council and a dean's council feel redundant. The executive dean's council seems elitist and a bit exclusionary. How are three-to-four people supposed to adequately represent an entire campus of students, staff, and faculty? Have a large council with all represented. Especially given the brief conversation brought up when questioned about an interim-dean while vetting for executive deans - what prevents the alternating dean's unconscious bias in the executive dean's council?

there was a connection made between accreditation of professional faculties and the college model yesterday this connection is not clear, accreditation for professional programs can occur within any framework - it just needs to be explained - if this is the rationale for choosing the college framework this is not correct

College Model Composition

I feel the proposed College of Arts and Science with their retaining their faculties as a revision to what was the hybrid model is the way to go. I feel there are strong synergies that can be had between Arts and Science and there are strong synergies with Education, Law, and Business being with ALES and Engineering and this will set up the university for more success than the current proposed Tri-Council aligned college model.

I feel that there would be great synergies for a college that included Arts, Science and Augustana. I don't feel keeping the Augustana Faculty separate is inline with the Universities vision. As an Arts and Sciences Faculty there are many reasons this is a good fit. Among others it would allow for the potential to offer more opportunities to those students that want to study on a smaller campus. You could expand this more and in addition to grouping the faculties you could position the Campus separate. Having a Camrose Campus that is available to all facilities, colleges, schools, etc has the potential to be even more successful in attracting students.

Faculty of Arts and Science, but do not merge FEC; Arts makes more sense with science than with business, law, or Education

UofA for TOMORROW

modified college--grouping the faculties in the college model for the purpose of delivery of services makes sense, but absolutely no need for the executive level of administration academically -- a board of deans for each would be best, or a rotating "lead" dean.

I would propose consideration of the invisible college or shared services model (ICM). Having listened to the GFC meeting, I heard the following:

- The ICM retains all or almost all the savings from the college model
- It permits maintenance of our current 'front-stage' organization - with faculties remaining officially independent - thus helping minimize risks to accreditation, identity, and reputation, while also leaving student-faculty relations unchanged.
- It avoids the introduction of a new governance layer of executive deans

I heard four objections:

- Executive deans are required for college/service manager accountability
- Executive deans will enhance interdisciplinarity
- Executive deans will help enhance EDI
- Executive deans are required for nimble decision-making

I think all of these objections can be met (please note: I completely recognize that I don't have access to all the relevant information, and that the working group has surely considered some of the solutions below; I want only to highlight possibilities for tinkering with the ICM to effectively address these concerns, and the limitations of the executive dean approach):

- In my understanding of the ICM, service provision would still be consolidated under a service manager responsible for coordinating services to several faculties. Would it not be possible to make the manager accountable to a mini-council formed of the relevant faculties' deans? This could create an accountability structure that wouldn't require new hires, would actively help ensure that faculty concerns were not lost in the hierarchical pipeline (as could easily happen with only an indirect line of communication), and should not add excessively to decanal responsibility given it would effectively add one regular meeting to their workload.

- It is my sense that interdisciplinarity is more effectively pursued as a bottom-up and cultural question than a structural one. The main barriers to collaboration seem to be a lack of mutual knowledge (e.g. not realizing others have related interests) and a lack of common language and research practices (e.g. struggling to understand one another's theories and methods, and having to invest time and effort into mutual translation). It's not immediately obvious to me that the introduction of executive deans would address these barriers more effectively than, say: encouraging graduate students to take courses across disciplines (building organic connections

UofA for TOMORROW

amongst themselves, and encouraging them to inform faculty members of opportunities opened up by overlapping theories or methods); arranging informal faculty liaisons or even simple meet-and-greets; or emphasizing and investing in the cross-disciplinary initiatives that we already have, such as AI4 Society or the Intersections of Gender. All these options seem to allow more organic discovery of shared interests and topics, and development of shared language; and I'm sure faculties would be happy to brainstorm others!

- I recognize the massive importance of EDI. However, it seems - as an outsider - that we could potentially pursue EDI goals more effectively with some kind of matrix structure: a single dedicated Head of EDI, who could provide support for locally responsive faculty initiatives and help to cross-fertilize ideas across the full range of faculties would seem to offer more promise for effective and wide-reaching change than three executive deans with a wide range of other responsibilities that have been lifted upward from the deans.

- Aside from the question of whether nimble decision-making is an unalloyed good (I agree with one GFC member that deliberative decision-making can be a positive for university governance; especially under non-crisis conditions), I would imagine nimbleness could be achieved without a new governance layer and additional hiring. For example, would it not be possible to organize rotating mini-councils of deans to which the deans delegate specific authorities? Or to adopt a working group structure to address clusters of key decisions, with the decanal council then working only on full-group approval? Though this layered approach has been contentious for restructuring, it seems to me that many 'work-groupable' issues might be less contentious and more easily worked through with a group of 16.

Again, I don't claim all the above is uncontestable or fully informed! It just seems to me that the addition of executive deans does not add any obvious value beyond the shared services or invisible college model - which has definite advantages in terms of retaining faculty independence and closer-to-the-ground decision-making - while costing the new hires would cost additional money at a time of great scarcity. And on that basis, I would hugely appreciate dedicated / more public consideration of this option by the working group.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my feedback and suggestions! I would like to close by saying that I genuinely appreciate the ongoing effort to be consultative during a process that is inevitably very time-constrained. I realize this has not been easy, by any stretch of the imagination, and am grateful for the efforts everyone in the working group has made to generate and evaluate options in good faith. I hope that some of the comments above are of use as things progress.

Hybrid Model

In Favour - Hybrid Model

Hybrid Model. This seems to make the most sense from an academic point of view and provides the most in savings. I do not like the Executive Dean model because it appears to be another level of bureaucracy, so my concerns about a merger between Arts & Science are lessened since these will not have such a position.

The Hybrid Model, largely because it establishes a Faculty of Arts & Science which is not lead by an Executive Dean and because it achieves substantial cost savings.

Hybrid. (Option C), the structure has the best chance to realize actual savings.

Concerns - Hybrid Model

The School of Public Health should go in the Professional and Applied Sciences it does not fit well with the other Health Sciences at all and fits much better with the ones under there. There appears to be a reluctance of the Central team to recognise that Public Health is an applied area that is not about Health Care or doing things to people but about society. Why are you so intent on putting public health in with the so called Health and Medical sciences. What have we got to do to make you listen as it is clear you have not! We do not fit with them at all!!!!!!!!!!!!!! This is so frustrating.

Consolidation Model

In Favour - Consolidation Model

The Consolidation Model Proposal will best serve the UofA long term because a) it creates Faculties that most faculty members and students can identify with, b) it strikes the right balance

U of A for TOMORROW

in terms of administrative structure and staffing, and c) it provides an academic structure that is intuitive to members of the public and that will make sense to members of the public.

I think the consolidation model is likely the best approach for the U of A moving forward. I think it strikes the balance of leaving the administration of particular autonomous groups to themselves, while grouping departments in a way that makes sense. I would hope that particularly in the Faculty of Arts & Science this would help reduce redundant courses offered between different current faculties/departments.

Concerns - Consolidation Model

Restructure the health and medicine faculties and force them to get on the regression curve. if these 6 faculties were fitted to the curve it would be: $y = 0.1888 \cdot (32,730^{0.6137}) = 111$ FTEs. If you followed your own model, these six faculties need to cut 499 staff. Since this number is greater than the total cuts required, fixing this one set of faculties would solve all the problems. Instead you are allowing them to be overstaffed by 423 positions (they should have total staff of 111 FTEs vs scenarios which show 534 FTEs).

I think the consolidation model might be acceptable except for the illogical consolidation of "Arts and Sciences." I know this is a historical combination in academia, but has no place in modern understandings of these disciplines. There is very little overlap professionally, pedagogically, or practically between these two very different areas, and as a member of the Faculty of Science, I fear the Arts would suffer with this relationship, as I think Science would be more likely to be prioritized due to its size and power. Not only that, but these two faculties have the largest course loads of any faculty, with the worst operational staff/course ratio, which I have personally observed is a major problem already in Biology for example, where full time staff support is very strained and a lot of burden is placed on graduate student teachers for undergraduate labs. Also the separation of ALES and Sci has always seemed idiotic to me (I know there is a lot of competition between the two, as well as feelings), their goals, research, professional skills, and even sometimes students are the same (many grad students for example I know try to take classes in ALES because they provide courses Bio does not, but this is hard as ALES students are prioritized, so they are not guaranteed access). I do not think we should be perpetuating this separation without taking this opportunity to help both ALES students and Sci students have more opportunities with each other that would benefit both departments. For that reason alone I think the college model is the best.

General Questions and Comments

GFC should not use the invisible model - it will paralyze the university financially and academically. Let's make the most of this crisis while still hearing the voices of the academy, but I do not favour the [invisible college] model. I agree with the provost, it will not work.

In all three proposals it's also very apparent that any amalgamation with Engineering and ALES results in huge staff and operational budget cuts. What is the reasoning behind that? Are they that bloated?

My only concern with all of the models is the potential level of disconnect. This seems to be a hurdle already with higher positions unaware of the full extent of a staff member's plate. Moving roles around under different umbrellas (ie: under faculty, under centres of excellence, etc.) means that staff are further disconnected, especially if displaced but still representing a faculty or department. ie: a staff member moving to a student services centre of excellence and having a "manager-type position" to bridge the gap from the centre to the faculty/department is just adding distance, not ease-of-access.

Native Studies stays autonomous, it would be great to see more integration between with other Indigenous units on campus, to better serve unique student needs, visitors, and Indigenous communities. Synergies and economies of scale will fall into place naturally. Indigenous enrolment could possibly double with integration, whether it's part of this process or the next phase as mentioned in the revised plan. Despite the differences in disciplines (it's primarily Social Science and Humanities), which can be accommodated in time, making this a reality would make the UofA a destination university across Canada and possibly North America, as opposed to only a local University for Indigenous Peoples. Possible integration of units would be CILLDI for language, Law for Aboriginal legal studies, Business for professional studies, Education for Indigenous Education and ALES Northern programs. Restructure physically, one building for Indigenous Studies/Programs, versus, a multitude of locations, a floor or a wing on campus. Pembina Hall is the perfect location for an all Indigenous building. "Come to the Center" would be theme in this restructuring, "Merge" as opposed to divide.

Appears that Native Studies, FSJ and Augustana are not impacted by the changes with respect to staff #s, resources, etc. Would suggest that Native Studies is young and small and needs to be allowed to flourish but FSJ and Augustana should be a part of shouldering the financial burden facing the University as with all other Faculties.

I would like to see the issue of the perceived dominance of medicine - for example the name change to add medicine and the requirement of medicine accreditation to be addressed if the college model goes ahead as this will be an issue for all health faculties/disciplines

1) All models are similar with regards to the addition of administrative oversight: oversight of the largest unit (Consolidated calls this "Dean", College and Hybrid calls this "Executive Dean"), mid-sized unit (Consolidated calls this "Head", College and Hybrid calls this "Academic Dean", and smallest unit (unclear across the models whether "chairs" would be maintained). 2) The Consolidation model would trigger an immediate need to review the faculty evaluation process as FEC as it sits at the level of the largest unit. While I have heard that holding FEC process at the largest unit level is an ultimate goal (although not announced), the College and Hybrid options allow for this change to be considered outside of the academic restructuring and give the mid-sized units (called "Faculties") a chance to explore how they function within the new structures. 3) While the Hybrid approach may be beneficial for administrative and fundraising opportunities for Applied Sciences and Professional programs, there seems to be a misalignment of knowledge and expertise. Specifically, Education, Law and Business overlap with knowledge (theory, research methodology, etc) from the Arts to a much greater extent than Engineering or ALES. (N.B.: A coma would be helpful as I hope we are not calling Law, Business and Education "Professional Sciences").

First, when we saw the 20+ proposals put forth, it was clear that certain voices on campus carry further, carry more weight, and are taken more seriously. A process that highlights inequities on campus and who has a voice that is "important" and "valuable". Second, the three options are versions of a single choice. Rather than presenting radically different choices to truly get a sense of our University's appetite for change, the ARWG has presented three sides to the same pyramid - and done this twice. There is an illusion of choice by the manipulation of language (calling units "faculties/colleges/schools/divisions"). Third, The three options still create an additional level of administration and administrative oversight. Despite statements that "academic deans" would oversee programs and curriculum - these need resources which would

U of A for TOMORROW

flow from the "executive dean". Thus the program and curriculum decisions rest ultimately with the executive dean. Fourth, we see limited opportunities for interdisciplinary work outside, and no structure to support interdisciplinary work woven in.

It reflects very poorly on this institution that none of these proposals have a decline in the number of leadership positions. Not shockingly, you've protected your own jobs (or jobs you eventually want) and instead have eliminated front line admin positions. As someone who completed their undergraduate program at the U of A and is now completing their PhD, I can confidently say my experience has been dramatically shaped by the support offered by admin staff. I have had no interaction with my deans. All of these proposals will dramatically affect the student experience because you're eliminating all the positions that deal day to day with students.

The fact that the projected ""estimated savings"" for leadership positions is NEGATIVE tells me all I need to know. I have defended the University so many times in the last year, but that ends now. You were handed an extremely unfair task by our government, but you have handled it very poorly. You need to do better.

FGSR needs to be on the table. The fact that it's not on the table means it should be included in SET. It is a disgrace as an administrative unit and, I fear, may be being used as a "model" for centralized "services." Anyone who has been a grad chair or grad dean or grad administrator knows that the system can't work without all of us acting as a shield and interpreters between the students and FGSR with its rigid, arbitrary, ever-changing, and often perplexing "administration" of our programs.

There are so many small, inconsequential, low hanging fruits, that the committee could make to be seen to ""hear"" from the concerned voices by adopting them. 1)College of Arts and Science for Option C would take care of concerns of lost identity. 2)Invisible college is simply a plea to limit the scope of governance and budget for the superdeans. 3)Moving Dentistry as its own faculty is of no consequence to others in health sciences. 4)Removing ""School"" or Option A approach retains the perception of autonomy.

Academics yearn autonomy, so as long as options can assure how autonomy is not changed, and that suggestions are seen to be adopted, there will be buy-in.

UofA for TOMORROW

I think option B/C currently splits your vote. I think you have three groups of voters, Option A/B/C believers, Option B/C either-or voters, and Obstructionists.

I think how you get people to vote will be consequential, preference votes will likely result in a different outcome than first past the post.

I recommend outlining more specific considerations for students. What benefits are we getting out of these models? How does this affect how much we pay for administrative fees hidden within our tuition costs? We don't know how much was being saved prior to this consolidation plan, so the numbers seem pretty meaningless. How does it affect program accreditation and other technical aspects? Where do our known support systems go or will be now need to start all over with administrative personnel for our concerns? How would convocation work?

I'm wondering how funding will be allocated within conjoined faculties with regard to student tuition and administrative fees. It seems like a lot more deans and associate deans will be incorporated into any of these models. As well, in professional programs I have concerns about how we will be appropriately accredited. Additionally, I was wondering how our current student councils (i.e. Alberta Pharmacy Students' Association) would be affected by a conjoined faculty. Furthermore, my concern is as a student in her final year, how will a conjoined faculty look after alumni who graduated from a different faculty than the one that will be conjoined after the Class of 2021 has left.