

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
College of Arts and Sciences

College Reorganization Proposal
January 29, 2024

Background: The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Reorganization was initiated in Fall 2021. In collaboration with the College Advisory Council (CAC), a process was designed for studying the prospects and possibilities for college reorganization. The CAS Reorganization Task Force, made up of six Faculty Members (selected by CAC) and six Department Head / School Director (DH/SD) administrators (approved by the Dean’s Office) worked together over a period of seven months to carry out the [Dean’s charge](#). To that end, they crafted the CAS Reorganization Task Force Report, submitted in Fall 2022. During that semester, the Dean’s office worked again with CAC to design the next step in the process, which resulted in the creation of the Faculty Consultant group. Comprised of four Faculty Members (three from CAS; one from the College of Education), the Faculty Consultants—who were selected based on experience with leading challenging conversations and collecting, analyzing, and visualizing data—organized a series of focus group/listening sessions with stakeholder parties to address questions and collect feedback on the three alternative models put forth in the 2022 Task Force Report. The Faculty Consultants produced a second report, submitted in August 2023, which presented stakeholder feedback from the focus groups and put forward a fourth “hybrid” reorganization model assembled from elements of the first three models that were positively received.

Why Reorganize? The Reorganization Task Force Report (2022) recommends that reorganization intentionally address several areas of concern in the College. These include:

- improving advising structures;
- expanding marketing, communications, and outreach by hiring a dedicated expert in the Dean’s office whose role will be to support and strengthen the recruitment and branding efforts of departments / schools, disciplines, and programs;
- promoting interdisciplinarity;
- providing a more systematic approach to diversity, and equity, and inclusion in the College;
- addressing inequities in the workload of faculty, unit leadership, staff and in the number of direct reports to the Dean; and
- remedying clerical and other support staff concerns. (Previous separations had left a dire need for staff positions that are essential to support students and faculty and to ensure that units and programs across CAS can function.)

Additionally, a rationale for considering a reorganization is supported by the following:

1. Over the past ten years the College has contracted significantly. Enrollment, measured in Student Credit Hours, has decreased 44.6%, while the number of tenure-line Faculty Members has decreased 23.2%, the number of Full-time Lecturers has decreased 31.6%, the number of Part-time Lecturers has decreased 47.5%, the number of Clerical-Secretarial (CS) employees has decreased 51.6%, and the number of Professional-Technical (PT/PE) employees has decreased 36.4%. Over this same period, the number of Department Head, School Director, and Associate Dean positions has remained constant at 20. Given the reductions we have made in other employee classes, we must consider whether we can make a proportionate reduction in the number of unit administrators.¹
2. Although every CAS School and Department has had its own full-time administrator, CAS Departments and Schools vary greatly in size and complexity. For example, by one measure of full-time employees, our largest unit has 41.5 full-time employees and our smallest has 2.5 employees. (See table on pg. 5.) Given these disparities, we should consider whether every Department and School requires supervision by a dedicated full-time administrator, or whether a smaller team of administrators could effectively provide administrative oversight and support for the College's 18 Schools and Departments. Many times in the past an administrator has successfully overseen more than one Department on a temporary basis. For example, in Winter 2024, three administrators are each serving as Department Head for two Departments. These temporary arrangements have been implemented under existing employee contracts without any change to Department Evaluation Documents (DED) or Department Input Documents (DID).
3. When our College was organized in 1959, it was led by an 11-member administrative team consisting of one Dean and ten Department Heads. With the emergence of new Departments and Schools, the College's administrative leadership has nearly doubled: one Dean, two Associate Deans, 15 Department Heads, and three School Directors. The large size of this group can make it difficult for the College's administrators to function as a unified, effective team.
4. Demographic forecasts indicate that the College will continue to face enrollment challenges in the coming years. The [National Center for Education Statistics](#) projects that the number of students graduating annually from Michigan high schools will decline by an additional 5.3% over the next seven years. Consequently, we must consider how to direct resources to areas critical to recruiting and supporting students, including marketing, advising, and instruction. Achieving these goals may mean moving personnel resources from unit administrator positions to specialists directly engaged in increasing enrollment and fostering student success.

¹ Comparison of Fall 2013 and Fall 2023. Enrollment data from IRIM and employee data from Banner.

5. The number of Clerical-Secretarial (CS) employees supporting CAS Departments and Schools has decreased to 13, with several Senior Secretaries supporting more than one unit. Clerical-Secretarial staff members have raised concerns about these arrangements. Senior Secretaries have asked that every Senior Secretary report to only one supervisor and that workloads for Senior Secretaries be made more equivalent.
6. Some have observed that the five interdisciplinary programs that report directly to the Dean's office lack visibility and regular administrative support within our current structure. The place of these programs within our administrative structure might be clarified through reorganization. Additionally, with the savings realized through reorganization, we may be able to allocate budgets to these programs.

Our Current Status: CAS is currently made up of eighteen separate academic-administrative units (three Schools and fifteen Departments) under the supervision of Administrative Professional employees (AP, non-bargaining, twelve-month administrators). Schools and Departments in CAS are of widely varying size and complexity; no two are exactly alike. At the same time, there are similarities in tasks and expectations for Administrative Professional (AP) managers. Many units in the College have become considerably smaller over the years in terms of student enrollments, number of faculty, number of lecturers, and the number of dedicated staff.

When we examine the reports, data, and models that have been presented over the course of two and half years, one theme appears to be consistent: a proposed reduction/consolidation of the overall number of Departments and Schools in the College. To achieve this, it has been proposed that CAS combine Departments and Schools into larger administrative groupings that are balanced in size (number of full time faculty/instructors) and complexity, thus reducing the overall number of full time Administrative Professional (AP) managers in CAS.

Another proposal under consideration is the replacement of Department Heads / School Directors with Faculty Department Chairs. This change would have the advantage of providing interested faculty with increased leadership opportunities. However, a concern that has arisen repeatedly in discussion with union leaders and some faculty is how such a change would align with our current labor contracts. The AAUP contract, as one example, would need to be reopened and renegotiated to provide a structure that can accommodate Department Chairs and maintain the current structure for faculty grievances and other processes. Full-time and Part-time Lecturers, whose contracts were recently merged through negotiation, could also be impacted. Reopening contracts that have just recently been successfully renegotiated would be time-consuming, labor-intensive, complicated, and uncertain in terms of outcomes. According to Academic Human Resources (AHR), another significant obstacle to the creation of Department Chairs is that no one College can create a new Faculty classification exclusively for itself. The AAUP contract applies to all faculty across the University; a contractual change for one College would necessitate adoption by all.

Proposal for Reorganization: Alternatively, we might consider other ways the College can consolidate Administrative Professional (AP) leadership without reopening labor contracts to accommodate a new order of Faculty Department Chairs. One approach would involve grouping Departments and Schools under one administrative office. We experienced this very recently in CAS, when two Departments were placed under the leadership of one Department Head. The situation arose when one of these Departments was unable to identify an internal candidate for the Department Head role, due to the Faculty's commitment to research, grants, and instructional pursuits. Although not intended as a permanent solution in this case (due to the combined size of the two aforementioned Departments) the grouping concept provides a flexible and potentially efficient path forward.

Applying this approach more broadly, we propose that the College group its 18 Departments and Schools into 10-12 administrative clusters. Each cluster would be managed by a non-bargaining Administrative Professional (AP) employee, thus maintaining the position of Academic Department Head / School Director within the College. Departments and Schools newly grouped with other Departments and Schools would elect a "Faculty Chair" who will advise and consult with the Department Head / School Director on matters related to scheduling, staffing, hiring, etc. The Faculty Chair will be elected by the voting members of the Department / School that is being grouped. No Department or School will lose its status, or any of the contractual rights therein, as a "Department" or "School." Departments / Schools that enter into administrative groupings would retain their own Department Input Document (DID), Department Evaluation Document (DED), and budget, although some Departments / Schools will need to revisit their DIDs and DEDs to account for the creation of the new Faculty Chair role. This position will be supported by release time paid for by savings from the consolidation of Department Heads / School Directors. The amount of release time would be determined by the overall size, scope, and complexity of the Department / School.

The consequences of CAS's student enrollment decline are being acutely felt by Full-time (FTL) and Part-time (PTL) Lecturers, as course schedules have been reduced and as instructional opportunities for Lecturers have narrowed to accommodate Faculty load requirements. The instructional release time that is granted to Faculty Chairs (in combination with the recent implementation of the Research/Creative Activity Release - RCAR), could increase instructional opportunities for Full-time and Part-time Lecturers, which aligns with feedback received from the Lecturer focus group on reorganization outcomes (Faculty Consultant Report, 2023, pg. 20). Lecturers have also expressed interest in gaining access to service roles and responsibilities that contractually apply to Faculty. While this may be worthy of consideration, it may require a reopening of current contracts and could have consequences across the Colleges.

The vital work performed by Clerical-Secretarial (CS) and Professional-Technical (PT/PE) employees in CAS has also been transformed. Staff positions vacated previous to and during the pandemic, through retirement and reassignment, have gone unfilled, leading to an uneven realignment and/or increase of workload for staff. Our proposal seeks to create a better balance and sense of stability for staff. When an administrator serves as Department Head / School Director for a group of two or more Departments / Schools, a Clerical-Secretarial (CS)

employee would serve as Senior Secretary for the same group of Departments / Schools. The administrator would serve as the Senior Secretary’s sole supervisor. This administrative team of Department Head / School Director and Senior Secretary would maintain one front office to support the Departments / Schools within the administrative group. According to the Faculty Consultant Report (2023), “CSs want to have an identity that comes from working with/for Departments but they also want to support each other in teams,” (pg. 20). Our goal is to create a structure that supports both departmental / school identifications and teamwork.

In deciding how to align Departments / Schools into administrative groups, we propose using the number of full-time employees as a measure of administrator responsibilities. For this purpose, we define full-time employees as the number of Faculty Members (FA), Full-time Lecturers (LE), Professional-Technical employees (PT/PE), and Administrators (AP). We include current Department Heads and School Directors in this count, as these employees would remain part of their home Departments / Schools in this reorganization. Although they are essential members of our community, we do not include Part-time Lecturers (LL), Employee Consultants (EC), and Graduate Assistants / Doctoral Fellows (GA/DF) in this count, as these numbers tend to vary from semester to semester. Clerical-Secretarial (CS) employees are also not included in this count given that our proposal would seek to ensure that secretarial support to Departments and Schools is right-sized.²

Africology and African American Studies	4
Art and Design	30
Biology	24.25
Chemistry	20.5
Communication, Media and Theatre Arts	41.5
Computer Science	13
Economics	8
English Language and Literature	30
Geography and Geology	17.25
History and Philosophy	26
Mathematics and Statistics	25
Music and Dance	23.5
Physics and Astronomy	9
Political Science	9
Psychology	22
Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology	21.5
Women’s and Gender Studies	2.5
World Languages	13

² This table shows the number of full-time employees of CAS Schools and Departments in the AP, FA, LE, PE, PT, and VF classifications who received pay in Fall 2023. CS employees are not included. Employees with appointments in two Departments / Schools are counted as .5 in each Department / School, with the exception of two employees whose splits are defined as .75 / .25.

How will Groupings be Determined? In our view, a Department Head or School Director can effectively oversee and support 25 or more full-time employees. Consequently, we do not propose a change in administrative leadership for Departments and Schools with 23 or more full-time employees. We would ask Departments / Schools with 19 or fewer full-time employees to join administrative groups of at least 23 employees. Departments / Schools with more than 19 but fewer than 23 full-time employees may be able to retain their current administrative structure, but some of these units may be asked to join an administrative group in order to provide an administrative home for a smaller Department / School.

Raw data on Department / School full-time employee counts would not be the only factor driving the process of aligning Departments / Schools into administrative clusters. We will also take into account several key considerations, including disciplinary similarities and affiliations, departmental / school identities and traditions, other measures of size and complexity, and locations of offices. (We do not anticipate that any Faculty Members or Lecturers would change office locations in this reorganization.) Each Department / School with fewer than 23 full-time employees would provide input stating its recommendations about what other Department / School(s) would be the best partner(s) to join in an administrative group sharing a Department Head / School Director, Senior Secretary, and front office.

Each of the College's interdisciplinary programs would also belong to an administrative group, and would receive oversight and support from the group's administrative team of administrator and Senior Secretary. Giving interdisciplinary programs the same administrative support structure as Departments and Schools should help to ensure the visibility of these programs and guarantee that they receive effective administrative support.

Although cost reductions are not the primary goal of reorganization, we began this process with the understanding that any new organizational structure would need to be reasonably budget neutral. The proposal we put forward here would achieve that goal and moreover would help the College realize significant savings. The current median salary for CAS Department Heads / School Directors is approximately \$132,000. When we add fringe benefits that number is nearly \$185,000. A reduction of one Department Head / School Director position and the return of the person holding that position to faculty would result in savings of about \$46,000. Reducing by six current Department Head / School Director positions would save the College approximately \$277,000. The savings would provide funds to cover release time for Faculty Chairs based on Department / School size and complexity. Additionally, savings would allow us to consider hiring additional staff based on changes in duties and support needs in areas of the College where faculty, lecturers, and students are underserved.

Progress on Reorganization: As noted in the Reorganization Task Force Report (2022), some of the "concerns that hinder the optimal functioning of CAS" (pg. 3) need to be addressed through administrative advocacy beyond the College level. In the past two and half years, as the reorganization process has evolved, the College has made progress in at least two areas that were originally identified as areas of concern. Last fall, the Dean was granted permission to recruit a new staff position: a dedicated CAS Marketing / Communication Specialist (PT08). That

search is currently in process and holds the potential to bring our College into alignment with the ways most public comprehensive universities currently manage marketing and public relations. Additionally, the Dean's Office is in active conversation with Associate Provost for Student Success Calvin McFarland and Provost Rhonda Longworth about relocating the CAS advising office to room 205 in Pray Harrold. The relocation would align with Francine Parker's original intention for the Center (CAS is currently the only College on campus that does not have advising services on site), and the advisors are enthusiastic about the prospects of such a move, which has the potential to build stronger alliances and open channels of communication among faculty, lecturers, students, and professional advisors, whose services are essential to student success.

The Task Force Reorganization Report (2022) also lists diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as an area that could be strategically addressed through reorganization. In the year following that report's submission, Eastern Michigan University hired a new Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), Dwight Hamilton, who officially assumed his duties on September 18, 2023. Mr. Hamilton is now working to coordinate diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across the University. Alongside our own ongoing efforts to strengthen our College mission of access and opportunity, we will be working in collaboration with the University's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion under Mr. Hamilton's leadership.

As part of this ongoing effort, and in response to concerns raised by current Department Heads / School Directors, we will be reevaluating the roles and responsibilities of the CAS Associate Deans to better align with the responsibilities of Department Heads / School Directors.

In conclusion, as the College considers this proposal we want to acknowledge that reorganization will take continued time and discussion. Implementation will not necessarily happen across the College at once; we might consider a phased approach, as some other institutions have adopted. We also want to remind everyone that at this stage of the process nothing is engraved in stone. This proposal is built off the strengths that we see in hybrid Model #4, from the Faculty Consultant Report (2023). And while there is still time for consideration of workable ideas that may yet come forward, the reorganization process cannot remain in "consideration" mode forever. We believe that the proposal outlined above would help us best move towards the preferred outcomes and goals outlined in the Reorganization Task Force Report (2022) and the Faculty Consultant Report (2023), without requiring a reopening and renegotiation of labor contracts, which would have ramifications for faculty, lecturers, and staff in all five Colleges.

Our proposed next step in the reorganization process is to ask all Departments / Schools to have a conversation about their place within a reorganized College. Please consider the following questions and send the input of your Department / School to the CAS Dean by March 31, 2024:

1. Does the current configuration of disciplines and programs within your School / Department work well, or would you consider making changes to the composition or structure of your unit within a reorganized College?

2. With what other Schools / Departments do you have the closest affinities? With what Schools / Departments do you most often cooperate in curricular offerings? What three Departments / Schools do you see as the best possible partners with which to form an administrative cluster?
3. In the spirit of leveraging this opportunity, and as we look to the next five to ten years, how would you like to see the educational mission of your School / Department strengthened within a reorganized College?

Additionally, we invite the College interdisciplinary programs that report directly to the CAS Dean's office—Critical Disability Studies, Data Science & Analytics, Environmental Science & Society, Neuroscience, and Urban Studies—to provide input to the Dean by March 31, 2024 on the following questions:

1. With what Schools / Departments do you have the closest affinities? With what Schools / Departments do you most often cooperate in curricular offerings? What three Departments / Schools do you see as the best possible partners with which to form an administrative cluster?
2. In the spirit of leveraging this opportunity, and as we look to the next five to ten years, how would you like to see the educational mission of your program strengthened within a reorganized College?

Updates and Corrections:

2/19/2024: Full-time employee counts for Biology and Chemistry were adjusted to reflect a split appointment between those two departments.