

Davis Division of the Academic Senate
Staff Summary of Responses
Academic Organization Task Force Report
May 23, 2014

The Joint Academic Senate/Administration Academic Organization Task Force Report (Task Force) was distributed to all standing committees and the Faculty Executive Committee of each college and school. Responding committees agree that the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) raises serious issues concerning advising, infrastructure, development and departmental recognition. However, responses also agree with the Task Force's conclusion that forming an independent college may not be the best way to address these issues.

Before MPS can consider the possibility of becoming an independent college, the Provost and the College of Letters and Science (L&S) must develop plans to address identified issues, particularly advising and infrastructure. Because underfunding has proven to be an impediment to performance, L&S must address structural departmental underfunding. This issue of underfunding, which may be a cause of other issues raised in the report, must be resolved before consideration of the formation of separate colleges.

The L&S Faculty Executive Committee provided substantial comments, though the committee did not reach consensus on the Task Force report. The committee's comments, in full below, highlight three reports from the steering committees of the three divisions in L&S: MPS, DSS, and HArCS, as well as Associate Dean McClain's response to the MPS response.

Enclosure:

Response Report: Academic Organization Task Force Report



Davis Division Academic Senate

Request for Consultation Responses

Joint Academic Organization Task Force Report

April 18, 2014

Chair Nachtergaele has requested Divisional review of the Joint Senate/Administration Academic Organization Task Force Report. The Task Force was jointly appointed by Provost Hexter and Chair Nachtergaele following receipt of a request from the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences to become a college. The Task Force was asked to refrain from recommending a specific organizational structure and to examine the proposal's campus-wide impact.

Faculty Welfare

March 19, 2014 10:40 AM

While MPS have identified serious issues with advising, infrastructure, development support, and departmental recognition, the FWC concurs with the Task Force's conclusion that forming an independent college or merging with another division is not necessarily the best way to address these concerns. The committee encourages the Provost to develop a concrete plan to address the identified issues (where advising and infrastructure seem most serious) within the L&S structure and to utilize additional funds from the 20/20 Initiative to improve existing campus units, like MPS, where underfunding has been shown to be an impediment to performance.

Graduate Council

April 22, 2014 11:29 AM

No response at this time.

Planning & Budget

April 22, 2014 8:51 AM

CPB discussed the Joint Academic Organization Task Force report. The committee is in agreement that there are issues that must be resolved within the College of Letters and Science. CPB believes that one of the main issues, which may in fact give rise to many of the other issues discussed in the report, is a structural underfunding of the College. CPB urges that the issue of underfunding be resolved before considering the creation of separate colleges.

Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (LS: SOC SCI)

April 21, 2014 11:27 AM

The L&S Executive Committee's response is long, so I am uploading it in pdf form. --Phil Shaver, Chair

Response continued on next 5 pages.

Date: April 17, 2014

From: Phillip Shaver, Chair, L&S Executive Committee

Re: Executive Committee Response to the Joint Administrative/Senate Task Force on the Academic Organization of UC Davis

The L&S Executive Committee contains L&S Division deans, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Advising, and representatives from all three divisions of L&S, so it was not possible to come to a committee-wide consensus regarding the Task Force report. I am therefore simply copying below the three reports from the steering committees of the three divisions in L&S: MPS, DSS, and HARCS. At the end I have copied Associate Dean McClain's response to the MPS response.

Date: March 18, 2014

From: Isabel P. Montañez, Chair of the MPS Steering Committee and Alexandra Navrotsky, Interim Dean MPS

Re: MPS response to the Joint Administrative/Senate Task Force on the Academic Organization of UC Davis

***Summary:** The Dean of MPS and its Steering Committee are grateful for the efforts of the Joint Academic Senate/Provost Task Force on the Academic Organization of UC Davis for highlighting the issues related to the organizational structure of the College of L&S that currently compromise the effectiveness of the Division. However, we are disappointed by the lack of recognition in the report of MPS' clearly articulated goals and coherent and bold vision for transformation by 2020. We maintain that a College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences with a strong research and teaching identity will not only benefit the campus as a whole but is a requisite component for bringing the campus's 2020 Vision to fruition.*

MPS response to the Joint Administrative/Senate Task Force on the Academic Organization of UC Davis

The current organizational structure of L&S, established 18 years ago, no longer provides the most effective model — a reflection of its substantial growth to an unwieldy size and the increasingly varying needs of the three Divisions. Specifically, the current structure lacks the support needed for the continued development of a prominent Division of MPS, which involves ambitious goals of 'breaking the top 20 rankings by 2020' and enhancing the synergy and balance between the biological and life sciences and the physical, engineering and social sciences. The latter was stressed by the 2010 WAG report as a high priority if UCD aspires to reach the 'Next Rank Group'. MPS has the academic talent, ambition and resolve to move forward and achieve its goals, but the positioning strategy that this will require is limited by the current College organizational and leadership structure. Thus, it remains our conclusion that a College of MPS, which meets the specific objectives and needs of its faculty and students, will provide a better framework for fulfilling our research and teaching mission and will assure the competitiveness of MPS programs for national prominence.

The MPS proposal (fall 2012) requesting that the Division be established as a stand-alone college was evaluated, along with other possible configurations, by the Joint Academic Senate/Provost Task Force on the Academic Organization of UC Davis in the context of the broader-scale organization of the campus. Here we, the MPS Steering Committee and the Dean, respond to the findings of the Task Force delineated in their recent report (Feb. 3, 2014). We concur with the Task Force assessment that there are a number of operational issues that urgently need to be improved and that many of these issues transcend MPS, affecting the other two divisions in L&S as well. The Task Force correctly points out that new resources will need to be found in order to address and rectify these issues. The report, however, focuses primarily on the operational issues of the College and Division and fails to acknowledge the vision and goals of the MPS faculty for academic transformation that were clearly articulated in our written (Appendix A) and oral reports to the Task Force.

From the vantage point of MPS, our reaction to the report is divided into three parts:

1. Specific responses to points in the report.
2. A list of action items that, if implemented quickly, would go a long way toward ameliorating some of the functional problems. We suspect that the cost of these urgently needed actions will be similar whether or not MPS becomes a separate college.
3. A list of underlying organizational problems that would remain despite the actions above; their resolution continues to require a major reconsideration of the existing college organization, in which we still favor MPS as a stand-alone college.

We acknowledge the difficulty in making definitive assessments given that the university organizational structure is changing rapidly, with a consolidation of functions at higher administrative levels. Thus, parallel changes are occurring separately from any discussion of L&S or MPS organization, making long-term strategies and effects hard to gauge.

Specific responses to major points in the report

Pg 6 (2nd paragraph) — The report concludes that ‘There appear to be no active barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty.’ It further raises the question whether college structure impacts (1) the intellectual connection and collaborative potential across different disciplines and (2) UC Davis’ ability to lead very large centers and program projects such as those funded by federal agencies. And in turn, asks ‘will a change in college organization provide the opportunity to improve matters?’ We believe that the task force has underestimated the barriers. One example of how the college structure impacts the MPS Division is the appointment of our Faculty Assistant at 20% in comparison to comparable appointments of Associate Deans at levels of 50 to 80 % in the Colleges of Engineering and Biological Sciences. This translates to a lower level of effort invested into developing strategic and cross-disciplinary research collaborations involving faculty in the MPS Division in comparison to COE and CBS. Faculty Assistants were not automatically included in meetings involving Associate Deans of Research of the Colleges. A lower percentage appointment translates to less teaching or other workload relief. The end result is that faculty assistants are not treated at the same level as associate deans.

Pgs 7-9 (Workload by Academic Rank) — The Task Force does not recognize the full extent of the MPS faculty workload given that it does not acknowledge the impact of the large number of non-senate and other instructional/temporary titles in the Division. Specifically, the effort required in the recruiting, management and supervising of non-Senate faculty or temporary personnel was not

considered. We note that this balance of Senate FTE and other faculty was not a matter of choice by MPS but rather is a consequence of not being able to recruit full-time ladder-rank faculty at an appropriate rate to keep up with growth.

Pg 10 (Impact of Different College Models on Research) — The report suggests models for resource allocation within the current divisional structure in order to enhance research support, in particular for MPS. In so doing, the Task Force does not recognize that Colleges receive more resources and respect than the Divisions of L&S. Moreover, the report does not give sufficient credit to the impact that a divisional organizational structure of a large college with a focus on a liberal arts undergraduate education, such as L&S, has on the identity, vision, goals, and nimbleness of faculty to respond to research, teaching and fund-raising opportunities. This was discussed in more detail in our initial report.

Pg 10 (Shared Governance) — We are grateful to the Task Force for highlighting that the ‘current organizational structure of shared governance in L&S does not adequately account for needs of the faculty.’ As the report indicates some steps have been taken by the Divisions of L&S to improve the shortcomings of the inefficient shared governance structure. Currently, Divisional steering committees and FPCs are the representative groups that support personnel and executive decisions in the College. With the formation of Division steering committees, the focus of the L&S Executive Committee has shifted to course and major change decisions while serving as a ‘pass through’ committee for issues of specific concern to the Divisions. Nevertheless, the steering committees, which can deal with substantive issues local to the divisions, remain somewhat unofficial and mainly advisory in nature.

Pg 11 — We agree with the Task Force assessment that the undergraduate experience be central to the reorganization of the College. MPS has recently submitted an aggressive master plan for the recruitment, retention, and advising of students in mathematical and physical sciences (Center for Education and Careers in the Mathematical and Physical Sciences) with a particular mission to be the campus focus for increasing the number and retention of STEM students.

Pg 12 (last bullet point) — Given the successful transition of the Division of Biological Sciences (DBS) to the College of Biological Sciences (CBS) in 2005, we argue that there is no precedent for concern that the separation of MPS would erode the existing liberal arts education focus at UC Davis. The Division of Biological Sciences became the College of Biological Sciences after ~7 years, reflecting their growth and evolving research and teaching needs. The Division of MPS has similarly experienced tremendous growth since the 1995 reorganization of the College into three Divisions with number of senate FTE, enrollment of undergraduate majors and graduate students, and pattern and level of extramural funding akin to that of the Colleges of Biological Sciences (CBS) and Engineering. Notably, MPS Contracts and Grants grew by 47 % from 2007-2008 to 2011-2012 — a faster rate than the other 3 Colleges. If ORU activity is included then the growth is 74 % over the 5-year comparison period. Despite comparable growth of the two Divisions over the past two decades, DBS became CBS after ~7 years, whereas MPS remains a division after 18 years with no clear justification for why this structure is warranted.

Pg 13 (Undergraduate Advising) — The Task Force indicated that ‘MPS, in particular, may get less out of shared advising than the other divisions’ which may ‘exacerbate a greater issue in MPS of student retention.’ They further point out that ‘Not focusing on the needs of the students in MPS is a disservice to the campus ability to address STEM education goals, a mandate for the good of the state and nation.’ We stress that the budget for Undergraduate Education and Advising (UEA) in

L&S is driven by the college organizational structure leading to minimal flexibility. This budget structure has been in place for decades and has taken its share of reductions over the years. Notably, there have been no opportunities for negotiating advising resources within L&S, thus accentuating the existing limited flexibility.

Pg 14 (Communications and Development) — We concur with the Task Force finding that ‘challenges emerge from the current development and communication infrastructure within L&S.’ The current configuration of staffing is driven by the organizational structure of the College and precludes the requisite flexibility to serve the MPS needs.

In addition, we note discrepancy in certain statistics reported by the Task Force report and the documents that were provided by the Division to the Task Force. These include:

- Pg 6 (3rd paragraph) — The reference to ‘the division draws in well over half (MPS estimate is 67%) of L&S’s research funds’ needs to be corrected from 67% to 55%.
- Pg 6 (last paragraph) — The MPS student credit hour load is equivalent to 21% (as of 2012-13) — not 19% of the campus total.
- Pg 5 (1st paragraph) — Correction of the reference to ‘MPS by its own estimate generates 65% of L&S’s research dollars . . .’ MPS generated 55% of the 2012-13 extramural funding received by L&S. The total expenditures attributed to MPS from 2011-12 data were 65% of the research expenditures in L&S.

Action Items

Advising: The present structure does not serve MPS adequately. We believe that there may be room for a joint college-wide or perhaps better university-wide service dealing with the issues of very basic first and second year advising. However, advising done in regard to choosing, nurturing, and sustaining a major must be centered in MPS, coupled with expanded coordination with the departments. This mandates major revision of the current structure of UEA and indeed we question whether UEA should continue as a separate organization geared only toward L&S. The improved on-line advising system being developed by the IT group moved over from MPS (Minh Nguyen and his staff) will also change these needs and balances. Recognizing that MPS must be the center of STEM education on campus, we have just prepared detailed proposals for MPS-STEM advising and related outreach, mentoring, and education matters.

Development: MPS currently has one development officer, Shari Kawelo, who interacts directly with the MPS dean, but whose contact with the main development office involves a middle level of coordination in L&S (currently Maureen Miller, who has just announced her retirement). MPS needs more than one development person including specific development personnel to focus on the new “chemistry” building. Importantly, there is a need for a clear reporting line between the MPS development personnel and the main development office (Shaun Keister’s group), without an intervening level of coordination. We further need our own MPS publicity person — a technical writer in the sciences— rather than continued dependence on shared services.

Executive Committee: Given that the L&S College committees are more interdisciplinary than their equivalents in the other colleges and professional schools at UC Davis, we recommend that each divisional steering committee become an Executive Committee. Such stand-alone committees could

more effectively and efficiently address those issues specific to their Division. The three chairs of these executive committees could meet occasionally to address those issues that really affect all of L&S. In such a structure, the role of the L&S Executive Committee should be re-evaluated; if retained, the chairs of the three steering committees should be *ex-officio* on the L&S Executive Committee.

University Committees. L&S should have three representatives (one from each division) appointed to all important university committees leading to more fair representation of the MPS.

These action items can be addressed without protracted consultation given the changing campus administrative structure, the urgent need to improve advising and service to STEM students, and the existing representative bodies in place for each Division.

Remaining underlying issues

1. L&S is simply too large compared to other colleges, making it inherently cumbersome. For the organizational structure to be most cost and time efficient, it should reflect the research, advising, education and outreach priorities, lines of reporting, and communication roles of the associated faculty. Over the past several years, the Divisions have been operating more independently in order to address their growing needs and opportunities. A consequence of this evolution is that the Divisions are not fully utilizing the L&S resources as these resources are spread thin and cannot be redirected as needed given the entrenched L&S philosophy.
2. We ask ‘To what degree is L&S a college in name only, with increasingly separate and disparate functions?’ Most of us share the intellectual and emotional commitment to a liberal arts education, but it is not obvious that a “liberal arts college” is the only way to further such goals. As noted above, the creation of CBS has not weakened the liberal arts education at Davis and there is no reason to believe that the creation of a separate MPS college would do so.
3. With regard to restructuring, MPS and engineering are different in culture and would not fit together easily. Although we note that the earlier separation of biological sciences from the College of L&S does separate the physical and biological sciences at UC Davis, we strongly feel that any formal alliance with CBS would be problematic, especially for those MPS faculty not working on research that overlaps biological topics. This reflects the heavy emphasis on biological sciences at Davis, and the perception (justified or not) in much of MPS that biological sciences are favored over the physical sciences,
4. Paramount to the discussion of the campus academic organization is the perception, internal and external to the university, that a divisional dean is not a college dean and a division is something short of a college. We contend that a dean of academic stature on par with the other Colleges is necessary to maximize our visibility on the national and international academic stage and for ambitious fundraising. An administrative leader of this stature would provide the gravitas needed to promote the MPS goals through focused marketing communication and fund-raising, pro-active recruitment and retention of faculty, and development and fostering of major inter-College collaborative efforts. MPS further requires an Associate Dean(s) of equivalent rank to the administrative management of the other colleges. These issues remain important in searching for a new dean and with regard to fundraising, as well as locally on many levels.

Appendix A

Date: August 26, 2013

To: Professors Andre Knoesen and Carolyn De la Peña

From: Isabel P. Montañez, Chair of the MPS Steering Committee and Professor of Geology

Re: MPS Steering Committee discussion regarding the academic organization of UC Davis

The MPS Steering Committee was established in 2012 in response to the 2nd report of the Dean's Special Committee on MPS Positioning (Feb. 2012), which recommended that the Division have its own faculty senate committee to provide a comprehensive focus on core functions relevant to MPS and to chart its own destiny as it continues to grow and pursue a unified goal to obtain rankings of '20 [or higher] by 2020.' During its inaugural year, the MPS Steering Committee evaluated various sources of information regarding the current structure of MPS within the College of Letters and Sciences (L&S) with the goal of building a consensus within the division in terms of a shared vision of our future. Our discussions, which twice included the chairs of the five departments and the director of the ORU unit NEAT (Professor Alex Navrotsky, current Interim Dean of MPS), were informed by several sources including oral reports of faculty discussions within each department and three written assessments involving MPS: (a) the Washington Advisory Group (WAG) report and (b) two reports by the Dean's Special Committee on MPS Positioning, which was charged with evaluating the current organizational model of the Division in the context of recent strategic planning. Importantly, the notion of a College of MPS did not arise from our committee, but rather grew out of the grassroots efforts of departments within the Division and the findings of the aforementioned three reports. The MPS Steering Committees' role was to critically evaluate the available information and determine whether there was support for advocating for the creation of a new College of MPS, or for identifying an alternative mechanism for gaining more autonomy for the Division.

The following arguments summarize the compelling reasons for why MPS would benefit from being an autonomous College. They do not necessarily represent the sentiment of all faculty members in MPS but rather they reflect the consensus that developed following intra-departmental faculty and MSP Steering Committee discussions. A comprehensive analysis of various potential models for the organization of MPS and associated departments is presented in the 1st report of the Special Committee on MPS Positioning (Kauzlarich, Chair, August 24, 2011).

The Division has experienced tremendous growth since the 1995 reorganization of the College into three Divisions. Currently, MPS has 154.3 senate faculty FTE, and 1,660 undergraduate majors and 549 graduate students, operating with a yearly budget of \$44.3 million. Of the \$39.5 million of research expenditures for the College, 65% is generated by MPS faculty.

Despite a strong research component, MPS is perceived on campus as a teaching and service unit. The MPS teaching load (3 podium courses per year) is larger than that of faculty in the Colleges of Biological Sciences, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, and Engineering reflecting the undergraduate programs, which directly impact majors in these colleges through course requirements. The WAG review team recognized the research potential of the departments in the Division in acknowledging their 'know-how and ambition to rise in national ranking' and concluded that 'the performance of the Division of MPS will be a major determinant in how the higher education community views the College and hence UCD.' This report further recognized that legacy budgeting of a perceived service Division has resulted in protracted underfunding of MPS and may have negatively affected the research time and productivity of its faculty — an inconsistency in comparison to other top research universities.

Currently, the three divisions in the College of L&S share an Executive Committee and associated College Committees, Undergraduate Advising, College Relations and Development, and College Computing staff. There are multiple advantages to having MPS as a College with its own system of independent committees and staff:

- The L&S College Committees are more interdisciplinary than their equivalents in the other colleges and

professional schools at UC Davis resulting in an impacted workload and slow response by several of these committees. Examples of time-impacted committees include the Faculty Personal Committee and the College Courses Committee. Comparable committees of MPS faculty would be more effective, beyond just lower workloads, given that members would be more knowledgeable about the issues presented to them permitting them to be more engaged in and pro-active for MPS-specific issues. See the 2011 report of the Dean's Special Committee on MPS Positioning for more detail (attached Appendix A).

- The nature of the extramural funding and research is quite different from that of the other two Divisions both in per faculty annual expenditures and departmental distribution of extramural funding brought onto campus. Rather, MPS shares a pattern and level of extramural funding that is more akin to that of the Colleges of Biological Sciences and Engineering. A MPS Executive Committee could work effectively with the Dean to evaluate the role of extramural funding and related issues within the context of the MPS budget model. This could involve defining resources to support faculty efforts in garnering large interdisciplinary extramural grants, including training grants.
- As a stand-alone college with a Dean, Executive Committee, and staffing comparable to that of the Colleges of Biological Sciences, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, and Engineering, MPS would be much more effective in developing and fostering cross-college research collaborations. It would further create an environment that allows the MPS faculty to realize their full research potential, which has been arguably constrained by the high teaching and administrative loads of this 'service' Division.
- The current structure constrains the independence needed in recruiting, specialized advising, and retaining MPS students. Dedicated advising staff would provide a more focused approach to the needs of MPS students, particularly important for the campus's STEM-related investments and efforts.
- MPS has its own Senior Development Officer who works closely with the Dean, but there is a need for a focused staff that will target marketing, communications and fund-raising specific to MPS interests and affiliates, including leaders in the related private industries. Given declining administrative budgets, it is anticipated that some shared staff support will be necessary.

The Steering Committee concluded that an organizational structure for MPS that meets the specific objectives and needs of its faculty and students will provide a better framework for the research and teaching mission of the organization than the current structure as it strives to 'break 20 by 2020' and will assure the competitiveness of MPS programs for national prominence. In late fall 2012, a motion was put to vote in the five departments to get a sense of the faculty opinion and it passed in all of them. In turn, the Committee, along with the chairs of the five departments, and the Chair of the L&S Executive Committee met with the Chancellor and Provost to brief them regarding the issues of foremost concern to MPS. These initial consultations eventually led to the formation of the "Joint Academic Senate/Provost Task Force on the Academic Organization of UC Davis" in Spring of 2013.

April 9, 2014

Memo

To: Phil Shaver, Chair
L&S Executive Committee
Fr: Division of Social Science Steering Committee
Re: MPS proposal to reorganize L&S

In general, the DSS Steering Committee understands and shares many of the concerns raised by MPS in its effort to improve advising, attract external funding, and ensure that division-specific issues are

efficiently and effectively addressed. On behalf of DSS, we believe that it's very important to recognize and address the problems that MPS has articulated, and we hope to contribute to solutions to these problems.

At the same time, we are not convinced that the proposed reorganization is the best way to go about addressing these problems at this time, especially given that the university has recently embarked on a massive funding reorganization. It seems likely that the new campus budget model will have far-reaching consequences for these issues and others, and we believe it makes more sense to first see how allocations of new FTE as well as staff (particularly for advising) will address or perhaps change some of the MPS concerns. In addition, it seems likely that if MPS establishes itself as a separate college thereby making it likely that both HARCS and DSS will establish themselves as separate colleges, overall administrative costs, which will be required to administer each college separately, will undoubtedly increase. Dividing into separate colleges seems like a cumbersome and costly procedure at a time when the university is endeavoring to cut costs. Therefore, while we agree that important problems with resource allocation within the current three-division model for L&S exist, we support the conclusions of the Joint Task Force that the first step is to think creatively and jointly about whether and how these problems can be addressed within the current college structure.

We had several questions regarding implications of the MPS reorganization.

The traditional purpose of a college is to award a degree. Does it make academic sense to award separate degrees from MPS, HARCS and DSS?

Given that MPS offers courses that are essential to many of the majors offered at UC Davis, will creating a separate MPS college make it harder for students to take MPS courses?

Could the proposed reorganization lead to replication of MPS subject matter across what would be several separate colleges?

How do other universities cluster their MPS departments? The goals and challenges outlined in the MPS position are shared by all units of L & S. How does becoming a separate college get them closer to achieving these goals? It is not clear how it will help them.

How will dividing into separate colleges influence interdisciplinary collaboration?

Finally, we wonder what the benefits of such a reorganization will be for the university and, most importantly, for the students, especially undergraduates.

HARCS Steering Committee Response to the MPS Proposal to Reorganize L&S

The members of the HARCS Steering Committee remain committed to the ideal of the liberal arts and to the model of a strong College Letters and Science as the foundation of that ideal. We believe that the MPS proposal would undoubtedly debilitate, and possibly destroy L&S at Davis. We believe the proposal would be detrimental to faculty and to students and especially to undergraduate

students. We are concerned that such a proposal would inhibit interdisciplinary scholarship for faculty and interdepartmental study for students.

We recognize, however, that the current structure of L&S is not functioning effectively. There are at present centrifugal forces which threaten to render L&S even more ineffective. In particular, we believe that the new budget model is a major contributor to the devolution of L&S and a driver of the MPS proposal. It is hardly surprising that introducing a competition-based budget model would lead to competition between divisions. In particular, the new model incentivizes the divisions to compete against one another to attract and retain majors. An unfortunate manifestation of this is apparent in the MPS proposal. MPS wants to establish its own advising system to replace the Undergraduate Education and Advising unit that has long served L&S well. The MPS proposal makes it clear that the new function of undergraduate advising would be to attract and retain majors for a division rather than to ensure the academic success of our undergraduates whatever their major. Thus the role of undergraduate advising is to support the division rather than the students. We have little doubt that the new budget model, especially if MPS exits L&S, will compel the other divisions to follow suit in an unseemly scramble for majors.

Despite our concerns about the MPS proposal we do agree with many of the problems in the College that MPS identifies in its report. We believe, however, that many of these problems are not unique to MPS but also apply to HArCS and to DSS. Thus we believe, as the Task Force report suggests, that what is needed now is a reexamination of the structure and governance of L&S. Ultimately, the HArCS Steering Committee is convinced that that our colleagues and our students would best be served not by dismembering L&S but by enhancing the College and the ideals it represents.

Associate Dean McClain's Response to the MPS Response

Dear Members of the Executive Committee:

I am concerned about the "MPS" response to the Organization Task Force report that was circulated to the Executive Committee on Monday. While reading their letter I was surprised to learn of their "action item" to drastically change the advising structure for the whole College, and not just for MPS. To my knowledge this has not been discussed at the L&S Deans Council or in the Executive Committee. This new proposal has little to do with the original idea for a separate MPS College, and is apparently based on assertions that MPS students are not as well served by the UEA as those in the other divisions. I have already addressed this and other numerous errors about the UEA contained in the Task Force report. Clearly those errors resulted from misinformation provided to the Task Force.

The MPS steering committee continues to misrepresent the role of the Undergraduate Education and Advising (UEA) in the College. Specifically, the "Action Item" for advising indicates a lack of knowledge about advising in the college, and about the advising needs of students. The truth is that UEA has been the leader for advising on this campus. If the College or campus were to undertake this action item, it would be a great disservice to the students on campus. It would appear that this action item is driven by the absurd idea that poor retention in MPS departments can be blamed on advising rather than the actual factors affecting student decisions. As I have said

in the Executive Committee meeting, the role of the advisers on this campus is to help students be successful in their undergraduate careers at U.C. Davis; it should not be to increase the number of majors in any one program. This “proposal” or “action item” affects the entire College, and is entirely premature since the real proposal is to create a separate College. For review, the “action item” reads as the follows:

Advising: The present structure does not serve MPS adequately. We believe that there may be room for a joint college-wide or perhaps better university-wide service dealing with the issues of very basic first and second year advising. However, advising done in regard to choosing, nurturing, and sustaining a major must be centered in MPS, coupled with expanded coordination with the departments. This mandates major revision of the current structure of UEA and indeed we question whether UEA should continue as a separate organization geared only toward L&S. The improved on-line advising system being developed by the IT group moved over from MPS (Minh Nguyen and his staff) will also change these needs and balances. Recognizing that MPS must be the center of STEM education on campus, we have just prepared detailed proposals for MPS-STEM advising and related outreach, mentoring, and education matters

Before such drastic changes would be proposed, one would expect that some knowledge of the current structure of advising be considered. To that end, I am going to provide some background.

The Current Advising Structure in the College of Letters and Science

Like most major research universities, U.C. Davis is centered on the College of Letters and Science. As such, and again like most universities, the faculty and majors represent a diverse and exciting array of academic disciplines. This diversity is served by the advising structure of the College, made up of faculty and a highly professional staff of major advisers and Deans’ office advisers. The two categories of advisers work together to assist students when those students must navigate the complex array of requirements set by the faculty of the University, the campus, the college and of the majors. They meet together quarterly to discuss issues of importance in advising.

The role of the major advisers.

- Currently, the College includes over 50 majors and 50 minors. The majors are housed in L&S departments and programs, and many departments manage multiple degrees or majors.
- The major advisers (faculty, staff and peers) provide advising for the majors. This requires intimate knowledge of the wide array of options available to the undergraduates in the major (e.g. electives, emphases, the majors themselves, etc). The advisers in these programs are superb, and work very hard to accommodate the changes mandated by the faculty.

The role of UEA

- In addition to “major requirements” managed by the major advisers, the faculty of the College, the Campus, and the University faculties each add their own requirements before a student may complete a degree. Students are provided with guidance on these requirements by the UEA. Examples of these requirements include:

- o *University, Academic Senate.* Entry Level Writing requirement, American History and Institutions requirement, Scholarship requirement (2.0 UC GPA), 180 minimum units, residency requirement, etc.
 - o *Campus, Davis Division of the Academic Senate.* General Education, scholarship requirements (maintain 2.0 GPA each quarter), minimum progress requirement, additional residency requirement, etc.
 - o *College, College Assembly and the Executive Committee (that's you).* Scholarship requirement (2.0 GPA in major, and in upper division major), breadth requirements for the BS and AB degrees, foreign language requirement, area requirements, unit requirements and limitations, further residency requirements, etc.
- The UEA manages and directs students as they work through the University, Campus and College requirements. We note that none of these requirements are strictly “very basic first and second year” advising, but instead apply to students throughout their undergraduate careers. In fact, there is no such thing as strictly “very basic first and second year” advising, and the MPS response is incorrect to say so.
 - Among their myriad duties UEA academic counselors are responsible for the following:
 1. Providing advice to student on the University, Campus, and College requirements.
 2. Working with students who fail to meet the Campus requirements for academic progress. In the College of Letters and Science, some 500-600 students are Subject to Disqualification each quarter, and are contacted by our office for evaluation. Hundreds of students come into our office every January and April, and over the summer where Counselors will review their specific situation using a holistic approach, and make continuation or dismissal decisions based on the policies set forth by the faculty that are in the best interests of the student. In addition to students who are SD, about 600 students end the quarter on Academic Probation, and are contacted by the UEA and requested to make an appointment to discuss their academic plans.
 3. For each student who is subject to dismissal a contract for continuation or readmission (if they are dismissed) is drawn up by the Counselor. Counselors follow up with heir cohort checking on their progress - albeit self-reported. Students know what it expected of them if they plan to continue as students or return at a later time.
 4. Counselors review applications for readmission by previously dismissed or withdrawn students, and monitor students’ progress toward meeting readmission requirements.
 5. In collaboration with major advisers, the UEA counselors are delegated the authority to certify degree requirements.

6. UEA Counselors and advisors assist students with petitions for double majors, change of majors, simultaneous enrollment, declaring minors, late actions, excess units, extending incomplete grade deadlines, pursuing University Extension courses for degree credit, repeating courses for a second time, individual major proposals and revisions, take graduate and professional level courses for degree credit and waivers of the senior residence requirement, evaluation of transfer credit from 4 year and out of state institutions, as well as Office of the University Registrar petitions.
- In addition to the advising duties, UEA Counselors provide staff support for faculty committees of the College. In fact, if it were not for this support, some committees would be dysfunctional.
 - UEA counselors also participate in a major way in recruiting activities for the campus, and with new student orientation – freshman, transfer, international, STEP - in the summer.

The flaws of the advising “action item” advocated in the MPS response to the task force.

- The action item proposes that UEA provide very basic first and second year advising. As stated above, the phrase is meaningless, and none the responsibilities enumerated above are “very basic first and second year advising.” On the contrary, most are critical over the students’ entire careers. The policies, rules and regulations of the University are complex – there is little “basic” about them.
- The action item states that the “...nurturing and sustaining a major must be centered in the MPS.” Substitute the word “majors” for “MPS” and I AGREE. This is, in fact, exactly how it works now, through the advising provided by the major advisors. However, MPS also claims that they should help students “choose” a major. Students shift majors between divisions, within divisions, and between colleges all the time. MPS advisers can help students move into an MPS major, or change from one MPS major to another. However the MPS advisers should not be providing the only advising on changing out of the MPS. If we are truly student-centric on this campus, advisers should not be trying to inhibit students leaving MPS majors where their interests no longer lie, and/or where they are not doing well.
- An implication of the response letter is that MPS was important in the development in the online advising capability on campus. This is incorrect. The IT group (which was administered by MPS, and funded by UEA and MPS), developed these new tools in collaboration with UEA staff led by Assistant Dean Trask. It was Assistant Dean Trask and Associate Dean McClain who proposed to move these online tools to the other colleges. This in turn led Assistant Dean Nguyen to request to move his team to the central campus.

In closing, I would be delighted to discuss advising issues for the College of Letters and Science with the Executive Committee and/or its members.

Respectively Submitted

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