

December 15, 2011

CHRIS CALVERT, CHAIR

Faculty Executive Committee
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Re: Davis Division Response: Proposal to Merge the Departments of Textiles and Clothing and Biomedical and Agricultural Engineering

The Davis Division of the Academic Senate forwarded your request for review to all of divisional standing committees as well as Faculty Executive Committees within each college/professional school. Comments were received from the Committee on Academic Personnel-Oversight, Graduate Council and Undergraduate Council.

The Committee on Academic Personnel-Oversight (CAP) expressed significant concerns regarding the impact on faculty within the Department of Textiles and Clothing.

- CAP understands that one faculty member from Textiles/Clothing will not have a departmental home; one will be transferring to L&S, and the remainder will transfer to Biological/Agricultural Engineering in the merger. In all three cases, CAP is concerned about the fairness of future peer evaluations associated with merits and promotions, in light of the shift from a highly interdisciplinary department centered around textiles and clothing, to disparate academic atmospheres with other foci. CAP recommends that the dossiers of these faculty members contain information documenting this shift, and that differences in the review associated with the new peer groups (of different academic cultures) must be carefully considered in future merit and promotion actions for these faculty.
- CAP is especially concerned that the faculty member who apparently will not have a home department will not benefit from the same, consistent peer evaluation procedures as previously in her/his employment history at UC Davis. It is unclear just what the peer evaluation procedures will be for this faculty member. The proposed merger document refers to the "pending retirement" of this faculty member several times, but also says that "...this faculty member is expected to retire in about one year." These two references are somewhat contradictory, as it would be CAP's interpretation of a "pending retirement" as one that has been officially requested with formal written documentation. It is CAP's understanding that unofficial faculty retirement plans are to be considered confidential and personal, as well as tentative, and therefore cannot be officially assumed in consideration of the proposed merger.

Graduate and Undergraduate Councils expressed concern about the impact on delivery of Textiles and Clothing curriculum as well as the impact on the Chemical Engineering and Materials Science cross-listed courses, renovation schedule for updating laboratory facilities, as well as general space assignment.

Graduate Council:

1. **Protect/Reallocate CHMS space:** The space used by CHMS in Everson may have become vulnerable with this merger. Labs and offices in the building appear to be "reallocated" to campus without proper faculty consultation and the faculty state that no solid plan has emerged for compensating CHMS for the lost space. This should be immediately addressed.
2. **Safety and quality of the facilities** require immediate remediation by the Deans' Office:
 - The labs and offices for the Textiles program are still in Everson. The building is old and labs are not equipped to meet the current safety standards.
 - Similarly, there are immediate safety issues in the research labs for the BSE program that should be addressed.
3. **TA support** for TXC courses should continue on par with the UG major phase out, as indicated in the proposal.
4. **The courses currently cross-listed with CHMS** should remain as such in the future, as they are based on disciplinary and academic considerations that have been in place for some time.

The graduate programs involved, as well as Council, are supportive of the interdisciplinary collaborations that will continue to be supported through this merger. BSE stated that one Textiles faculty has had a joint appointment in the department for some time, and that the other two incoming faculty will join the BSE department-based graduate

program, which will enhance the breadth of research available to BSE students. The programs have been administratively clustered since 2010 so neither anticipates any negative impact on the administration of the programs.

The merger will bring three fiber and polymer scientists to BAE and possibly can strengthen the research and graduate educations in bio-based materials, fibers and polymers. In fact, members of BAE have expertise in areas complementary to the current textile faculty and may be interested in joining Textile Graduate Group. Having said all of this, however, Council would like to point out that expertise of the faculty in polymer science have even more direct relevance to Material Science, and Council would like to be assured that a merger directly with CEMS has also been considered.

Undergraduate Council:

Undergraduate Council supports the proposal, while noting two concerns:

1. Closing the TXC major appears to be embedded in the proposal. UGC views a closure of the TXC major as a separate issue and UGC's support for the merger proposal in no way is support for the closure of the TXC major.
2. UGC has significant concern about space allocations, upgrading laboratory space and the timeline for renovations. The plan for location of offices is unclear, as the proposal states that offices will be consolidated in Bainer, however the TXC faculty offices will be in Everson. Also, a proposed renovation of the labs in Everson is planned to meet safety guidelines for the TXC group, but the long term goal is to move the laboratories of both groups to the old Food Science & Technology building where renovation and upgrading will take place to meet research and teaching needs of the consolidated department. What is the timeline for the renovation of the laboratories in Everson vs. the renovation of the laboratories in the Food Science & Technology building? Has financial duplication been addressed for renovating labs in both buildings?

Based on the concerns expressed above, the Davis Division would like answers to the questions raised before providing a final determination.

Sincerely,



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c: CAP Chair Chiang
GC Chair Knoesen
UGC Chair Rossini