



# **Davis Division Academic Senate**

## **Request for Consultation Responses**

### **Merger Proposal: Human & Community Development and Environmental Design**

**December 3, 2010**

Davis Division review of a proposal from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences to merge the Departments of Human and Community Development and Environmental Design. The proposal is supported by the college's faculty executive committee.

# **Academic Freedom & Responsibility**

**February 14, 2011 4:26 PM**

# Administrative Partners (DANN TRASK)

October 11, 2010 2:13 PM

Dear Professor Powell,

The L&S Executive Committee has discussed the proposal to consolidate the Department of Human and Community Development and the Department of Environmental Design in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences to form the "Department of Human & Community Development and Design." In addition, given the nature of the requested actions, the Executive Committee sought the views of faculty in associated existing undergraduate programs in our college. After considering the matter carefully, the committee has serious concerns with the proposal:

- The attached letter from Professor Timothy McNeil, Director of the Program in Design, summarizes the strong objections of the faculty to the proposed new department name. The existing Design Program in the College of Letters and Science offers a very popular undergraduate major in Design, and the real potential exists for cross college confusion resulting from the proposed name. The Executive Committee joins the Design faculty in strongly objecting to the use of the word "Design" at the end of the new department designation.
- The Department of Psychology objects to the statement that the new department's academic domain would be "human ecology" (see A.1. "Objectives"). Human ecology falls under the area of social psychology. Additionally, it is widely considered a subfield within the discipline of Anthropology.
- The name of the new department in itself is awkward. Additional concerns were expressed over the unusual internal structure and how the new department would work.

We urge that the consolidation request not be approved in its current form.

Sincerely,

Patricia C. Boeshaar, Chair  
Executive Committee  
College of Letters and Science

## Attachment

October 1, 2010

Patricia Boeshaar  
Chair of the L&S Executive Committee

Dear Chair Boeshaar,

Reading over the circulated minutes for the L&S Executive Committee (New Business, item 8) I'm concerned by the proposed name for a new department in CAES. The proposal calls for a combined *Department of Human and Community Development* with the *Department of Environmental Design* resulting in a new name of *Department of Human & Community Development and Design*. The faculty in the Design Program find this name misleading, specifically objecting to the general word "Design". The Design Program in the College of Letters and Science is intending this year to return to departmental status and as a result will become known as the *Department of Design*. The Design Program has 450 plus undergraduate majors and is the only comprehensive design discipline department within the UC system. If the name is approved, the singular word "Design" will be shared by both departments.

For the sake of clarity within the academic and professional design community, and to avoid duplication on the UC Davis campus, we oppose the use of this department name. We would like these factors to be taken into account when the new department name is decided. Other options for a new name include:

Department of Human & Community Development and Landscape Design.  
Department of Human & Community Development and Environmental Design.

Thank you for taking this under consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Timothy McNeil,  
Director, Design Program

# **CAP Oversight Committee**

**December 2, 2010 2:53 PM**

CAP has looked into this proposal and does not find any issues with it.

Solomon

# **Courses of Instruction**

**December 1, 2010 8:51 AM**

*No response at this time.*

# **Elections, Rules & Jurisdiction**

**January 3, 2011 2:30 PM**

*No response at this time.*

# Graduate Council

November 29, 2010 3:56 PM

The proposed merger affects four graduate groups: Child Development, Community Development, Geography, and Human Development. Graduate Council requested that the Chairs of the graduate groups involved in the merger poll their membership and pass along any concerns for our consideration; as of this writing, we have received the following note:

As of now, we have had replies from a limited number of members of the Grad. Group in Human Development. There is consensus that merging the departments should not lead to modifications of the programs--either the M.S. or Ph.D. Generally, the expectation is that the programs will retain their (multi) disciplinary identities.

Of greater concern is the possibility that the resulting merger could somehow lead to a title that could obscure the identity of the programs--or at least make them less easily identifiable or apparent to prospective students.

A more indirect, but real potential problem derives from the fact that (reduced) FTE allocations will be made to the department as an entity--without regard to the different programs that it serves and their separate identities. This becomes a major concern where impending retirements will impact the availability of instructors for "core" curricula for the Ph.D. and the M.S. It is not clear that the needs of the Graduate Programs will be given full weight. [11/17/10]

While Council raised some concerns about the scholarly and pedagogical implications of the proposed merger in response to the worries raised by several members of Environmental Design, we agreed that there may indeed be potential for the merger to create a unit that would be "greater than the sum of its parts," as the August 2010 proposal promises.

Some of the staffing implications were not clear in the proposal, but we accepted the premise that these would need to be worked out once the merged unit was up and running. With this prospect of future staffing changes in mind, we ask that the new unit be reminded of the Graduate Council Policy on Notifying Graduate Council of Changes in Administrative Structures, (GC2009-02). This policy states that "Council must be notified when substantial and important changes in administrative structures are planned that will impact graduate program or groups." The proposers should respond to Council with the information required.

GC2009-02 can be found at:

<http://www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/gradcouncil/GC%20Policy%202009-02%20-%20Admin%20Restruct%20Notification%2011-2009-2.pdf>

# Planning & Budget

**February 8, 2011 10:01 AM**

The committee would like to thank Dean Van Alfen for the additional information. There are several points CPB wishes to address.

- 1) In the area of consultation, a 'faculty-based' committee appointed by the Dean is not the same as Academic Senate consultation, even if there is broad representation in that committee.
- 2) As far as the faculty vote, five of the ten comments recorded on the ballot were extremely negative, even if the faculty members who wrote them voted for the merger. Comments such as "shotgun marriage"; the merger having no "teaching, research or disciplinary basis"; its not being "a comfortable fit"; and the merger's being a condition by the CAES Dean to keep the undergraduate and graduate programs intact reflect a sense of hopelessness among the faculty, which is incompatible with the proactive action you have described.
- 3) CPB did have the old data on the vote in its report. The data supplied by you does tally correctly. CPB believes at this point that there is a positive vote on the merger.
- 4) On the issue of placement of faculty, CPB must disagree with your position. All attempts should be made to ensure that the faculty continue to have a successful career at UC Davis. Faculty affected by closures and mergers should be consulted as to what academic unit they feel fits their research and teaching needs. These wishes should be honored, even if they require the faculty to move to another college. Steps should be taken so that new home departments are not penalized when they agree to take in these faculty. This must be done with the faculty affected by this merger.

# **Undergraduate Council**

**November 22, 2010 12:55 PM**

The Undergraduate Council supports the merger and the faculty's interests in a name change. This is an excellent opportunity to find synergies within the courses even though the majors are not closely related. Because students belong to major rather than departments, it is important to protect the integrity of the curricular offerings of the majors.