

Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Design

FINAL report

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Context and History

- A continuum of cumulative budget shortfalls and lack of consensus within the Budget Recommendation Committee prompted the elimination of four Dean positions in Spring 2017.
- Academic Restructuring is referenced in Strategic Planning Retreat documents and the developing Strategic Plan: “Complete and implement the academic redesign”
- Budget Recommendation Committee prompted an investigation of academic structure in 2019-2020. An Ad Hoc Minot State Restructuring Committee was formed and presented four models to Faculty Senate in February 2021. The committee was reconstituted by Faculty Senate for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Committee consisted of seventeen members including faculty, staff, and one student. Note: Although input was gathered from all, some members were non-voting.

Activities included:

- Weekly 90–120-minute meetings
- Online surveys of faculty and staff
- Interviews with all university chairs
- Interviews with the Honors and Interdisciplinary Studies directors
- Facilitated an open innovative design forum that was attended by fifty-two faculty and staff members and two students
- Presentation to FS on March 24th for the purpose of gathering feedback.

The committee has now prepared a final model for presentation based on feedback gathered.

Problems to Solve

- The original charge to the Ad Hoc Committee included some problems to address:
 - Address inequities in access to the VPAA. This problem was addressed by having all chairs report directly to Dr. Geller for the 2021-2022 school year; however, this has increased her workload to an unacceptable level.
 - **Recommendation:** Create seven schools to report to an Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVPAA)
 - **Recommendation:** Hire an Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVPAA) to serve functions outlined in this report to allow the VPAA time to focus on academic strategic planning, innovative programs, and curriculum development.
 - **Recommendation:** Create an Academic Council, which should include all seven chairs of these new schools, the AVPAA, the Director of Assessment, and others as determined during the design and implementation process.
 - Anticipated budget shortfalls. Recommendations must be budget neutral or result in savings:

- **Recommendation:** As part of the implementation process, the financial specifics should be a factor as decisions are made about reassignment time and stipends at both the school and program level. Savings for this model are clearly dependent on how issues of reassignment time and stipends are addressed during the implementation process if this proposal is approved.
- Last year's Ad Hoc Committee identified other problems that need to be addressed:
 - **Inequities in chair duties and other reassigned time for faculty across the institution.**
These inequalities result in morale difficulties as well as decreases in effort and attention.
 - **Recommendation:** Use an institution wide sliding scale (an Equity Reassignment Analysis process) for load related to administrative tasks at the school and program levels
- This year's Ad Hoc Committee also identified the following problems:
 - **Lack of consistency in procedures and policies across the institution, which results in inequities and inefficiencies as well as morale difficulties.**
 - **Recommendation:** Regardless of restructuring changes, we need to create institution-wide procedures and policies for reassignment time, stipends, contracts, computer purchases, and budgets, at a minimum.
 - **The need for increased engagement across campus with the institution as a whole and goal driven leadership.**
 - **Recommendation:** All faculty members, after their first year, should be required to serve on at least one and not more than three Faculty Senate or institutional committees. This service should be part of the faculty evaluation process.
 - **Recommendation:** All faculty, after their first year, should contribute to their department through leadership on program tasks such as scheduling, transfer credit approval, accreditation, program review, assessment, and advising. Support should be provided to new faculty as they take on these roles. Programs can determine how this shared responsibility will look but the focus should be on creating an environment in which program responsibilities are shared and knowledge of the institution and its policies and procedures are developed.
 - **A need to more regularly review our processes, procedures, and policies to make sure they are functioning optimally.**
 - **Recommendation:** Review any restructuring changes through the Faculty Senate Satisfaction Survey and Staff Satisfaction Survey for a minimum of two years following full implementation. Continue to evaluate periodically to assess how things are going.

Changes made to Model 1 since March 24th meeting

1. Changed School Director title to School Chair
2. Faculty Evaluations will be completed by School Chairs instead of the AVPAA (formerly the Director of Faculty). The committee believes that chairs have the capability to review and evaluate faculty outside of their immediate discipline as this is the practice currently in place at MSU. In addition, tenure and promotion happens outside of specific disciplines. Nursing and Communication Sciences and Disorders will have a program Director (required for accreditation) who will conduct faculty evaluations in their area, rather than the School Chair, due to size and accreditation requirements.
3. Moved history to School of Social Science and renamed the school
4. Moved psychology and addiction studies, to the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences (changed the name of that school as well)
5. Moved School Psychology to School of Education
6. Deleted General Education from the School of Interdisciplinary Studies since no one person is responsible for it.
7. Added Pre-Professional Programs to the School of STEM.

Clarifications since March 24th meeting

1. Programs requiring administrator/director/coordinator positions per outside accreditation will retain those positions.
2. Administrative assistant assignment is proposed as follows, based on special duties and size. The total number of administrative assistants listed in parentheses is the same as the current number of administrative assistants in academic departments and divisions.
 - a. School of Arts, Culture, and Languages (2)
 - b. School of Business (1)
 - c. School of Education (1)
 - d. School of Health and Behavioral Sciences (3.5)
 - e. School of Interdisciplinary Studies (0.5)
 - f. School of Social Science (1)
 - g. School of STEM (1)
3. Specified that Kinesiology includes Exercise Science and Rehabilitation, Physical Education, and Corporate Fitness and Wellness Management, which are together under the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences
4. Specified that School Chair contracts are 9-month positions plus a summer stipend. Associated stipends are to be determined through the implementation process. Summer duties must include advising students OR this task must be clearly designated to someone else who receives at least a portion of the stipend. Specifics should be worked out during implementation.
5. The VPAA and the AVPAA will be responsible for determining School Chair and Program Coordinator reassignment time using the Equity Reassignment Analysis process.
6. Specified contract flow should move from program coordinator to the school administrative assistant, to the school chair, to the AVPAA, to the VPAA, to the VPAF, and then to the employee.
7. Procedure for selection of School Chairs should be:
 - h. interested faculty apply,
 - i. the faculty vote,
 - j. the top two to three names are advanced to the AVPAA and VPAA for selection with consideration of diversity of disciplines,
 - k. school chairs are elected for a three-year term with no more than two consecutive terms,
 - l. elections shall take place one year prior to the previous chair's term expiration.
9. Policy and procedures for school and program budgets will be determined during implementation

Model 1 – School Chair Model

Introduction

The School Structure Model reduces the number of direct reports to the VPAA by organizing academics in seven schools each led by a Chair, reporting to an Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs. An Academic Council should be created, and integrated into the governance system, comprised of, at a minimum, the School Chairs, the AVPAA, the VPAA, and the Director of Institutional Assessment. Other members will be determined during implementation.

Rationale

- Fewer direct reports to VPAA allows more focus on academics and strategic planning
- Equity of access to administration
- Equity in teaching loads due to oversight by AVPAA
- Fewer adjuncts as some current department/division chairs can return to teaching
- Incorporates aspirations for innovation
- Enhances collaboration

- Equity amongst schools
- Equity in release time/compensation and workload for individuals with administrative responsibilities
- Clear communication lines from individual faculty to Program Coordinators, to School Chairs, to the AVPAA, the VPAA, and the Academic Council.
- Clear lines of accountability
- Easy to spot and resolve problems/fix bottlenecks if they occur
- Clear performance management, including faculty and School Chair evaluations

Potential Job Descriptions – to be finalized during implementation process

AVPAA Duties

1. Assists and encourages faculty in their pursuit of excellence in teaching
2. Assures equitable teaching loads within the schools
3. Approves position requests
4. Approves contract requests
5. Receives faculty evaluations from School Chairs, reviews, and refers as necessary to the VPAA
6. Provides recommendations to the VPAA regarding promotion in rank and tenure appointment
7. Orients new faculty regarding university policies and procedures
8. Orients and mentors School Chairs regarding university policies and procedures
9. Encourages and reinforces collegiality and adjudicates disputes
10. Encourages faculty participation in service activities
11. Provides time and resources within programmatic and fiscal constraints to stimulate service activities by individual faculty
12. Communicates concerns of the schools to the VPAA
13. Ensures adherence to university policies
14. Participates in student, faculty, and staff appeal processes when not resolved at the school level
15. Conducts annual evaluations of School Chairs
16. Reports to the VPAA
17. Reviews course scheduling issues

Academic Council Duties

Academic Council should include all seven Chairs of these new schools, the VPAA, AVPAA, the Director of Institutional Assessment, and others as determined during the design and implementation process

- Duties:
 - Identify of needed policy areas,
 - Discuss policies and procedures and their implementation,
 - Discuss curriculum issues,
 - Review of articulation agreements and memoranda of understanding,
 - Academic strategic planning activities,
 - Provide feedback about the academic calendar,
 - Review and approve study tours,
 - Consider and review innovative initiatives
- Chairs Council disbanded

School Chair Duties

1. Ensure quality teaching, research, and student learning within the school.

- 1.1. Serves as the main point of contact with accreditation agencies
- 1.2 Negotiate, set, and maintain accreditation standards for subordinated academic programs
- 1.3 Ensure professional development to meet accreditation standards and programming changes
- 1.4 Work with program coordinators to continually align program syllabi with accreditation requirements and market needs
- 1.5 Leads efforts to determine the latest market trends and student needs
- 1.6 Ensures and supports programming change and development process to keep programming up to date and relevant to the market needs
- 1.7 Review curricular changes and carry these changes forward
- 1.8 Review and approve syllabi
- 1.9 Responsible for faculty observations
- 1.10 Write and manage annual evaluations of faculty and staff
- 1.11 Faculty observations and feedback to faculty on probation
- 1.12 Review of Annual Assessment Reports

2. Support marketing and student recruitment activities for the school.

- 2.1 Responsible for school website
- 2.2 Responsible for program sheets and other communication
- 2.3 Represents schools in contacts with marketing, supports MSU marketing campaigns

3. Coordinate development, implementation, and improvements of strategic plan for the school.

- 3.1 Organize annual strategy review for the school
- 3.2 Responsible for strategy implementation
- 3.3 Responsible for updating all internal documentation related to changes in strategy

4. Represent the school, maintain relationships with internal and external communities.

- 4.1 Academic Council
- 4.2 School faculty meetings
- 4.3 School coordinator's meetings
- 4.4 Maintain relationships with high schools
- 4.5 Partner institutions - MoUs and articulation agreements
- 4.6 Accreditors
- 4.7 Meeting with supervisor (VPAA)
- 4.8 Benefactors
- 4.9 Summer presence
- 4.10 University Communications - accomplishments, new developments, news stories

5. Faculty issues and student issues, new faculty and adjuncts - complaints, improvement plans, recruitment of new faculty and adjuncts.

- 5.1 Point of contact for all new students and communities
- 5.2 Faculty load reports
- 5.3 Manage the process of student and faculty complaints for the school
- 5.4 Coordinate the process of employing of new faculty and staff

6. Budget and financial management

- 6.1 Develop budget
- 6.2 Budget presentation
- 6.3 Budget adjustments and corrections
- 6.4 Final approval of school expenses (vouchers)
- 6.5 Regular monitoring of budget status

7. Responsible for subordinated team

- 7.1 Supervise professional advisors
- 7.2 Supervise coordinators
- 7.3 Supervise administrative assistant
- 7.4 Supervise student workers
- 7.5 Facilitate visits of candidates for employment
- 7.6 In coordination with VPAA manage the search process for faculty, staff, and adjuncts
- 7.7 In agreement with VPAA prepares employment offers and termination letters
- 7.8 Coordinate advising sessions/orientations
- 7.9 Overload and adjunct contracts
- 7.10 Responsible for class schedules

Financial Considerations

Elimination of the department chair positions would allow seven faculty members to return to full-time teaching as well as reduce any associated adjunct costs. In those areas in which no adjuncts are currently used, the return of chairs to teaching might decrease shortages created by unfilled positions OR could free faculty up to teach in other programs or areas, just a first-year experience.

Reduction of 16 chair and 2 director stipends of \$3500 per year = \$63,000

Reduction of 16 chair and 2 director stipends per summer = \$54,000

See Table 1.

Current release time estimate for chairs and directors is 210 credits (see Table 2). At least an additional 137 credits of release time are used for program coordinators and other activities according to interviews with chairs.

Table 1

Current Chair/Director Stipends	#	Amount	Total \$
9-month Stipends to Chairs/Directors	18	\$3,500	\$63,000
Summer Stipends to Chairs/Directors	18	\$3,000	\$54,000
Current Total Chair Stipends			\$117,000

Table 2

Current Chair/Director Release Time	#	Amount	Total Credits
Chairs 1-15 Release Time	15	12	180
Chair 16 (nursing) Release Time	1	18	18
Directors (Honors and BGS) Release Time	2	6	12
Current Total Chair Release Time			210

Reallocation of load and stipends: Approximately 216 credits of the 347 credits of release time must continue (see Table 3), leaving up to 130 credits of release time that could be eliminated and repurposed. This time is equivalent to $130 \text{ credits} / (24 \text{ credits/FTE}) = 5.4 \text{ FTE}$ tenure-track faculty or about \$130,000 in adjunct costs.

These 130 credits of load and \$117,000 of stipends would be used (1) to hire the assistant VPAA and (2) to pay more adequate summer stipends to the seven school chairs as indicated in Table 4.

Table 3

New School Chair Model (assuming fulltime chairs, which may not be accurate)	Release Time
School 1 Chair Release Time	24
School 2 Chair Release Time	24
School 3 Chair Release Time	24
School 4 Chair Release Time	24
School 5 Chair Release Time	24
School 6 Chair Release Time	24
School 7 Chair Release Time	24
Nursing Director (12-18)	18
Comm. Sci. and Disorders	12
Subtotal (198 vs 210 below)	198
Other Release Time to Continue Same as Before	
Teacher Advisement and Field Placement Coordinator	6
RN to BSN Director	12
Total Release Time (in credits)	216

Table 4

New Model Costs	#	Amount	Total \$
Summer Stipends to Chairs	7	\$10,000	\$70,000
AVPAA Salary + Benefits			\$135,000
Total			\$205,000

Vice President for Academic Affairs

