

The draft proposal to form a new college, University College (which appears to be the “re-making” of CCDE into a college) was sent to the Faculty Council Academic Affairs Committee (FC AAC) for review and comment at the end of the Spring semester. This report is inclusive of the comments and questions from the AAC members. Justification for this disquisition is that a perspicacious study of the proposal is requisite for any consequential discussion by the University community. It is the opinion of the FC AAC Chair (and likely the FC AAC members) that the intentions of the document are genuine, the concept is alluring, and that this new college can be efficacious. The current proposal is a framework, but it can be morphed into a document embraced by the campus community by expanding various sections to address the concerns (some are described below) of many individuals.

The AAC Chair met with Provost Langley on 28 May 2009, for about 30 minutes, to discuss the draft proposal and the initiative. Interspersed, where appropriate, are Provost Langley’s comments about the proposal and his responses to the questions we had time to discuss. The statements attributed to the Provost are the Chair’s interpretation and distillation of what he said, and are never direct quotes. The ensuing discourse also incorporates comments from all responding members of the AAC.

Provost Langley began the discussion by stating that we, as a campus, must become more international: (1) we must become “players” on the world stage to have a global presence, (2) on the local and state level we must proffer initiatives to abet the Commonwealth populace to remain contemporary and, (3) professional programs are needed to address delimits of our present academic programs to allow returning graduates to advance their education in their chosen field, direct their education toward a new, emerging area that will benefit both the citizen and the State, and allow those who never attended college to garner a degree in a professional or applied discipline/area. The offered degrees may be as simple as a Certificate of Study, or as advanced as a M.A./M.S. These may be completely online offerings or a combination of online/in class offerings. (What was not stated but is evident to the Chair, from our conversation, is that as the State allocations to the UMASS system become smaller [as a percentage of our overall budget] in order to secure additional funds, when the legislators ask ‘what have you done for us lately’, we need to be able to reply that we have been a major force in public education for retraining and educating our State work force so our citizens have productive careers and contribute to the economy.) The Provost indicated that we must be responsive to the development of economic resources that benefit the State by responding to the economic needs of the State, something that CCDE is supposed to currently engender.

The Provost also stated that the international market, particularly China (and India - the Chair had a discussion with Professor Kamal Bawa, who indicates that India may be as large a market as China, and that he has personal information that the workers there desperately want these certificates and/or degrees from a respectable US institution) is a place where the population and the government need and want applied and professional degree programs via the internet.

As a source of revenue we must consider online programs a necessity to propel us through the coming decades and to support the present and anticipated new programs that we need to advance our evolution to a world class research and teaching institution. There are many present undergraduate and graduate programs that need or anticipate expansion (both for the increasing enrollments and to remain contemporary) as well as new initiatives and programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that scholars at this campus wish to pursue. But the funds to support these ambitions [faculty hires, TA lines,

support staff, etc] are presently meager or lacking. And our urban mission and clientele will require additional financial aid, as well as mentoring and tutoring services to enhance retention, initiatives that the Administration supports. We are also committed to the non-traditional student, sometimes referred to as diamonds-in-the-rough, who are too often overlooked by the traditional colleges and universities in the greater Boston area. All of these enterprises require an influx of revenue. It is evident that we need creative ideas to generate revenue, but it is important that these new ventures, whatever they are, be launched with the spirit of pedagogical integrity that characterizes this campus.

The new college will incorporate those missions, but will also pursue national and international trends and needs via online courses. The Provost also stated that since these trends are inclined to change frequently and are even fleeting in nature, he expects that the faculty will be untenured and temporary with 3-5 year contracts. There will be some long term, possibly tenured faculty, and there may be a cadre of visiting professors at any time.

► The AAC Chair discussed with the Provost why the name proposed for the new college, University College, may be a contentious choice. This name generates a sense of superiority of this new college, and the name also implies that it is another academic intellectual degree granting arm of this campus. Provost Langley responded that we must be cognizant of our target audience, which will be local, statewide, national, and international. A name such as CCDE or College of CCDE will not be attractive and in places such as China it may be viewed as an inferior degree because they are looking for quality programs AND a name that carries distinction. The Provost further intoned that this new college will be granting degrees, but the degrees will be focused toward applied or professional specialties rather than academic fields of study. Hence, he said, the College of CCDE is not appropriate, but University College is appropriate. AAC members feel that 'University College' would be too confusing and would misrepresent the kinds of degrees/certificates that the college proposes to offer. A name change should be considered, possibly to College of Professional Studies. The name, College of Professional Studies, is taken from a recent meeting the AAC Chair (and other UMB faculty) attended at the Swiss consulate in Cambridge, MA. The Swiss have an advanced array of online courses and programs, and their use of College of Professional Studies has not hindered their worldwide initiatives. We think College of Professional Studies satisfies the prestige aspect to meet the desires of our international constituency, and it apprises individuals of the endeavors this new college will offer.

► It would be supportive of this initiative to have a better defined rationale for this new college and to address why these goals cannot be accomplished under the current governance/colleges structure. Such a rationale will state and define why a separate college is required to accomplish the goals, the time commitment and resources needed to develop this initiative, etc. Much of the rationale can be derived from the above statements.

► The proposal states that the current campus structures are insufficient to support the "Goals" of the new college, but then, under "Current CCDE Structure, Scope and Function," it lists everything CCDE is accomplishing under the current "insufficient" structure. And it appears that most everything listed under "Goals" is already being accomplished under the existing CCDE system. It will be helpful if this disparity could be addressed in the proposal.

► The temporary nature of the faculty contracts, and their untenured status, is certain to be contentious to many, and is an issue that we must consider at length. The obvious concerns are the criteria to evaluate faculty hires and the evaluation of their effectiveness as instructors. While this arrangement can work, it requires constant evaluation; it would be useful to have this detailed in the proposal. Possibly we can establish an advisory board to ensure ongoing assessment of faculty in the new college.

► Provost Langley stated that a steering committee with members from the new college, the present colleges, and the Deans would evaluate these new programs, and the final approval of all decisions rested with Faculty Council. Stating this in the proposal would be appropriate. A defined governance process cements guidelines to this enterprise.

The Provost indicated that he expects: (1) this new college to have a Dean who is an academic, (2) that this new college will not have thesis driven M.S. degrees, but will (3) award undergraduate and graduate degrees in the applied and professional fields, something the Provost referred to as (4) quasi-terminal degrees that are narrowly focused: (5) they would *not* be new modes of inquiry, nor would they be generating new data. Those type of degrees (6) remain the dominion of the present colleges.

► It would be beneficial if these six points are delineated in the proposal to indicate that these degrees are not new modes of inquiry and are not generating new data. Those degrees that encompass new modes of inquiry and data should be ascribed as the domain of the present colleges, and that this new college will not abscond with present academic programs.

► On page 1 of the proposal, paragraph 4 states, "...University College would foster innovative academic programs leading to the award of academic degrees...". Many have commented disapprovingly about this concept as presently stated and it is in contrast to what the Provost implied, above. Much consternation would be alleviated if the details described in the above paragraphs could be incorporated here.

► The AAC Chair mentioned that it would be helpful to have it stated that when courses are offered online and have a congeneric or parallel course within our colleges, such a course will be vetted by the College department/institute, as will the instructor, who should be either chosen or approved by the department/institute. Provost Langley responded that, of course, this is his perspective, too. It will be helpful to have this perspective added to the proposal.

► Provost Langley indicated that there are several scenarios for online courses of study. First, there is a course/program of study that an academic department is not interested in pursuing because it is an applied or professional course/program of study for which they do not wish to commit resources. (This could mean that where such a clear divorce is present, then the new college would be unfettered in offering this course/program of study.) Second, an academic unit may be contemplating a new course/program of study, but are uncertain if they wish to allocate resources to an questionable endeavor. In this instance the new college, with the academic unit's approval, can offer the course/program of study as a trial to determine if it is feasible and sustainable. Once the course/program of study has demonstrated success, the academic unit can have the course/program of study returned to the academic unit if they so desire. Both of these scenarios (and others) could be described in the proposal.

- On page 1 of the proposal, paragraph 2 states “CCDE offers degrees and certificates that belong to five of the colleges: two bachelor’s degrees, eleven master’s degrees, and 26 certificates.” We assume that this status will persist in the new college but, again, we would like to have specific language inserted in the proposal that states that these degrees and certificates remain the province of the colleges and that the colleges have complete oversight of their courses offered online, and to adjudicate who will teach said courses.
  
- On page 1 of the proposal, paragraph 4 states “...University College would be financially self-supporting...”. This is illustrated further on page 2, item 5. We need, however, to have a determination of the feasibility and authenticity of present and projected financial independence. Provost Langley indicated that this is being investigated by the Budget and Long Range Planning Committee of the Faculty Council. We wonder if an additional accounting should also be undertaken by A&F. We were struck by the overhead costs associated with the new college’s operations, and wondered whether we could see a breakdown of these numbers. For instance: “each successful bachelor’s degree could gross about \$1.3 M and net about \$820K, each successful master’s degree program could gross \$805K and net \$368K, and each certificate could gross about \$1M and net \$465K.” We were surprised by the difference in gross and net of the certificate program. It would be helpful if these items were further characterized.
  
- On page 3 of the proposal, **Administrative Structure**, we would like to have included that the Dean will be an academic (in contrast to a financial administrator), the details about faculty recruitment, and the specifics for “...offices responsible for clearly-differentiated functional areas.” Program Committees that are referred to under “Office of eLearning” need to also be defined better: who are the liaison officers? Deans? Associate Deans? Administrators from the Dean’s Office? Faculty?
  
- On page 4, the Associated Faculty section can be better defined. What sort of compensation will be provided to the home academic unit (\$\$\$)? The present arrangements have been unsatisfactory to both the home academic unit and to the full-time faculty teaching through CCDE. Rates of remuneration to faculty are less than 50% of what some other institutions pay. We need to have a discussion about compensation to departments and to faculty so that departments are willing to offer courses through the new college and full time faculty are willing to teach said courses or, if necessary, we attract the best instructors who are committed to quality.
  
- On page 5, under the heading **Degree Programs**, there are issues that we are concerned about, and they have been discussed earlier. These sections need to be expanded to accommodate concerns of many faculty. Some specific examples include:
  - 1. *Degree programs offered by the other colleges, in collaboration with University College.* This section needs to be defined to indicate that programs that are presently the domain of the current colleges/institutes will not be subsumed or supplanted by this new college. Any current degree program offered through this new college should be acceded by the home department/college/institute, or stipulated as a joint venture by both parties, if it is to be offered through this new college. If the department/college/institute is unwilling to have its degree program offered through the new college, that wish must be accepted.

➤ 2. *Degree programs developed and offered by University College for particular groups of external students.* Language might be added that (a) ensures that any program(s) in our current colleges/institutes is not duplicated in this new college, (b) offshoots of, or tangential aspects therein of any programs in our current colleges should receive approval by the current offering department/college/institute, as well as Faculty Council. Certainly, when a department/institute does not wish to offer a program (such as Pharmacology, Homeland Security, Medical Technology, etc.) because it strains/depletes current resources, or takes the department/institute in a direction different from their vision, then the new college can offer such a program once approval is forthcoming from the department/institute and Faculty Council, and (c) if a department/institute wished to cede a current program because it no longer fits the nature of the department/institute, then the new college can offer such a program once approval is forthcoming from the department/institute and Faculty Council.

➤ Some additional concerns require elucidation in the proposal, but they can be easily addressed:

- (1) how will this new endeavor affect our accreditation and NEASC? It is obvious that the Provost would never compromise either of these items, but a statement about the impact of the new college on these two items would be appreciated.
- (2) will the implementation and administration depend upon, and use therein, our present classified staff?
- (3) will the on-campus students in these new programs be using our support services ? (One would expect that they will use them.) If yes, then how will support services be enhanced to accommodate the additional drain on their resources?
- (4) what is the interface between the current colleges and the new college? If a professional degree program *requires* CLA or CSM or CM courses how will this be administered? Will other students in this new college also have access to courses currently offered in CLA, CSM, CM, etc.? How will the interface be governed? How will increased enrollments be accommodated, especially in courses that are perennially over enrolled? How will we accommodate the need for additional classrooms or lab sections?
- (5) what will be the admission criteria for students wishing to enroll in the new college?
- (6) will this new college recruit current faculty and result in a net loss of faculty services for our present colleges?
- (7) if a faculty member of our current colleges wishes to teach a course(s) in the new college, how does that impact their teaching commitment in their home college? And how is their specialty course(s) or general course(s), which should be offered in their home college, to be offered for their majors in their absence? Who is responsible for the salary of a part-time replacement?

As stated at the beginning, it is believed that the items in question can be addressed satisfactorily, and that the intentions of the document are genuine.