

The chancellor has now announced his plan to remake our college structure in a matter of weeks (for details, see [his blog post](#)). RME's are making their way to most colleges on campus, and faculty are being asked to vote in the next few days, with very little notice, and little or no discussion, on moves to eliminate one college and reorganize five others. We are posting the RME's [on the FA website](#) as they are shared with us.

In our view this plan is an effort to subvert shared governance by circumventing the Article 9 process and forcing through major changes with a minimum of faculty input. And it would result in SIUC entering a year of chaos in which we would jettison our current academic structure without providing a coherent replacement.

These changes would short-circuit the Article 9 shared governance process

The chancellor aims to put much of the overall framework for his restructuring plan in place without bothering to wait for final Article 9 votes on many of the schools that form the centerpieces of his plan. The disingenuousness of his approach can be seen in his repeatedly characterizing a fundamental transformation of our college structure as a mere "renaming" of colleges.

CASA would not just be renamed but shed the School of Architecture, ISAT, and automotive and aviation programs. Engineering would gain multiple programs in science, math and transportation, while Agriculture would gain geology and all our biology programs and units. Why refer to these massive changes as mere "renaming"? To hide the fact that the chancellor is attempting to push through fundamental restructuring in a matter of weeks, despite widespread opposition to his restructuring plan.

The claim that this college "renaming" process is separate from the school change process is just as disingenuous. At the BOT retreat on March 9, the chancellor said he would not move departments to their new college homes right away, in order not to violate Article 9 of the faculty contract. But many departments would in fact be moved to their proposed new homes under these RME's, and the new colleges just happen to have the same names as those in the broader restructuring plan.

The new College of Health Services and Human Science is a particularly curious example. Human services programs would apparently not yet be moved from CoEHS. But are we really going to put human sciences (a new way of speaking of human services, together with the proposed school of psychology) in the new name for CASA and then not move those human services programs (and psychology) to that college?

Or consider it like this: why is the chancellor moving units out of CASA? Because he's decided to rename it. Okay, so why has he decided to rename it? Try to answer that without telling the truth: because the chancellor has decided to form schools and put

them there. But that decision has not yet been approved by faculty in units, by the FS, GC, system office, Board of Trustees, or IBHE.

If you consider the FA interpretation of these moves overly cynical, note that there is no alternative justification in the chancellor's blog post or the RME's for the new college structure. Perhaps because he has lost all credibility to make claims about savings, given the [fraudulent nature of the figures](#) in the original Article 9 program change proposals, the chancellor does not even bother to claim in his post that eliminating a college would save money, and the RME's we have seen argue only that there would be no net increase in spending. So these changes can only be understood as an effort to jump-start the stalled restructuring process, by bypassing Article 9 and pushing through massive changes in the last weeks of the semester.

These changes are not justified by the Financial Sustainability Plan

To support his "renaming" of colleges, the chancellor cites the [Financial Sustainability Plan](#) approved last summer. That plan does indeed say that SIUC "will reduce the number of academic colleges by one" in order to save money (page 9). But it commits only to "considering" two different plans for the College of Science: merger with CoLA, or redistribution of units to Agriculture and Engineering. The chancellor has opted for the latter approach, but does not say why—because to do so he would have to admit that he is doing this to implement his school plan. Note that the Sustainability Plan says nothing about remaking CASA by removing architecture, transportation, and ISAT, or changing its name to include "human science."

So while the Sustainability Plan envisioned a one-step restructuring process that would eliminate the College of Science in order to save money, the current RME's would make college restructuring, disguised as renaming, a halfway house on the road to the chancellor's further radical restructuring of campus, while not saving any money. Citation of the Sustainability Plan is just as disingenuous as the rest of the latest phase in the chancellor's effort to remake our campus.

The proposed changes would harm SIUC

The effort to ram through college-level changes by July 1 would leave SIUC a confused mess for the next academic year. SIUC would end up with new colleges with new combinations of units. If this were the only step in the reorganization, these colleges could get to work on reorganizing themselves, drafting new operating papers, forming new college committees, staffing up college offices, reconfiguring recruiting strategies and materials, redesigning webpages, and generally seeing to the myriad of tasks required to run a college. But they cannot start on any of that work with the prospect of future restructuring hanging over their heads.

Where, for example, would a potential student look for programs in human services next year? We will have our current College of Education and Human Services, where human services programs will still apparently reside, while another college, the former

CASA, is now called Health Services and Human Science, where “human science” can only be understood as a new name for the human services programs that college will not yet have. So who will market those programs during the transition period, when SIUC has two colleges named for them? And what dean should make hiring or promotion decisions for faculty in those programs? What sense does it make to say we’ve got human services in two colleges while they reside in only one?

So we will have ersatz colleges for a year, mired in a confusing state of limbo, while we continue to debate changes. The chancellor even suggests that some new schools will be formed in the middle of the next academic year. Imagine the chaos of attempting to merge multiple departments into a single school in the midst of an academic year. There is simply no justification for putting a new college structure in place while the makeup of the units that will form these colleges remains in question. These colleges cannot function effectively until that question is decided. We will be far better off retaining our current structure until we determine what our new structure will be.

The chancellor is desperate to regain momentum for his lagging restructuring plan. He is apparently willing to put SIUC through a year of chaos in order to show that he is getting something done. He needs a win; he feels he needs to show the board he can do something—even if that something does SIUC harm.

It is time for faculty to make themselves heard. Changes on to colleges are no longer merely local affairs, where it is fitting and proper for faculty to vote solely on what makes sense for their individual programs, and for other faculty to defer to their colleagues’ judgement. Each of these college RME’s impacts the whole campus. We urge faculty to vote for what is in the best interest of SIUC, and reject this irresponsible attempt to restructure our campus in haste.

In solidarity,

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