

FA [Website](#)FA on [Facebook](#)

I. Deadlines and updates

Submit extension vote results by February 9

Departments (and existing schools) have relatively little time left to vote for a 30-day extension in the Article 9 review process. The deadline for a vote, assuming you were given a proposal on November 13, is February 11. As that date falls on a Sunday, we recommend conducting your vote in time to submit it to Associate Provost Dave DiLalla by Friday, February 9. If every unit in a given school votes for an extension by a 60% majority, the extension must be granted.

If you do not vote for an extension, the administration will presumably move promptly to schedule final meetings and final faculty votes (at the department level) on the school proposal. After that point, formal departmental voting will be over, but there will be more votes at the Faculty Senate and Grad Council, and review by the system office and Board of Trustees; in some cases, approval by the IBHE and HLC may also be required. (This all assumes that the FA's grievances do not result in the administration "revising and resubmitting" proposals; but, as [we explained last time](#), it is never prudent to assume a grievance will be successful.)

Send all vote results to Associate Provost DiLalla; we would appreciate it if you would also send reports on all relevant votes to me at dmj2@me.com. As faculty contemplate votes for extensions, or final votes on proposals, FA reps are happy to meet with departmental faculty or faculty in proposed schools to answer questions about the restructuring.

DRC meeting Thursday

The FA's DRC will meet this Thursday (February 1) at 5:00 in Parkinson 202. All FA members are welcome to attend.

Votes thus far (as of Saturday 1/27)

We are aware thus far of three proposed schools in which every unit currently slated to be included in the school has voted for a 30 day extension: Humanities; Media, Communications, and Performance Studies; Social Sciences.

As of this weekend, a total of 16 departments had voted to extend the Article 9 review process. No department, to my knowledge, had voted to shorten it. I will continue to post [results from all votes](#) reported to me, and gather reports on new schools or other changes [on the FA website](#).

Other initiatives & links

The BOT meets February 7 and 8 in Edwardsville. These meetings will be another important opportunity to share faculty views. If you are looking to attend and would like to make car pool arrangements, please [get in touch](#).

We also encourage faculty, singly or in groups, to **send letters to the BOT** expressing their views about the restructuring. BOT members are reading letters, and using them to gauge campus and community support for the proposal.

A group of full professors is working on a letter expressing concerns with the restructuring proposals. For more info, get in touch with [Debbie Bruns](#).

A group of faculty members from the humanities is considering a counterproposal for a possible College of Arts and Sciences (the name is tentative). They welcome representatives from units outside the proposed school of humanities to meet with them to discuss possibilities for reform that do not require abolishment of current departments and schools. If you are interested in learning more about this effort, contact [George Boulukos](#).

If you haven't done so yet, do consider taking the [CCC survey about the chancellor's plan](#).

Video of the [January 23](#) forum on the future of SIUC hosted by the Green Party can be found [here](#).

2. Plan B

If not this, what? That's one of the most common questions I get asked by faculty, including faculty with concerns about the chancellor's plan. The chancellor has adopted "the status quo is not an option" as a mantra (see [this](#) recent blog post, for example). Everyone agrees with him that far. But there is a big difference between "we've got to do something" and "we've got to do this." And there are many options between the chancellor's proposal and maintaining the status quo. One obvious middle ground would be to adopt schools where faculty and students think they will improve things, and try other things elsewhere. But the chancellor has thus far not been open to this suggestion.

It is not the role of the FA to draft alternative proposals for change. What we can do is to suggest questions we should be asking, and how we should take answers to those questions and put them to work.

Why is our enrollment declining? The chancellor says it is because we lack innovative programs. But without any argument or evidence that's little more than a guess. It is simply astounding that we are making massive plans to reorganize without any real effort to answer this fundamental question. We must also address retention: recruiting

more students does no one any good if they do not graduate. A particular focus must be the declines in enrollment and low retention rates of minority students.

Why are some peers outperforming us? Are there institutions that are a good match for us in mission, location, and resources, yet are doing better than we are? What lessons can we learn from them?

What can we learn from our past? Why did we once have 25,000 students? Were we doing things right then that we are now doing wrong? What past ideas for reform have been left undone, and why? Were they poor ideas, or did we lack the administrative leadership, or faculty buy-in, to carry them out?

What programs should we focus on? The chancellor has proposed that we restructure first, and then have those new units decide where their strengths lie. He has proposed new programs for some of his proposed schools, but he did so without substantive consultation with faculty or providing evidence that his choice of programs made sense. Shouldn't we start by identifying our current strengths, and possibilities for new strengths, and then restructure, where needed, to support these potential areas for growth?

Are our priorities out of whack? SIUC is running a \$4 million deficit in athletics annually, and the chancellor has just decided to add an expensive new sports and to hire a former football coach as a special assistant (at \$140,000 a year, we've been told). Can we afford this level of deficit spending on sports? And are there other areas where we could cut back to redirect resources to our core academic mission?

Are our tuition and fees too high? SIUC used to cost less to attend than neighboring universities; now we are basically on par with other Illinois schools and more expensive than our out-of-state rivals. Can we cut tuition and fees and attract more students without sacrificing the quality of an SIUC education?

We can't spend years studying these questions. But it is foolish to act first, and ask questions later. Research is what we do: this is a research project, and we can do it. Set a practicable but tight deadline and stick to it.

While we work on these questions, SIUC should not tread water. The chancellor has given up on recruitment for the fall of 2018, proclaiming that freshman class a lost cause. There's no sense recruiting for SIUC in its current form, he appears to think, so we must spend whatever time it takes to tear down our current structure, rebuild from scratch, and then hope to grow again. The chancellor says we do not have enough time to debate whether departments should continue to exist, yet his plan will take years to bear fruit, if ever it bears fruit. We don't have that time to lose.

If we instead devote ourselves to building on what works and changing what doesn't, based on answers, not guesses, we can build morale and a sense of purpose, rather than tearing ourselves apart through a forced restructuring. As confidence in our ability to work together and solve our problems grows, so does our ability to recruit and retain

students. Instead of fighting amongst ourselves, we delegate some faculty, staff, and students to study our problems and propose answers, while others work to attract and educate more students now.

So, yes, there is a better way to approach our problems. To be successful, a plan to turn around our enrollment crisis must be based on evidence, and it must win widespread support on campus. The current proposal does neither of these things. We can solve our problems if we work together—and that is the only way they are going to be solved.

In solidarity,

Dave Johnson

President, SIUC FA

FA [Website](#)

FA on [Facebook](#)

OFFICERS

Dave Johnson, President dmj2@me.com

Segun Ojewuyi, Vice President sojewuyi@gmail.com

Debbie Bruns, Secretary brunsdebbie@gmail.com

Joe Shapiro, Treasurer jps Shapiro@gmail.com

Dan Becque, DRC Chair mdbecque@gmail.com

COLLEGE REPS

Agriculture: Paul Henry p Henry@siu.edu

CASA: Sam Pavel spavel@siu.edu

CoEHS: Patrick Dilley pdilleyphd@me.com

CoLA: Anne Fletcher beasleybe@earthlink.net

Engineering: Open

Library: Phil Howze p howze@siu.edu

MCMA: Rob Spahr rspahr@siu.edu

Science: Randy Hughes hrhughes@siu.edu