



# SIUC Faculty Association

IEA – NEA

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## Faculty Association Review: School of Human Sciences<sup>1</sup>

The program change plan under consideration would:

- Split food and nutrition programs off from the Department of Animal Sciences, Food and Nutrition, and move them from the College of Agriculture to the new school, which has been slated to join the proposed College of Health and Human Sciences. Faculty voted against this move.
- Split the exercise science program from the Department of Kinesiology, moving it to this school, while the sport administration program has a proposed new home in the College of Business. Faculty have voted against this move.
- Eliminate the School of Social Work and merge it with the new school. While Faculty have voted in support of the plan, the Director of the School of Social Work has written two persuasive letters opposing it.<sup>2</sup>
- Eliminate the Department of Public Health and Recreation Professions and move it into the new school. Faculty in the department have voted to approve the new school.

It is no exaggeration to say that this school is controversial. Overall, Faculty voted against the plan, with 14 voting against it, 11 in favor, and 5 abstentions. Three of the four units involved raised serious objections to the new organization (twice via faculty votes, once via a letter from the school director). In doing so, they have presented far more compelling arguments in opposition to the proposed school than any arguments made on its behalf. Strong arguments against the placement of programs, and serious concerns about accreditation and autonomy have been raised in the supporting materials. None of these arguments is answered by anything in the materials provided the FA, FS, and GC.

Given the quality and quantity of opposition to this plan for a new school, and the absence of any substantive positive rationale from the administration or supporters of the plan, the FA recommends that the plan be rejected.

Some of the discussion below will point out contractual problems with this plan. We have filed grievances that identify prior contractual violations committed by the administration as it pushed its reorganization proposals through the Article 9 process. This is not the place to rehearse those

<sup>1</sup> As in our other reviews, we use a line in the left margin to note material that is of particular relevance for the particular school proposal under consideration.

<sup>2</sup> One of Director Kawewe's letters is attached to the School of Social Work Faculty Vote document, the other to the School Plan packet. We have put together a table a contents for the latter and append it to this document.

grievances, which are now on their way to an arbitrator. Instead we emphasize problems that will arise in the future if this plan is approved in its present form.

In section I, we lay out some general problems with this plan. In section II, we evaluate the extent to which this plan satisfactorily addresses the seven required components of a “Program Change Plan” as they are laid out in Article 9 of the CBA.

And as we have indicated in other reviews, the FA would be happy to send a representative to meet with members of the FS or GC to answer questions that may arise about this review.

## **SECTION I: General Problems with the Plan**

### 1. Elimination of the School of Social Work would threaten accreditation of our Social Work programs.

Director Kawewe’s letters (one attached to the plan itself, one attached to the School of Social Work vote) should be read in full, but here are some key points.

- Accreditation in social work requires that social work units be autonomous; our social work program would likely fail this standard if reduced to the status of a division.
- Formation of the new school would coincide with the re-accreditation process, making it very difficult for social work to secure re-accreditation even absent the autonomy issue.
- Social Work faculty must meet special qualifications not likely to be met by faculty in other units in the proposed school, limiting the chances for “synergy”.
- The proposed plan violates the Memo of Understanding that incorporated the previously independent School of Social Work into CoEHS.

None of these arguments is answered by anything in the materials provided the FA, FS, and GC.

### 2. Sport Administration Faculty do not belong in the School of Marketing and Management.

The Kinesiology Faculty are strongly against the plan because colleagues in Sport Administration would be placed, against their will, into the School of Marketing and Management. Kinesiology Faculty outline their reasoning in the letter attached to their vote report on the plan. Their three main arguments are:

- Sport Administration faculty view sport as a multi-dimensional construct and not merely as a business. Their research and teaching focuses on the social and psychological aspects of athletes, academic advising for student-athletes, youth/recreational sports, charity sporting events, student-athlete well-being, service, and outreach.
- Sport Administration Faculty have established relationships with colleagues assigned to the proposed School of Human Sciences, but not with those in the School of Marketing and Management.
- Most sport administration programs across North America are housed in units like the proposed School of Human Sciences, rather than in schools or colleges of business.

Note that in November the Faculty in the departments of Kinesiology and Public Health and Recreation Professions drafted an RME to keep Sports Administration and Recreation Professions programs together in a proposed School of Human Sciences. Recreation Professions has been brought back from business to this proposed School of Human Sciences, but Sports Administration has not. No rationale for this discrepancy is known to us.

None of the arguments made by Kinesiology faculty is answered by anything in the materials provided the FA, FS, and GC.

### 3. Human Nutrition and Dietetics belongs in the College of Agriculture, not with the College of Health and Human Sciences.

Faculty voted 3-4-3 (and NTT faculty voted 1-2-1) against the current plan. Faculty outline their argument in a document appended to their vote report. Their main arguments are as follows:

- Most activity in the College of Agriculture is ultimately aimed at human nutrition.
- Most nutrition programs at peer institutions are within colleges of agriculture, and more and more have been moving into such colleges.
- Nutrition and Dietetics has a successful track record in its current location within the College of Agriculture, and Faculty in the program already work across college boundaries with faculty outside the College of Agriculture.

None of these arguments is answered by anything in the materials provided the FA, FS, and GC.

### 4. Central features of the plan, especially features pertaining to tenure and promotion, would violate university policies and the current CBA

The procedures and processes for tenure and promotion that would govern the new school when it is placed under the administrative control of the provost would violate Article 13 of the CBA as well as university policies for the evaluation of tenure and promotion cases.

This plan, as others, calls for tenure and promotion review to be solely done by Faculty from the former departments or schools, regardless of their new placement in the organizational structure. Faculty who joined the new school from other units would not be involved in reviewing tenure and promotion dossiers of their new colleagues. This procedure would violate the CBA (including Article 13.05a), and it would also violate SIUC policy on tenure. Here is the most relevant language on tenure in university policy:

Basic Academic Unit: In conducting reviews at the basic academic unit level<sup>3</sup>, all tenured faculty shall have an opportunity to vote on a tenure decision, and only tenured faculty should vote on the decision.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://policies.siu.edu/personnel-policies/chapter3/ch3-faps/tenure.php>

The basic academic unit, if this plan is approved, would be the new school; and, if the proposed plan is implemented, all tenured Faculty in the basic academic unit would *not* be afforded the opportunity to vote on tenure decisions within what would now be their basic academic unit.<sup>4</sup>

5. The plan would leave Faculty with little say in the selection of their director

This school plan, as others, states that neither the interim school director nor the permanent school director will be selected following a faculty vote. Instead, faculty will provide input as they currently do for searches for deans and other senior administrators.

This change in approach from the current method of selecting chairs within these departments to a top-down approach for selecting a director of the school would severely diminish shared governance at the level of the basic academic unit.

6. The plan fails to address crucial issues

The plan does not say what impact, if any, the merger would have on recruitment or retention of students. Given the dire situation of our institution at this time, this is a problematic omission. Nor does this plan anywhere discuss how the Civil Service staff who currently work in the merged departments would be affected by the proposed merger.

## **SECTION II: The Seven Contractually Required Components of a Program Change Plan**

### A. Description of the proposed change(s)

The administrative housing of the resulting new school directly under the provost presents a series of problems.

- The CBA requires that the college dean participate in the process of the assignment of Faculty workload (8.01.c, which states every faculty member's workload assignment "shall be subject to the approval of the Dean"). Yet, according to the changes outlined by the plan, the Faculty in the new school would not be part of any college they were part of before and will not be part of a college at all as part of this plan, and thus serve under no dean. This issue is not addressed in the plan.
- The plan also fails to address how the absence of a relevant dean will affect annual reviews of untenured Faculty. If such reviews were done by the provost, this would create an unforeseen problem at the time a final tenure decision is to be made by the provost, because the candidate would already have received a provost-level evaluation.

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<sup>4</sup> The CBA does require that if "guidelines and procedures" for promotion and tenure are changed, Faculty can use the old procedures (13.01.b). But the CBA cannot and does not guarantee that faculty will be evaluated by the same *people* who were colleagues when they were hired or last promoted. Faculty are not normally evaluated for tenure and promotion by former colleagues. And current colleagues should have the right to evaluate candidates for tenure and promotion. The administration's interpretation of the contract is presumably meant to reassure faculty by changing as little as possible about tenure and promotion. But this plan would violate the spirit as well as the letter of university policies and the current CBA.

- Temporary placement of these programs under the provost would leave them in a state of limbo until final college arrangements are made. It would seem more prudent to decide on the college structure before implementing changes of this magnitude.

This plan, like other new school plans, describes the status of operating papers as follows:

During the period of creation of the School Operating Paper, day-to-day management of the school will be guided by applicable provisions of the former department/school operating paper and former college operating paper.

This directive ignores the fact that this new school brings together different departments from different colleges that do different things and may have very different operating papers. Use of multiple operating papers for the same unit is likely to result in inequitable conditions for Faculty who will now be members of the same academic unit (including different provisions for workload assignment, committees, evaluation, etc.).

In this context it is worth pointing out that, while current operating papers cannot be unilaterally changed by the administration, the formation of a school would require the drafting of new operating papers, operating papers that the administration can veto.

The plan does not protect the smaller divisions with the school. This concern was explicitly raised by Director Kawewe in Social Work. In her memo attached to the Social Work vote, she states:

“The divisions that are described in the program change plan for the School of Human Sciences do not ensure autonomy from other disciplines at all. This was already made evident in a minor way during the meeting involving the Chancellor and the affected faculty of the proposed School of Human Sciences. Faculty from Kinesiology (simply by virtue of their greater numbers) removed mention of “Services” from the name of the new school despite the fact that service characterizes the profession of Social Work...”

The plan is silent on this issue and does not guarantee an equitable allocation of resources among the “divisions” that would constitute the new school.

## B. Rationale

The rationale for this particular merger is not unique to this plan, but is instead the same as the rationale for every other plan in the current restructuring scheme. The main rationale for this merger, as for every other plan in the current restructuring scheme, is “to create opportunities for greater collaboration among students and faculty” and to align related programs “to foster synergy and innovation.”

But Faculty in this proposed school have pointed out that the proposal would harm existing collaboration by splitting Faculty in Nutrition from Agriculture and splitting Faculty in Sports Administration from Faculty in Kinesiology and Recreation Professions. The plan itself makes

no case for greater collaboration if the administrative plan is adopted in place of the arrangements advocated by Faculty.

The plan mentions that this merger will facilitate streamlining of the curriculum. Yet, the curriculum is dictated by the academic programs that are included in the merger, and these programs would remain intact after the merger. Given that the plan fails to mention any specific redundancies, it is difficult to see just where streamlining is possible and practicable (or necessary).

Director Kawewe in fact notes the difficulty of curricular streamlining in the case of Social Work, given the special qualifications required of Social Work Faculty.

### C. Impact on Faculty lines and Faculty workload (including redistribution of work)

The most serious impact on Faculty lines is likely to be the natural result of a school formed from units of different sizes, and put under pressure by the chancellor to identify a single “top-ten” program. There are no provisions in the plan to guarantee the continued existence of the “divisions” that would form this school. It is possible that, over time, attrition in the smaller units and prioritization of the larger department (the more obvious candidate for a “top-ten program”) would be a loss of faculty lines in the smaller units. The smaller unit could soon find itself unable to sustain graduate and undergraduate programs and be relegated to a service unit with even fewer Faculty than it had before the merger.

There is also the issues discussed above concerning the plan’s promotion and tenure process; see Section I.4 of this review.

### D. Impact on students and the ability to maintain the curriculum

As noted above, the merger may have a deleterious effect on the existence of some programs, and it may also hinder the ability of Faculty to maintain current curricula. Precisely because of concerns of this type, i.e., the potential of one department being swallowed in slow motion by a larger one in a merger, the CBA specifies that Program Change Plans should explain how Faculty would be afforded the “ability to maintain curricula, particularly in the case of mergers.” Yet, again, there is nothing in this plan on the matter of “the ability to maintain curricula.”

According to the plan, as a result of the merger outlined by the plan, “[Students] will have exposure to a wider range of faculty and will have opportunities to engage in cross disciplinary research, curriculum, and co-curricular activities.” But the plan provides no specifics, and combining these departments and programs into one school would not in itself expose students to more Faculty or to interdisciplinary research.

### E. Financial costs

This plan, as all the other plans released so far, fails to provide any specifics on savings. The school under discussion would require not only a director but division coordinators, who may receive summer salary. Thus, as the plan itself recognizes, savings from the demotion of current

chairs and directors “will be balanced against the salary costs associated with appointing an A/P Director on a 12 month appointment, plus any summer salary expenditures committed for divisions coordinators.” For all this plan reveals, formation of this school could cost more rather than less than current arrangements.

#### F. Comparison of similar programs at peer institutions

The Plan states: “The ‘School Model,’ with multiple degree programs housed in the School, is already functioning effectively at SIU in the School of Allied Health, the School of Information Systems and Applied Technology, the School of Art and Design, the School of Music and the School of Architecture.” Left off of that list (here as in other plans) is the School of Social Work, which would be eliminated to become a sub-structure within the new School of Human Sciences. If the school model is working well for Social Work now, it is hard to see why that model should be changed. As Director Kawewe’s letter makes clear, Social Work has rather little in common with the other proposed programs in this school. As such the proposed school does not resemble any of the current SIU schools.

The plan states that the administration is “not aware of an academic school or department that is fully parallel to the proposed School of Human Sciences in terms of curricular and content focus,” but goes on to list nine universities<sup>5</sup> with academic units “with some similarities” to the proposed school. Nine peers sounds impressive, but “some similarity” is laughably imprecise. Of the nine schools listed, none have social work and kinesiology in the same academic unit.

#### G. Possible consequences to the University’s Carnegie status

The Plan states: “The proposed change will have no direct / explicit impact on the University’s Carnegie Status. However, one of the goals of the campus-wide re-organization plan (see point B) is to invigorate, enhance and expand Faculty research and creative activity by increasing synergy and collaboration. This includes the goal of expanding extramural grant / contract activity and increasing Ph.D. production. The reorganization plan will contribute to the broader institutional goal of increasing the University’s Carnegie Status to R1 (Highest Research Activity).”

These goals are laudable, but this section of the plan is devoid of information, evidence, or argument. It would be much closer to reality to state that there is no reason to believe that this merger will have any positive impact on the University’s Carnegie Status. A carefully drafted plan would have addressed the actual consequences of this merger.

### **CONCLUSION**

The majority of Faculty assigned to the proposed school, Faculty who understand the fields and units in question, have voted against this plan, and presented substantive arguments against it. None of their arguments is answered by anything in the materials provided the FA, FS, and GC.

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<sup>5</sup> One, “Stephen Fraser University,” is apparently an error for *Simon Fraser University*.

The administration is therefore asking members of the FS and GC to reject the arguments made by the majority of Faculty in the proposed school, and by Director Kawewe, despite the fact that no effort has been made to address any of their arguments. The choice to us seems clear: this plan, at least in its current form, must be rejected. In fact this plan should never have been brought to the Faculty Senate and Graduate Council in the first place without the support of Faculty and Director Kawewe, or at least some responsible effort to meet their concerns.

The plan also shares the serious problems shared by most plans in the chancellor's restructuring scheme.

- The plan would run afoul of university policies and the CBA, particularly regarding promotion and tenure;
- The plan would diminish Faculty's role in shared governance at the unit level, particularly in the selection of a unit leader;
- The plan leaves many unanswered questions and fails to provide specific evidence that it will produce positive results;
- The plan fails to protect the smaller "divisions" and their curricula.

Many of these problems are likely due to the haste with which the plans were developed, and the lack of Faculty involvement in their drafting. The chancellor's restructuring plans employ a cookie-cutter approach in which the same plan is applied to every unit on campus, whether it fits or not. We are told little or nothing specific about potential costs, impact on recruitment or retention, or the effect of proposed plans on academic programs and their continued viability. The plans are not so much specific proposals for actions as general templates for hypothetical program mergers. They simply do not make an argument for merger of these units in particular, as they fail to take into account the specific characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of the units involved.

Faculty who are not in the habit of supporting major initiatives without specific argument or evidence may well find it hard to support such plans. Given the negative Faculty votes in this case, and the unanswered arguments against this plan, we see no justification for approving this plan in its current form.

## Appendix: Proposed School of Human Sciences Program Change Plan

### List of documents

	Pages
Program Change Plan	1-11
Separate and apart from the Program Change Plan statement	12
RME for Program Change Plan	13-17
Additional Materials Submitted by Affected Units	
Email from Sarah Buila – School of Social Work votes	20
Email from William Banz – Voting Ballot Article 9	21
Email from Saliwe Kawewe - Social Work Feedback for Academic Reorganization Proposal including MOU (attachment)	22-29
Email from Juliane Wallace - Proposed School of Human Services with attachments including an RME for PROPOSED Merger of the Departments of Kinesiology and Public Health and Recreation Professions into the School of Human Sciences IN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES	30-35