Dear Dean Rodgers,

Thank you for submitting your March 15 report describing changes proposed by the College of Liberal Arts to address the Strategic Alignment and Budget Reduction Implementation Plan for 2009-11. The Strategic Alignment and Budget Reduction Review Committee has completed its preliminary review of your plans and has prepared the following comments and questions for your consideration.

We commend the College of Liberal Arts for embarking on conversations to move the college to an administrative structure of five units/schools. Such a transformation will provide greater opportunities for future investments in graduate education and to further the missions of the college. We encourage continuation of these conversations and offer the following suggestions and comments as this proposal is developed and vetted both within the CLA and across campus.

- Divisional centers and institutes were mentioned but few details were given. Please provide a description of these centers and institutes and how they align administratively with your new college structure. Please provide more detail on your organizational chart to include units, majors, enrollment by major, and infrastructure. If there are majors that do not meet the academic system guidelines, please provide a plan for increasing the enrollments in these majors or how majors may be merged to meet the guidelines.

- The proposed units/schools are a realignment of existing departments. Were there conversations of other possible realignments across existing units? For example, were there conversations between faculty in Speech Communication and English regarding shared academic orientation in the broader area of rhetoric?

- What does it mean that “faculty will continue to identify themselves by their current department affiliation…”? Please confirm that the new schools/units will each have a single supervisory administrator.

- What structure is envisioned for the new schools that will encourage them to function as cohesive units rather than as federations of related departments?

- The College of Agricultural Sciences is proposing a unit/school called Applied Economics and Policy Studies. On the surface, there appears to be overlap between this proposed unit/school in CAS and the School of Public Policy in CLA. Justification from both colleges for the need of two distinct units with a focus on policy will be necessary. Otherwise, we would encourage conversations for a single unit/school that can serve students across the university.

- The Psychology group (7 faculty) is well below the guideline of 20 faculty per group. The potential inclusion of faculty from across the university in research and graduate teaching efforts does not alleviate the problem, unless these faculty are moved out of their current units and into the psychology group. Otherwise they are simply double counted. The proposal suggests that if collaborations are not sufficient, reallocation of psychology to another college is under consideration. We would like to know more about potential reallocation efforts. Alternatively, did faculty members in Psychology have the opportunity to develop plans for their unit to align with others within the College? If so, what realignments were suggested?
• The Committee encourages continuing discussion with HHS and COB concerning the most appropriate college affiliation of the School of Design and Human Environment. If possible, a specific proposal should be developed to address this issue.

• What are the academic and administrative implications for shifting inefficient on-campus courses to Ecampus? Have you discussed this shift with students?

• How have the prospective divisional administrative components been vetted with other colleges?

• Budget projections for the next biennium indicate that additional cuts will probably be necessary, possibly in excess of 10%. To what extent will the proposed changes address further decreases in state-appropriated funding?

The Committee is expected to develop recommendations for the Provost’s consideration by the end of May and, therefore, would appreciate receiving your response by April 30, 2010. In your response, please clearly identify substantive changes that will need University approval.

Please let me know if you have any questions for the Committee. Also, please do not hesitate to contact me if you think the Committee can play a facilitating role in development of plans, either within the College of involving other colleges, which may advance the strategic initiatives of the university.

Sincerely,

Becky Warner
Committee Chair