

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
From: President Luis M. Proenza and Provost Elizabeth J. Stroble  
RE: College of Fine and Applied Arts Proposal  
Date: February 18, 2008

### Proposal

As a result of a two-year process engaged in by the College of Fine and Applied Arts, we now make recommendations to the Faculty Senate for a new arrangement of the programs comprising the college. Our recommendations are designed for the purposes of bringing greater visibility, vibrancy, and focus to programs within the College, without disrupting existing approved policies and processes for academic units such as merit review and retention, tenure, and promotion, including where tenure resides for individual faculty. This proposal is informed by benchmarking studies completed by the College with the assistance of a strategic planning consultant as well as the recommendations from the faculty within the College.

We request, per Board Rule 3359-10-02, that the Faculty Senate review this proposal in its role of reviewing proposals for “. . . the creation, abolition, or rearrangement of colleges, departments, schools, or divisions of instruction. . .” The intention of this proposal is to create two new colleges through a rearrangement of the programs within the College:

- A college encompassing the Myers School of Art; School of Communication; School of Dance, Theatre, and Arts Administration; and School of Music
- A college encompassing School of Social Work; School of Family and Consumer Sciences; School of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.

Further, we recommend that the E. J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall continue a dotted line reporting to the dean of the first college on academic matters but with fiscal reporting to the Chief Financial Officer.

## Background

### *College of Fine and Applied Arts Conversations*

In November 2005, Provost Stroble met with the faculty, staff, and contract professionals of the College of Fine and Applied Arts to discuss topics about which decisions needed to be made: the appointment of an interim dean and the longer term consideration of possible structures that might provide alternatives to the current array of programs in the College. She also met with the formal leadership of the College.

A process of nominations, interviews, and broad input from the College resulted in the appointment of Dr. James Lynn as Interim Dean. He then, with the assistance of a strategic planner, engaged the College's schools in benchmarking to identify changes that could enhance the visibility, vibrancy, and focus of units within the College.

During the Spring 2006 semester, the schools considered the best two or more alternatives for the way they are organized. In May 2006, their work was completed and compiled in a document submitted to Provost Stroble (Attachment A).

Provost Stroble's review of the document identified a number of rich ideas within the various School reports which were only generally addressed in the consensus recommendations forwarded by the College-level committee. Among these ideas were several references to the possibility of arranging several of the College's schools into a health and human services unit.

### *Academic Health Center Conversations, Including The College of Fine and Applied Arts and The College of Nursing*

At the same time, during Fall 2006, institutional conversations began with key health providers in the community about greater collaborations with the University that could result in the creation of an academic health center. Because the College's report made mention of a possible rearrangement of health and human services programs and because the College of Nursing was increasingly involved in strategic partnerships with area health providers, the provost invited participation by both Colleges in a consideration of the implications of creating an academic health center for programs in both Colleges. At this time, both Colleges were led by interim deans.

These conversations were led by an Innovation Team including individuals from both Colleges. They were connected to a larger, emerging opportunity in the community to link the University with health sciences partners to develop an Academic Health Center (AHC). A draft case statement was created by community partners, including The University of Akron, and shared with the members of the Innovation Team (Attachment B). President Proenza requested the input and assistance of the Innovation Team in developing the case statement as a basis for the proposed AHC. The developing concept of an Academic Health Center included these benefits:

- Higher quality and integrated health services with improved patient outcomes
- Expanded education access for students and the potential for truly interdisciplinary health professions training
- Community wide attention to the needs of the medically underserved
- A high quality health care workforce to meet employer needs
- An interdisciplinary health research system with associated technology transfer and economic development
- Increased diversity in the health professions workforce
- Stronger public policy informed by an interdisciplinary perspective.

In the context of the AHC conversations, the Innovation Team considered how rearrangements of programs within and across the two Colleges could capitalize on the AHC planning. The provost identified the need to align with national higher education trends to make health and human services programs more visible for students and community by locating them in one academic unit. She also described the need for these programs to expand their capacity to meet the need and demand for more health professionals, to grow research funding, and to enhance partnerships that could provide clinical sites and shared faculty. These conversations were designed to maximize and further develop the resources for the Colleges through the creation of new, strategic opportunities in the larger context of the Mayor's proposed Biomedical Corridor, the investment of the Knight Foundation in University Park Neighborhood, and the Northeast Ohio Universities Collaboration and Innovation Study Commission.

The provost and the Innovation Team met with the faculties of the two Colleges in December 2006 to share this statement of intent:

*We intend to create a leading interdisciplinary academic health center that builds upon the region's documented excellence in health-related education, research, health sciences, and human services. The center will engage in collaborative, entrepreneurial, and innovative initiatives. The center will be the foundation for influencing the health and well-being of people regionally, nationally, and globally.*

They then invited the engagement of the two faculties in the ongoing conversations about the development of an AHC and the implications for potential program arrangements.

During the Spring 2007 semester, the community conversations about an Academic Health Center took on new visibility and urgency, particularly in the context of competing proposals brought to the Northeast Ohio Study Commission. On the UA campus, the provost requested that Interim Deans Lynn and Wineman and the members of the Innovation Team engage their faculties to develop a proposal that would respond to these questions:

- What organization/structure of programs in the two colleges would best position us to take advantage of the emerging opportunity with community partners who wish to establish an Academic Health Center, as described in the draft case statement?
- What organization/structure of programs in the two colleges would best ensure the outcomes and benefits described in the draft case statement for an Academic Health Center?
- What organization/structure of programs in the two colleges would provide the greatest visibility for increasing program strength and visibility in terms of recruitment (employees and students), enrollment, research and scholarship, service, and increased resources from donors and other external sources?
- What organization/structure of programs in the two colleges best prepares us to recruit appointed deans rather than interim appointments?
- How would you propose we ensure a smooth transition to new reporting structures: names; leadership; and various procedures such as merit review, RTP, search mechanisms, advising, etc. in ways that guard against unintended consequences for individual faculty and students?
- How would you propose that we build a model that could effectively engage other units on campus in interdisciplinary programs, research and scholarship, and service?

The proposal, including timeline and plan for implementation, was requested for review prior to close of spring semester. Attachment C includes a revised case statement and graphic proposed by the Innovation Team.

#### *Fine Arts, Communications, and E. J. Thomas*

When faculty in the College of Fine and Applied Arts considered two or more alternative structures for the programs within the College, one idea that surfaced was the creation of a unit that would showcase the arts. Various proposals for an organization surfaced in conversations and in written form, some proposing the inclusion of arts-related programs in radio, television and film production as well as interior design and fashion merchandising and E. J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall.