



WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Richard J. Helldobler
President

FROM: Joshua B. Powers
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: February 11, 2020

RE: Academic Reorganization Recommendations

Per the plan you mapped for departmental reorganization, and the input process, I am formally advancing to you the recommendations of my January 14, 2020 letter to the Chair of the Faculty Senate (attached and also on the Academic Affairs [website](#)). Since that time, I have received three additional points of faculty input, namely from the Department of Physics, the Department of Mathematics, and the Department Professional Sales. I will send these to you so you also have full perspective from specific units involved in the reorganization. Whereas this input has not changed my recommendations as made in the January 14 letter, it does helpfully remind the importance of ensuring that:

- Attention is paid to the process and mechanics of integration so all involved feel respected and heard on a pathway to positive interpersonal and departmental functioning.
- Departmental programs and activities are not stopped simply as a function of reorganization execution. That was not the intention of this process.
- It enables creative thinking about programs and their delivery, not only within a newly formed department, but across units as may be advantageous to our alignment of internal WP assets with external societal needs.

With respect to the comments shared by the Department of Professional Sales, I believe the reorganization will be positive for its achievements and future, something I shared when the Dean and I met with the department late last semester. Furthermore, I relayed my support for the Russ Berrie Institute going forward. An interim plan is in place and I anticipate receiving a proposal from the Dean shortly on a vision for its future, including with respect to a permanent Director.

With regard to the comments shared by the Physics Department regarding a desire to “be given an opportunity to grow and foster in a new age of STEAM” (i.e., STEM plus the Arts), I seek their engagement both within and external to the new department in this arena.

With respect to the Math Department’s comments, I respect the energy they have for their new Actuarial Sciences program and about to launch program in Applied Mathematics. I share their desire to be successful with those. I also believe there is room for the physics faculty to bring their articulated energy around cross-disciplinary ideas, UCC offerings, and STEAM in ways that can be mutually beneficial, and valuable to the college and University. I look forward to working with the collective department to lay the groundwork for success in these regards. At the same time, I do wish to acknowledge that there could have been other departmental configurations. Yet, I see this one as optimally aligned to possibilities going forward and that matched one of the two reorganization suggestions advanced to me through internal college vetting (the other having physics remain a stand alone department which did not match the intent of this process).

If/as you have questions, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to your final decision and charge to me to execute a plan for reorganization.