Academic Structures

Consultant report and submitted feedback

Consultant Report: Executive Summary

Spring 2022: By Academic Leadership Associates, LLC, Michael Diamond and Mark Robison

Schedule

Eight in-person, open-door, small-group discussions were held in March with approximatively 30 unique attendees, primarily from Arts & Sciences with multiple participants from Agriculture, Education, and Nursing. Sessions focused on either the affinity or overlay concepts.

March 9 sessions
- Affinity: 7 attendees
- Overlay: 10 attendees, including 3 who attended previous meeting
- Affinity: 2 attendees
- Overlay 6 attendees, including 1 who attended previous meeting

March 10
- Overlay: 4 attendees
- Affinity: 6 attendees, including four who attended previous meeting
- Overlay: 2 attendees
- Affinity: 3 attendees, all attended previous meetings

An April Zoom session was also held specifically for the College of Arts and Sciences with approximately 90 unique attendees.

Context

Across our eight in-person discussions and the Zoom meeting for Arts & Sciences we had roughly 130 unique attendees for these discussions. The vast majority were from Arts & Sciences, but at the in-person meetings we also had multiple participants from Agriculture, Education, and Nursing.

Summary of feedback

Participants shared their enthusiasm for 'process,' general support for 'overlay,' and strong aversion to 'affinity.' A majority of participants expressed deep skepticism as to the rationale for any changes beyond 'process,' and an oft-hear critique was that this effort is a "solution looking for a problem." A large amount of the criticism indicated a general distrust of "administrators" and a presumption that ulterior motives are behind these changes. Those comments that addressed the specifics of the Working Group's proposal largely affirmed the need for 'process' improvements and made the case for faculty-led efforts at interdisciplinarity.

The vast majority of attendees argued that all of the barriers to collaboration (or successful faculty work in general) can be solved through the 'process' paradigm. Their suggestions on 'process' largely addressed minimizing bureaucracy and increasing staff support.

While some people argued that 'overlay' is unnecessary because faculty already collaborate widely, most expressed an openness to this approach. The general sentiment was 'overlays' need to be faculty generated and people need sufficient bandwidth to create and nurture these collaborations. Increasing staff support and reducing non-academic burdens on faculty would be a cornerstone of such efforts, as would seed funding to support collaborative work.

Few participants expressed any positive views about the 'affinity' model. In general, faculty presumed the 'affinity' model would lead to closing departments. Those who took the proposals at face-value mostly expressed skepticism that any new configurations would be fundamentally better that the current ones. Faculty from Arts & Sciences consistently argued that the College is already an optimized 'affinity' group and that their co-location in a single, large academic unit is beneficial to all.

Analysis

A frequent critique of the Working Group report focused on the need for further detail. Many participants noted a desire to see the next iteration of the Working Group's efforts and to have opportunity to comment on those (presumably more detailed) proposals before final decisions are made.

Attendees' guidance for the Working Group mostly focused on the 'overlay' model. The argue that these connections only work when they are generated and driven by faculty. For this to occur mechanisms need to be established to ensure that sharing of grant funding and teaching credit are equitable and attractive across academic units. Early stage funding and release time would be vital. For academic programs, mechanisms for providing cross-college ongoing funding would be necessary. Senior faculty would likely have more social capital and the necessary institutional knowledge to navigate such processes, but junior faculty would need additional support to help them engage in interdisciplinary efforts.

Consultant Report: Detailed discussion notes

Spring 2022: By Academic Leadership Associates, LLC, Michael Diamond and Mark Robison

March 9, 2022

Affinity (8:30am – 7 attendees)
- There are many affinities to be formed outside of normal collegiate structures. A question is how we define affinity. Overlay may be more important in connecting people.
- One of the challenges of an institution built around siloed lines is how to set up processes and procedures to allow connections to happen without forcing them. Those processes should be supportive of those connections, not work against them.
- Is it really the case that the notes go to the working group? It is not clear to us what the process is going forward from here. The 'process' option is the most vital piece, because we have to make those systems work.
- How does affinity differ from what we have now, other than pieces being put together in different configurations?

- Why do we need to do this, and what are we trying to achieve? We need to ask ourselves: what is it that we want to do that we cannot do right now? Then, we need can reorganize on that basis.
- One of the things that always comes up is the question of competition between units, and the resentment that entails. Those discussions may be unavoidable, but there always a bad thing. The question here is how to move past that; to alleviate those unproductive schisms.
- If the school of art and our colleagues in the sciences were in different units it would be harder for us to collaborate.   The question is: how do we best facilitate collaboration? Maybe when colleges are bigger we are better able to do that?
- One of the three proposals from the Faculty Senate leadership focused on students as drivers of affinity—particularly graduate students. What if graduate students weren't in departments, but were instead in fields? What if we tried that with undergraduates?
- If that's the case then the question is: what kind of affinities?
- What we really need is the room to play, to experiment, and even to fail. We need a sandbox to play in, and we need to be able to do that without barriers and constraints.
- This process is unfolding without a clear objective or rationale.
- At the Town Hall there was the same kind of presentation we see at every event like that, which focuses on the changes occurring in higher education. If that much change is happening has anyone discussed downsizing the university? How does all of that information about the changes in the student population and the workforce intersect with this discussion? Underpinning this is the assumption that change needs to occur, but how are these changes aligned with those changes? Will these changes help us draw in non-traditional students, since the traditional age student population is declining? When do we start saying: if we reorganize around this affinity it will help us address those changes…?
- It is unclear to me how this academic structures process is unfolding and what happens next?
- Our university has a hard time keeping up with the governance structures and expectations we have in place as it is, and if we make a change on this scale it will be a major drag on our ability to deliver the most basic things like teaching and research.
- I was disappointed in the Town Hall because it was so focused on the broad higher education context. We started the strategic visioning that way two years ago, which was helpful—but we need to build on that and keep moving forward.
- To the extent that student success enters these discussions, I would argue that the biggest impact comes in articulating the broad areas we want them to succeed in, like critical thinking, written and oral communication, etc. We should add visual and design thinking to that and then robustly pursue it. In my experience, that is one of the highest impact ways we can bring positive change.
- In my experience, the biggest driver of change is external funding and that comes from the faculty themselves finding it and securing it. The institution has never been good at prioritizing and building on that basis, with the exception of Oak Ridge. How are we successful otherwise? We got there by setting up institutes and pulling together faculty to write grant proposals to secure the external funding necessary to operate. We are resource rich at this institution. You might not think so, but we are. We've got loads of resources here, but they need to focus on empowering faculty and not on administration.
- We need to ask why we do what we do. Very often the answer is: it has always been done that way. We need move beyond tradition. Whenever I try to do something new I call it a pilot study. I do a lot of pilot studies and eventually it becomes a parallel universe of its own. We all need that kind of opportunity to try new things.

- I don't think the affinity approach would enhance student success. I don't think it would help us accomplish our research. I don't think it will help us meet societal needs. Reorganization is not worth the effort, especially if we don't know why we are doing it.
- Yes, but I do think it is useful to discuss this and consider how to improve and how best to meet our mission.
- We need to acknowledge that although some of us want fundamental change, others of us thrive in the current system and would suffer from change.
- A lot of what we re discussing is ultimately about culture, not structure.
- Can someone come up with a video or presentation or something that really shows why were are doing this? Why we need to change?
- I think there is one already.
- Have students been consulted, to ask what structures they think would be beneficial?

Overlay (10:00am – 10 attendees, including 3 who also attended the previous meeting)
- The last thing I want to see is this university going down a road that will not be successful. I appreciate all the time put in by the working group. But, this document ends up saying that the way forward is to reorganize the colleges to solve problems we have not yet identified. That is completely backwards. We should identify the problems and then consider whether and how to reorganize. Collaboration is mentioned 23 times in the document, so that is clearly a major focus. The university has done many, many things over past 30 years to improve collaboration and none of those things have come to genuinely helped. What faculty need is time. It takes 200 hours to write an NIH grant, on top of everything else you are already doing. What we need is time, and you don't need reorganization for this. What we need are leaders reducing barriers to us getting done what we need to do. This idea of rearranging stuff to solve problems isn't going to help. Where the rubber meets the road is with each individual person in each individual unit.
- It is not at all clear that the administration can effectively foster collaboration. That needs to come from the faculty themselves. The dynamics of collaboration are very complex and organic, and it cannot be forced from above.
- I am on the committee and we did not recommend these four models. We were asked to come up with options for discussion. There are a lot of obstacles to collaboration on campus. For 'overlay' the idea is that the college structures stay as they are, but we have some other set of structures that overlap them. Let's say we create a 'school of climate change solutions' and connect people on campus who work in that area, giving them support and lowering barriers to their collaboration.
- Many of our faculty are siloed and our academic programs are siloed. We need to provide greater access to one-another across those barriers.
- I hear two things. I hear the curricular side, and students are definitely interested in a lot of inter-disciplinary areas. In terms of research, I don't think 'overlay' would solve our problems. Our facilities, our HR processes, our grant support—they're all major problems that won't be solved by this. If the university wants to make structural change they should address HR, facilities, and the office of research support. I am unclear how the overlay model would solve any of those. I worry that getting caught up in this will divert us from solving our more fundamental problems. How is the university going to accomplish this? We can barely set up a center, and as soon as the external funding wanes the problems begin.
- I encourage everyone to fill out the only form on the Provost's site and mention these process issues that need to be solved. The Provost responded to me almost immediately when I did that.

- To me, the overlay piece is important. There are a lot of problems that can be solved with that approach. There are barriers to collaboration that can and should be addressed. We need to identify these problems and push for solutions, or nothing will change.
- One of the inherent difficulties with the options we have been given is that they cater to different goals. Overlay makes a lot of sense for meeting students' interdisciplinary needs, but it does not address faculty needs. I fear that this will just introduce additional gatekeepers. The problem we seem to be trying to solve is that BAM (the new budget model) inhibits collaboration.
- I interpret the overlay model differently. Overlay is what we need regardless of the college structures. It is going to be needed, in particular, because of the new budget model and the siloes that it likely to instill. There need to be some administrative structures to help foster research and pedagogical collaborations across our college boundaries. I see overlay as potentially advantageous for exactly these reasons. We need to help faculty work outside of traditional disciplinary boundaries.
- We need to look closely at what has helped and hindered success and, on that basis, develop solutions.
- One example that has worked here is when a center reports directly to the vice chancellor of research. That takes it outside of the college structures. So, one play is to foster mechanisms whereby those cross-disciplinary entities do not have to go through a department or a college. The challenge, though, is that the office of research isn't set up for oversight of that nature. And, they only really do it when there is a lot of external funding. So, yes, there are ways to make it work— but it is hard to implement and very few people know how to make it work.
- One way thing we thought of in the working group was the model of the graduate school, which doesn't have any faculty or curricula. That notion of a structure that connects across colleges is at the heart of overlay. On the committee we received lots of student data, but no research data. It appears to be impossible to know who is collaborating with who on campus…?
- The associate deans for research in each college have those data.
- Here is my suggestion. We need an outcomes-focused model, rather than the four models in the report. We need to define the outcome we want and organize around that.
- One of the biggest factors in collaboration is personal relationships. A lot of this is about trust.
- A great model would be to begin with an existing motivation, where faculty re already excited about collaborating with one-another.
- The goals should be to foster the creation of these collaborations, and to fund them.
- There is a ton of collaborative research on this campus that does not revolve around funding. It is short sighted to only think about this in terms of sponsored research. What about unfunded collaborative research?
- The department bylaws do not consistently support collaboration, and that needs to be addressed.
- As we start this journey, who are we leaving behind?
- We need to solve how we reward collaboration, especially in tenure and promotion. Many disciplines have a bias against it, and penalize faculty for collaboration. Sticking it in the bylaws will not fix this, because the core problem is in the culture and assumptions people have about collaboration.
- What bothers me about the approach here is that all of this assumes that collaboration is a faculty problem to be solved. Everyone in this room is involved in collaborations, so what is the problem?
- I don't think the working group thought the goal is to make people collaborate more. We thought we needed to make it easier for people to collaborate; to lower the barriers.
- If you are after any kind of major center grant, the institution has to put up funding too—such as for staffing.

- What matters most here is scholarly activity, not sponsored research. There is a clearly a disconnect in this process on that issue. The metrics are there for dollars, for funded research. We need to make sure this process isn't driven by dollars alone.
- I hope that whatever goes back to the administration includes the importance of who we are attracting. We lose out in so many units because we should hire people who do not contribute to those metrics, but cannot.

Affinity (1:30pm – 2 attendees)
- Both of these options have merit, but I gravitate ore to the affinity model. Our biggest challenges rarely have solutions that sit within a single college. But, even if we do affinity right we would still need overlay to make other connections. The big challenge is how to get the campus to own this. It is a struggle to get people to see that how we prepared students before may not serve us well in the future.
- Let's say we restructure round affinity, and people move around. How do we stop that from become a new problem? How do we not get mired in that? Can that be made dynamic, so we can be agile? I am skeptical of overlay actually working, and I worry it would just be something people check off as having done it. And, if it is at all like joint appointments it could make tenure and promotion difficult.
- So, with affinity would there still be departments? Presumably yes. And, I presume a lot of degree programs would migrate into a new unit. I know this involves moving people, but maybe it would be most productive to think of it as moving the faculty line. Whatever happens, it shouldn't be based on peoples' personalities—where people move to get away from their rivals, etc.
- When changes like this happen they tend to foster resentment that last for decades.
- Will there be a point in this process where external stakeholders will be queried? I would want to know what donors and employers think before making an affinity change.
- We need to ask and be able to answer, in the long run, how this benefits Tennesseans.
- One advantage with affinity could be to better connect what was UTIA with the rest of UTK.
- Affinity is appealing in a lot of ways. Maybe STEM education could be co-located with some of those disciplines?
- I can imagine vibrant conversations with philanthropic foundations around the affinity-driven structures.
- I do think there could be exciting new research ideas from affinity—as long as they actually talk to one-another. Overlay may be able to do that too, but it is more likely with affinity. For students, I do worry that students may get lost in interdisciplinary programs. We would need to guard against this increasing how long it takes to graduate, for examples.
- If we do affinity we will need to do a lot of recruitment around it, along with outreach to school counselors, etc., to make sure they know about the unique opportunities at UTK.
- We need a creative process that engages faculty in identifying affinity options.

Overlay (3:00pm – 6 attendees, including 1 who also attended the previous meeting)
- If we create new colleges and don't fix our processes nothing will have been accomplished.
- One of the benefits of overlay would be adaptability. We have a lot of fads in academe, and it would allow us to pursue ideas and then change or adapt them as we go. I like the flexibility inherent in overlay.
- I too like the flexibility of this approach, at least in terms of its potential. The structures we create for this would, themselves, need to be flexible. And, it would no doubt take some time for people to adapt to those structures. It makes me think about our current interdisciplinary programs structure,

where things are created and if they thrive they achieve a level of stability—but if not they might go away.

- I have been at UTK long enough to see cycles of efforts like this. Past efforts like this proved to be unsustainable because it was an added layer of work for faculty, and it ultimately clashed with the interests of departments. At the graduate level things like this are hard to sustain solely on the basis of faculty enthusiasm. On the undergraduate level it is a bit easier because the structures create less friction. So, I love this idea—overlay—but you cannot do it just by saying people can do it hoping it will take shape of its own accord.
- I think it was five years ago that they wanted to hire people in clusters—and there were going to be five clusters. I think only one actually happened, and not to the extent intended.
- I have seen overlays fail because they lack support. These will need administrative support to ensure they do not create an insurmountable drain on faculty time.
- To me, the biggest time cost to faculty come from widely distributed unsupported initiatives. Bureaucracy in universities is nothing new, but the layers upon layers we have create barriers and consume a lot of time. How can overlay undo some of our existing attempts and systems of this nature?
- There is a cart-before-the-horse question with the new budget model here too.
- As faculty we think of problems and then look for solutions, but this is hard because it is a solution looking for a problem. The working group was asked whether we have the right number of academic units. This process should have begun with questions about what we are actually trying to accomplish?
- How are we defining faculty here? To what extent does this effort address non-tenure-track faculty? How does it address the time constraints of faculty who have so many responsibilities supervising non-tenure-track-faculty?
- It sounds like we need to create positions and structures to take away some of this burden, so that people who want to create an overlay have support in doing it.
- For our current interdisciplinary programs, faculty need to devote a lot of time outside of their department or college. They do it because they know it will help them get great graduate students. But, the lift to create and operate a program like that is large.
- The Graduate School would seem an obvious place to locate the support for this sort of thing. A lot of what's needed to make overlay work is administrative support; access to support staff.
- What are the conditions we need to allow us to have faculty-driven conversations about innovation, rather than ones driven by the administration? If overlay could mean something like a ground-up effort that would be good. So often at UTK I have seen an effort to grow a thing start with creating an office focused on that thing—and we need to do this differently, with a faculty-led process.
- The two IDPs we have now in my department came from the passion and energy of faculty. To have these ideas and bring them about we need faculty support.
- The way to free up faculty time is to have more faculty and more staff.
- On the subject of 'affinity,' I am completely against breaking up Arts & Sciences. There are alternative models that would yield results. There could be associate deans for social sciences, humanities, etc. There could be one for interdisciplinary studies.
- The 'process' piece is also vital. We have to streamline processes that create barriers and unnecessarily consume faculty time.
- What percentage has undergraduate enrollment increased? It is something like 10% in the past few years. How much has the faculty increased?
- Not at all…
- And we don't have the staff we need either.

- For example, most of the grant process is pushed onto faculty. Other universities have well-staffed offices for pre and post-award grant work. Here, faculty need to do all of those things, and in many cases in that process we are making decisions we are unqualified to make.
- How many forms do we have fill out where the same information is required five times in five ways? Those processes need to be more efficient, and there need to be enough staff to do the part of that suitable for staff.
- I think I like the overlay concept, but can we pair it with 'extract' as an idea? We need to undo some of these unnecessary structures.
- Overlay is only going to work if faculty have the time and motivation to make those connections and build on them.
- I don't see how creating new silos is going to help us accomplish interdisciplinarity.
- Faculty don't have as many opportunities to meet each other as we used to. It has been many years since we had a faculty dining facility. Now there is a meet-up, and it is in the football stadium— which tells you a lot about the university.
- If we re-imagining what the ideal university would look like I doubt we would spend a lot of time on structure. We would talk about student and faculty needs instead.
- I don't have a lot of faith in the process. We want to solve problems and we are bring asked to discuss hammers.
- I look around the room and see the same good-citizen faculty who always come to discussions like this. That is part of the problem, that the burden falls on a few.

March 10, 2022

Overlay (8:30am – 4 attendees)
- Psychology is an interesting example, because it has ties to both the natural sciences and the social sciences. I wonder how affinity would work for Psychology, given those varied ties. But, overlay is very promising. There will always be in the informal overlays, but with this proposal who precisely would the university support these more formalized overlay collaborations?
- There could be opportunities for research synergies, and sponsored research activity, in an overlay between Psychology and Engineering.
- The whole campus has gone through lots of change lately, and this would be yet another. People wonder whether the outcomes for this process have already been decided. We don't want to lose our identity in the College of Nursing.
- Nursing does a lot of interdisciplinary research with other colleges, and we want to enhance that— but it is true that we don't want to lose our identity by being pulled into another, larger college.
- Our institutional culture and our sense of belonging is largely in our departments. It is very threatening when there is an idea on the table that might break that up. But, it doesn't need to be threatening. The overlays in particular add to those structures without undermining them. But, sometimes it feels like the popular kids get overlays while others are left behind. I would like to see a more intentional discussion of overlays for teaching, and for service, as well as for research. However, I think about the process barriers to overlays. I think an overlay on undergraduate STEM education would be great, pulling in Arts & Sciences, Engineering, and Education.
- If overlay is just more work for people, it isn't going to flourish. The benefit for the people involved needs to evident. Maybe the benefit is a cluster hire? Maybe it is graduate GRA lines? Administrative support?
- I could imagine a unit devoted to interdisciplinary programs. There needs to be some sort of structure, and it can't be run out of the research office, since it isn't solely about research. Maybe the funding is for a finite number of years, but renewable?

- However this works it needs to work for both graduate and undergraduate programs.
- It would be great to involve students in these discussions, and not just create things for them that the faculty think they will want.
- This should also account for the likelihood that the need for some of these overlays may go away over time.
- In an overlay, would one still have a home department for tenure? Or, would an overlay have its own faculty? The department might see this as a detriment, so the overlay system would need to account for this.
- The deans need to be onboard with this, and the same goes for the department chairs.
- I think it would work best if there is more than one person from a department involved. That would help minimize the extent to which someone participating in an overlay would feel like an outsider in their department.
- I agree that the buy-in has to be there with the deans, or there is no way this could work.
- There has to buy-in and benefits for everyone involved, not just the deans. That goes for non-tenure-track faculty as well.
- The overlay would need to contribute to teaching, research, and service—not just one of these.
- In the College of Nursing we have seen the need for change for many years, and we've had trouble bringing people along with us. Now people see the need for change.
- I don't think that faculty are against change in general. But, it sometimes feels like a slippery slope and that some change could lead to too much change.
- I think there's been a lot of change recently, and so people feel like the changes are coming too quickly.
- My colleagues are open to the idea of overlay, but they're skeptical of how it will be rolled out and who will benefit. There is a skepticism that this will only benefit Engineering, computational fields, and unit connected to Oak Ridge. The concern is that the university will fund the winners even more robustly and leave everyone else behind.
- That's a great point. This shouldn't just be about giving more to the people who already have lots of resources. This should be about elevating strengths in a variety of places within the university. People won't even try to participate if they think the effort will be wasted; if they think the winners have already been determined (and that they're the usual suspects).
- One other thing that needs to be accounted for in the design of these overlays is accreditation in the professional schools.

Affinity (10:00am – 6 attendees, four of whom attended previous meetings on 'overlay')
- Of the proposals this one is by far the most toxic. I have yet to speak to anyone who supports this idea. Colleges are incredibly important for how we structure and deliver undergraduate education, and the notion of breaking up Arts & Sciences would cripple our ability to deliver a liberal arts education.
- Employers want people who are good at lots of things, and who bring a broad skillset. The notion of breaking up Arts & Sciences works against this. That would move us 50 years backwards. That idea is the opposite of where the world is going. I've her that public health and nutrition would like to be together in a College of Public Health, and that seems to make sense.
- Inside the College of Nursing the discussions have focused on a possible loss of diversity, and that the haves will come out on top and the have nots will have even less. The loss of diversity would come by putting only like-minded people together.

- The reason why we have a lot of colleges is related to accreditation. Changing those configurations would be problematic. And, some of those disciplines have very specific needs that need to be attended to in their own right.
- If Arts & Sciences gets broken up into separate colleges of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, how will that affect those of us who have a foot in each of those areas? Many of our departments are inherently interdisciplinary and splitting up the college would work against that.
- I am advocate of overlay, since it would retain our college structures but enhance interdisciplinarity.
- For interdisciplinary programs it is very hard to staff the courses.
- Every overlay splits our time into shards, in terms of teaching and for service.
- One overlay that used to work well was the statistics program. That is managed by the school of business and used to serve a lot of units. Then, five or so years ago the business school had a change of heart and decided to solely focus that program on serving their needs. That's a problem.
- The solutions to our problems are 90% in the 'process' area and 10% in 'overlay.'
- Right now the only students who have a lot freedom to put together a program of study that meets their needs are the honors students. But, all of our students should have that latitude.
- If we do affinity we will need all sort of new deans and associate deans. If we are going to spend money on that, couldn't we instead spend money on faculty to run the IDPs we have and whatever overlays we create? They need faculty to run them, and they need staff support.
- I am disappointed that these sessions are set up to discuss overlay and affinity only, which sets those up as the only options. Process is the piece we need to address.
- In terms of process, the biggest problems to address are:
  - Need for co-sponsorship of events, which is a massive waste of time
  - We need autonomy to spend modest amounts of money (which is both a procurement problem and lack of empowerment of people)
  - Human resources is a major problem, creating barriers to getting things done. They make it impossible for us to hire and onboard the people we need.
  - We need better, more effective assistance finding grants, writing the grants, and stewarding the grants.
  - Our IT resources and software are completely inadequate, and the systems keep being replaced every few years. Many of the systems we have don't talk to one-another, which adds to the problem.
  - Staff turnover is another chronic problem, which exacerbates the other problems
  - The IRB system is also problematic, where faculty have to be the PI on any student project.
  - There are also layers of approvals that make no sense. If the office of research is going to scrutinize my grant proposal, which does my college also have to do so? And, each of them takes five days to do so.
  - The systems with the registrar are also ludicrously restrictive and problematic.
- The point here is that for an interdisciplinary program the layers of complication increase and the number of approvals necessary multiply.
- There is a systematic underestimation of the amount of service involved in creating and operating any given program.
- As much as I deplore the use of outside consultants, this university would benefit from some sort of efficiency consultant reviewing and fixing our systems.
- At the research level, our mechanisms for credit sharing and F&A sharing inhibit collaboration. Ultimately, the department chairs don't want their faculty to do anything that limits their F&A.
- We could reconfigure the academic units to try to fix some of these barriers, but the bottom line is that we could never foresee all of the barriers. No configuration would successfully put the right

units together, because there are too many possible, useful combinations. And, those configurations would likely change over time.

- These systems can be fixed, but it will not fully address the problem of connecting people. Faculty need a place to come together. That qualitative aspect of these relationships is not addressed here.
- Another reason affinity isn't the answer is communication. For people to collaborate they need to know each other and be in the same communication loops. If Arts & Sciences is broken up how will we make and sustain those connections.
- We need the opportunity to really get to know one another. To bump into each other. That is where the collaborations will be formed, and right now there is no forum for those connections to be made.
- Our structures are very top-down across the university. We have a cultural problem that stems from the administration not trusting the faculty.
- If the Chancellor decides to do the affinity option it will get ugly. We will fight that tooth and nail and make the Chancellor's life a living hell.
- We are told there is no pre-determined outcome for this process, but we don't believe that. The starting point question was whether we have right number of academic units. It should have started from the place of what need to accomplish.
- The Chancellor could claim a major success just by making the university a qualitatively better place.
- Again, the one idea out there that seems like a good restructuring move would be to create a College of Public Health.
- Nothing about affinity gets us closer to achieving our strategic plan. It would make us less nimble and less effective.
- And, affinity is too permanent. What if those new configurations don't serve us well? That's why overlay is a better option.

Overlay (1:30pm – 2 attendees)

- I have seen overlay type things succeed elsewhere. It is clear that only a small minority of faculty have real joint-appointments where they are active in more than one unit. For overlay to work you need real engagement between departments.
- I worry that BAM will lead to differential tuition distribution by undergraduate majors, which would be a disaster. That would create lots of jealousy and animus between units. On the other hand, I worry that the unprofitable departments will be shut down.
- Here at UTK, I get the sense that few of my colleagues understand the scope of change that may come with BAM.
- With BAM, I wonder about inequities in F&A rates based on space usage. If one person uses a small footprint and another has a large lab, will they still pay the same rate?
- For collaboration, like overlay, one of the hardest things is to get a clear sense of everyone's strengths and interests so you can identify the 'boundary-spanners' who can be the bridges between disciplines, departments, and units. It is very hard to draw out of people what they want to research and how that might interlock with other peoples' research agendas.
- For students, we need better ways of letting them put things together in ways that meet their interests and needs. And, we need better ways of communicating with them so they know what resources are there.
- To really drive collaboration it is important for people to have teaching responsibilities in multiple departments. That plays a key role. But, you then end up having to learn two systems, and sometimes you end up with double service commitments.

- For these interdisciplinary ideas to really work they need start at the grassroots level. Some will fail, some will succeed. Once they coalesce, then maybe they need to be more deeply institutionalized, within a unit or as a center, etc.
- We should be purposeful about organizing around areas where there is external funding available. Right now, for example, quantum is a great example of a very interdisciplinary area with lots of funding.
- IAMM is an interesting example. Is there a way to track actual collaborations that stem from that? Maybe collaboration should be a factor in our yearly reviews?
- Collaborations take a huge amount of time and effort. For tenure-track faculty that level of service is very difficult to manage.
- One low-hanging fruit is to do shared funding of graduate students—and they then become the conduit for shared ideas.
- One challenge in engaging junior faculty is the difference in pathways across disciplines. In some fields people do five or more years of postdocs and in others they hire newly-minted Ph.D.s—which means they enter the professoriate with very different research records.
- As a faculty member you have so few levers to pull to be create and entrepreneurial, and yet you see all of these new initiatives coming down the line and they all make more work for you.
- The affinity topic is troubling. I value Arts & Sciences as an inherently valuable, inherently interdisciplinary endeavor. I worry about the future of those disciplines, and the value that can be derived from them, if they end up being separated.
- The degree program equivalent of this sort of interdisciplinary independence for an undergraduate can lead to problems of employability. For the honors students who can design their own majors, they sometimes struggle finding employment. This is particularly problematic for first generation students, who lack the context to know how navigate the opportunities at the university and then leverage them into a career.
- All of this is why overlay is maybe the best way forward for UTK.

Affinity (3:00pm – 3 attendees, all of whom attended earlier 'overlay' meetings)
- The idea of structural change clearly stems from the notion that we have difficulty working across units. Can't we just work to lower those barriers and make it easier to work across units, rather than engaging in this level of structural change?
- Right now we are structurally isolated. We are literally physically isolated by our buildings, and even within the academic units we are dispersed across buildings. We are also figuratively isolated because of our practices, processes, and culture.
- We need to find ways to make the time, space, and customs of people coming together to connect and learn from each other. The faculty club used to help with this, but that is long gone.
- I do like the overlay ideas, and if we could make that work it would help.
- We should do this in stages. First, let's fix the processes. Let's start there. Then, let's try the overlay idea.
- I appreciate the need for change. I don't know any kind of organization that can just stay unchanged. But, we need to do this purposefully.
- Staff need to be included in these discussions.
- Staff were not informed about these meetings, but they should have been. The messages only went out on the faculty list-serve.
- For overlay in particular, if it is to work staff will need to involved. For better or worse, teaching is no longer solely a faculty endeavor—and we need the staff to be part of this.

Zoom meeting with Faculty from Arts & Sciences, April 7, 2022

Attendance was 75-79 for most of the meeting, but unique attendees exceeded 90)

- No specifics on how this would work and the options are conveyed in vague ways.
- We have repeatedly said it is not just about structures. It isn't just about affinity and overlay. We have a lot of processes that need to be fixed. At the listening sessions faculty mostly wanted to talk about process. In these discussions we have raised much bigger questions about structure beyond these proposals.
- I am unsure about exactly what we are discussing. I am enthusiastic about the concept of overlay, but how would it work? What would that mean? These are ideas sound great, but we need specifics.
- We need a cycle of input after the committee revises their report and before the models are elaborated by the Provosts Office.
- I have asked multiple times for specific examples from other universities so we have case studies to consider. The cases need to be specific and include data.
- I'm not sure we should be choosing between affinity and overlay. I doubt that is what we should be doing. Having resources to establish more overlay centers is altogether positive. Those resources would be a positive thing. There is a lot of cross-disciplinary collaboration at the university already. But, whatever department you are in you already know how to work within across those structures. If you start rearranging colleges it would be a gut punch.
- The program I run began as an IDP and is now a major. This meeting is very important. In my previous institution, which was a lot like UTK, to do a similar kind or reorganization like this. That resulted in a school with all of the fine and performing arts. That had benefits, but an undertaking like this can create a lot of problems. The university benefits a lot from the investment it puts into he arts. The arts are fundamentally interdiscinplary . What would these change mean for our collaborations? Siloing the arts is bad for students and bad for fauclty.
- The timing of this is incredibly bad. Coming out of the pandemic it is unconscionable to burden faculty with this idea at this time.
- I read the report from the working group and went to the town hall. What I don't understand is the motivation for any of this. What are the problems and do any of these proposals address them. It seemed as if the goal is to make the university into a trade school. This seems entirely focused on training employees.
- The Provost needs to hear that we are very happy being part of the this large College of Arts & Sciences. The college works well and we have very good collaborations. I am totally against changing structures. Faculty are exhausted by the service burden and teaching loads. We cannot take on a change like this, especially as it serves no useful purpose. What we need is to invest in more tenure-line faculty.
- It is astonishing to me that there are so many people here from the College. The Provost implied that we do not care about this issue because few people came to his meetings. I trust our Dean, but I do not trust the Provost on this. This effort makes no sense. We have institutions like the Humanities Center, and it is grossly under-funded. We need the support to make these cross-disciplinary efforts what they should be. This is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. Why doesn't he ask what problems we think need to be solved?
- Based on these discussions, are we just wasting our time talking about the affinity model? If we are trying to do overlay, we don't want more administrators. We want it driven by the faculty and benefiting academic endeavors.

- The affinity model is a non-starter. We can't do interdisciplinary research through more division. This is a very important discussion, because if that model were pursued it would be disastrous for our students who truly want to pursue broad academic interests. Between these options, overlay is clearly the one that would actually help—depending on how it is implemented. We can definitely increase the opportunities for overlay so people can actually pursue their ideas. Course-banking, for example, would help open up time for these sort of efforts. I am eager to give fully tot his institution with my ideas and energy, but I need support and resources to help make that meaningful.
- I am not a new faculty member. I've been here a long time. When I arrived here we had four bio departments. We've been in this same situation before and it would be worth revisiting what went wrong twenty years ago when decisions were made that led us to here. More recently, there is no area of life science more negatively effected by our structures than plant biology—which spans Arts & Sciences and Agriculture. We need to be able to solve the problems of how degrees are counted across these departments, so credit is given where it is due. These problems need to be solves.
- Yeah to all of us for these inspirational voices. We are an amazing group who care deeply about our students and our research, and about the role of the university. Administrators seem to think that interdisciplinary collaboration can be created from the top down, if we have the right administrative structure. That just isn't the way collaboration emerges. How do I get units to collaborate when everyone is exhausted and their time is completely taken up already with their teaching and service? We need time to create new things, and the resources to support those ideas.
- The growth I have had through being part of arts and sciences has been tremendous—and I am in the arts. Sitting in a P&T committee with scientists is beneficial. I worry about siloing into just arts and humanities. I would not be teacher I am today were it not for those structures.
- We developed our own life sciences degree outside of departmental structures, and the departments contributed TA lines. We got that through the approval process, but ultimately got no support. And, the departments got no credit back for the degrees being produced. So, we had a viable idea that fell apart. That was a grassroots efforts that prevailed against the barriers put in place, but then ultimately went awry.
- We need mechanisms to offer new programs that cross disciplinary boundaries, but that doesn't mean we need different college structures.

Zoom chat (names redacted)
- I heard that the Provost was surprised at the lack of turnout at other sessions. I think the difference is that the Dean actually encouraged people to attend and laid out in a brief message why it might be important.
- And was kind enough to give us lead time to make ourselves available!
- And the provost 'listening session' I went to was terrible so many wouldn't go back
- One question is how there will be more extensive discussion of the host of ideas that have been presented. Is this all being done by the Working Group or will there actually be a set of discussions open to all regarding these alternative ideas
- Good question, but I am not sure the working group is even involved anymore. I understand that some recommendations of the working group have not received much attention. Specifically, an idea that what should happen is we should be looking at processes that might thwart improvement.
- This is not my understanding - the Senate leadership posted a timeline for next steps - it is on the Provost's site and assumes the working group continues in some format
- Thank you. I defer to your knowledge. My source on this would not have been as well informed as you.

- The Provost has says the working group gets the report
- Just for notes later: 73 people in the meeting + Mark Robinson. If it's just CAS TT faculty, that's like 11% of the faculty. That's probably not the correct denominator (staff, NTT, etc. are here, which is important) but maybe there's a way to get a better estimate: shows how many people are engaged.
- I want to amplify the note that why are we not taking the committee's suggestion to work on Process to improve things before moving on to decide if we need more substantive changes?
- XXXX's question is why the Senate put up specific proposals - they are on the Provost website as "examples"
- The objective for these examples was to encourage an initial format for specifying benefits and challenges
- Geographers' work is very interdisciplinary and falls in many categories -- putting it in either may not be easy at all.
- I think the Chancellor and Provost are definitely going to work on the Process, but there is the question of whether we could wait to see whether we need other substantive changes AFTER that
- College of Data Sciences?? Surely not.
- Would agree with XXXX that improve process is the first step. Get that done first.
- With regard to process, I would like to make the perhaps equal parts obvious and radical suggestion that actual members of the Colleges in question vote on specific and comprehensive proposals, perhaps through the body of the Faculty Senate. As in, follow procedures of shared governance.
- It was not a College of Data Science - you can see it posted on the website - again just as an example to foster a format for more detailed discussion
- XX, would you want to post the link in the chat?
- https://provost.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2022/02/021022ExamplesRestructuringSenateDec2021.pdf
- This is precisely the problem…we occasionally hear about specific proposals, and then hear that they are off the table. For example, the College of Science and Engineering that was mentioned in the paper was explicitly called a non-starter by the Provost. Now for the first time, we are hearing about a College of Data Science.
- XXXX, the College of Quant Science was presented during previous listening sessions as an actual recommendation of the Faculty Senate, and not as a something just to foster discussion. I feel like Faculty senate and the Working Group has been consistently mis-represented
- This is a naive question, but who initiated this entire process?
- I have no idea what the Provost may or may not have said was a non-starter, the objective was simply to foster a more uniform way to state a proposal.
- I would also second or third or fourth or whatever the notion that dealing with PROCESS is really the first step. I think it is quite possible that to the extent there is a problem in need of solution, dealing with process is going to get us nearly all the way there in terms of solving it. I realize process may seem a little "smaller" and might not look quite so great on a leadership resume, but process seems like step one to me. Then we can assess if there is still a problem. To the extent that interdisciplinary work is what we are aiming for, reorganizing away from a college like arts and sciences that creates great opportunities for that seems contrary to ultimate goals.
- It all seems like a (random?) selection of a solution in search of a problem. ALL of the identifiable problems are in the realm of PROCESS
- XXXX, I believe this was the Chancellor's initiative.
- XXXX: the chancellor convened a working group
- https://provost.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2021/11/ASWG_report_11_05_2021.pdf

- XXXX, the beginning to the statement of the examples is very clear that these were in no way from or approved by the Senate but just to foster format for more detailed discussions
- It seems like there is a choice, affinity or the reorganization of Colleges, but what about the choice of fixing processes as what needs to happen, not either of the others?
- The Provost said at a listening session that there would not be a College of Science and Engineering.
- thanks
- Why is the Faculty Senate making proposals without even discussing this with the departments that would be involved?
- The lack of release of data in the process has worried me. For example, I believe the committee looked at peer institution structures -- what did they find? The presentation showed a decline of college age students, but Boyd Center data shows the number of traditionally aged college students going *up* in TN. Releasing data would help inform decision making and shows a respect for stakeholders.
- Again, this was not the Senate - it was the leadership team because of our frustration that the underlying process for ideas was not well structured. We also encouraged and worked with the Provost office on the submission form for ideas
- The Faculty Senate should be representing faculty, not making proposals and decisions without consultation. In fact the FS exists precisely for SHARED GOVERNANCE.
- (I can collaborate (research) more if I can get teaching or service reductions. More centers can't create more collaboration alone).
- @XXXX the faculty senate is our elected representatives. I think the FS was trying at least to give SOME faculty input in a process that was completely top-down initiated.
- The Faculty Senate document was not a proposal - it was an example of how we needed more specific information in order to be able to weigh the pros and cons of changes (much like XXXX was saying). The working group document was SO VAGUE as to be useless for discussion.
- XXXX, what leadership team? Do you mean FS leadership? If so that's even worse.
- Exactly—this vagueness is completely impossible to work with. I appreciate the Senate's attempt ot nail down some ideas, without fully agreeing with some of them
- XXXX obviously we have a very different idea of the role of the leadership of the Senate - it is precisely to represent faculty perspectives, which is what the leadership has been doing
- Yes, an affinity model build with carrots!
- Hello all, My name is XXXX and I joined UTK in 20XX as an Assistant Professor in the School of Art. This issue was important enough to me that I wanted to teleconference in to give my unequivocal opinion. Overlay is a fantastic model that has proven itself to work well at UTK. The affinity model would make it impossible for me, us, to perform the kind interdisciplinary research and teaching that has earned me a Fulbright and a National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Publications fellowship during my brief years here at UTK. Increased interdisciplinarity cannot be achieved through further division. I am in support of my senior colleagues comments on the impossibility of the affinity model.
- @XXXX. Thank you.
- I feel entirely sure that the Chancellor has zero idea of how much cross-disciplinary work is already happening and is not visible because it is not always tied to shared lines or to external funding. In Religious Studies almost everything we do is interdisciplinary.
- Sorry, I mean overlay built on carrots
- How can faculty perspectives be represented if they aren't consulted. That's not shared governance.
- XXXX's point about timing is WELL TAKEN
- agreed with XXXX!

- Re @XXXX's point -- those data could be *partly* gotten from coauthorship, grants, cross-listing of classes, team teaching, etc. -- but nothing of this was presented publicly
- Pandemic brain. :)
- XXXX's points are VERY germane and need to be answered and from my experience are very apt as one who has crossed disciplines repeatedly
- I am astounded that FS leadership has taken upon itself to make proposals with such a major impact, and I'm just hearing about this now???
- @XXXX definitely NOT proposals!
- @XXXX, I fully agree. So much interdisciplinary work is happening already. And more will not happen without dealing with process and funding.
- XXXX, OK, what are they—suggestions?
- Examples of the level of detail we would need to be able to consider / start these discussions
- In addition to departments such as Anthropology and Geography that cross the natural and social sciences, our College also has programs that also include the Humanities. These departments would also be faced with crazy difficult and demoralizing choices if they had to choose a new College.
- The Provost rather amusingly made this distinction at one of the meetings—he said "proposals" and then quickly corrected himself and said he meant "suggestions". Doesn't give me a lot of confidence that there's much space between the two.
- Thanks. I raised this issue at a previous listening session and am really concerned about the future of our department in the model that divides up the College into clusters.
- How do you all respond to the Legislature essentially telling the College (presumably) that it will house a School of Public Policy to foster "Civics"
- Agreed with XXXX.
- Well stated, XXXX!
- @XXXX I believe understanding the intention of Faculty Senate leadership compared with the potential interpretation of the Provost is an important distinction
- I do not understand this question, XXXX. We fully expect the FS to be nothing like the Legislature.
- Totally agree with XXXX.
- Does anyone support the reorganization (affinity) model?
- I agree with XXXX about the arts.
- Many of us have been actively involved in "overlay" with respect to teaching and research, largely based on faculty doing extra , non-compensated work. Getting sustained support from the university has been nearly impossible. They introduce a great program/process and indicate they will provide substantial support for it, and then it fades away. That makes us extremely skeptical that a shift in emphasis towards more interactive activities is going to last.
- Agreed with XXXX!
- I agree with XXXX completely about the affinity model being bad for the arts. I think the core problem here is a breakdown of trust between faculty and UTK leadership because there is a breakdown in shared governance. I agree that this feels like a solution searching for a problem. This feels like a drive for more centralized control and further assault on shared governance.
- @XXXX YES - where would the funding for this be coming from?!
- Definitely agree with XXXX
- yes to "borderline unconscionable" on the timing.
- You mean the problem it's trying to solve? Also confused.
- Solution in search of a problem is spot on.
- Yeah to me this looks like "leadership wanting to make a mark" not "what we actually need right now"

- My concerns echo XXXX's comments. I am deeply concerned that creating smaller colleges based on "affinity" is likely to create a hierarchy of colleges in which some become a permanent lower class of service departments and others become high-flying money makers but that may be quite subject to fluctuating trends in funders' priorities.
- XXXX, we can't answer that question without knowing what "affinity" means. Math (and some other fundamental fields) could be said to have an affinity with almost everything. (There is a journal called Math and Music, for example.) The problem is that any preconceived notion, like a College of Data Science, can be justified by simply tweaking the definition of "affinity".
- I see affinity as not well aligned with these goals of solving complex problems and not efficient from a resource perspective. Overlay with new centers and things like that could be really great, WITH PROPER INVESTMENT.
- At the same time as wanting to make a mark admin get to echo views of faculty as "recalcitrant" and "unwilling to change" (and perhaps encourage early retirement and give "richer" new colleges more resources)
- We need to change just because it is an old format is not a good enough reason.
- I do strongly agree with finding concrete and material support for fostering the growth of our already amazingly strong tradition of interdisciplinary work - we do this well and it builds on a true liberal arts environment for our communal thought
- ^^ yes
- The strategic vision was released during the pandemic… we haven't even had time to process that document and the working group was already working on this. Goes back to TIMING. None of us have had time to process any of this. Moving forward so quickly is disrespectful of faculty ability to contribute meaningfully
- Not just a turn-off, but contrary to our actual mission
- I have the same concerns, around vocational foci and turning the university and the college into entirely utilitarian machines.
- If leadership wants to make a mark, they would be very wise to not push faculty who are already pushed to the max to reorient departments to a new college structure. They will have much more success putting much needed resources into the OVERLAY model. On a small scale, providing funds for GRAs and postdocs to jump start research between news units has in my experience been very successful. Leaders who manage to do this will see greater productivity and greater happiness. Leaders who push the AFFINITY model will see a lot of unhappy people and lower productive. Yes, in the AFFINITY model there might be some winners --- some people who are really happy. But the cost will be high for many others.
- So can the overlay model be directed (coopted?) towards that end with the goal of improving process and providing resource?
- I also concur with XXXabout existing lack of support for efforts that align with the overlay model. Many many faculty invest unrecognized and uncompensated effort toward building interdisciplinary collaborations and the lack of support within the current system raises questions for me about the degree of commitment from higher level admin to actually invest in these efforts.
- There is A LOT to be concerned about with the devil/details we do not know. Some of these decisions could have IRREPARABLE harms (if CAS were to be disbanded). It seems ludicrous to consider any significant modifications without thoroughly examining the potential consequen
- In addition to the vocational/employer driven interests in the future of education, the town hall I attended brought up the declining population of college-age students (which is going to have a giant impact on CCs and branch campuses), but none of these re-orgs seem to respond to that concern.

- Another axis to consider: money for overlays might be hard if most money goes to colleges (under the new BAM model). Perhaps a reason not to consider changing colleges and budget model at the same time (and after (during?) a pandemic)
- Or new support staff at the departmental and Overlay levels
- How about funding for faculty to co-teach across programs? That would be a great way to foster interdisciplinary
- *interdisciplinarity
- We need more tenured line faculty to keep up with increased teaching demands and always growing service demands. 100% agreement with XXXX.
- I believe our "affinity" in this College is that we represent the fundamental, classical areas of inquiry. The departments in our College have counterparts in nearly every institution of higher learning in the world. We train students in the subjects with which every educated person should be familiar.
- Agree on funding for interdisciplinary teaching.
- I agree with XXXX, we don't need more administrators, we need more faculty lines.
- Agree with XXXX about faculty lines.
- Yes on more faculty. Yes on more appreciation of and resources for the under appreciated labor that goes into all sorts of interdisciplinary "overlay" work.
- I completely agree with XXXX. I am co-director of one of the centers, and it is EXTREMELY difficult to incentivize faculty involved in the center to participate in lectures, etc. (in terms of attending them), beyond just being listed.
- Agree with XXXX, our College already has a great affinity.
- Yes. Don't throw money at upper administration. Hire tenure-line faculty and departmental support staff. This does not require "restructuring."
- For further solidarity on a lot of related issues I sincerely hope that all of you concerned folks are members or will join AAUP (https://aauputk.org/) and the union UCW
- That is a wonderful point! We also show up for the college, beyond the idea of trust, we are deeply invested in our college community because we function well together.
- Thanks XXXX--I agree with you completely.
- (here's how to join UCW — https://www.ucwtn.org/join-us)
- very similar (or worse) in social sciences
- Oh no, we're still afraid in the sciences, but humanities have it worse!
- No, we're afraid in the sciences as well! We want to stay connected with the arts and humanities. It is integral for our students and our community
- I went to the Provost's meetings but there was little listening to the faculty and mostly talking at us.
- It is true: we have many interdisciplinary programs, and they are always underfunded. A great experiment: what would happen if we committed to adequately fund the current cross-disciplinary programs.
- Various "micro" ironies on support for underfunded units across UT. As Director of Global Studies I can pay a scholar from another university to give a guest lecture but cannot give another UT scholar even $1.
- Lack of trust with provost office extends way beyond the humanities
- CAS as a broad community of scholarship across Arts and Sciences frames and informs our academic world and enriches our lives and our student's lives
- Thank you, XXXX!
- I believe that many earlier sessions were in person, not by Zoom. That may have also affected attendance.
- Agreed, XXXX. I think it's also an obligation as a the flagship public university in the state.

- I like this wording:
- CAS as a broad community of scholarship across Arts and Sciences frames and informs our academic world and enriches our lives and our student's lives THANK YOU XXXX.
- Exactly, XXXX!
- Wait—the Provost has explicitly said that this is not driven by the budget…
- @XXXX and XXXX, Yes, but with asterisk to say Arts/Humanities, Sciences, and Social Sciences. The "old" liberal arts model is pretty darn good.
- There in lays the rub. They are trying to solve a problem that wouldn't exist without BAM.
- That budget model is why CAS is important - we will be responsible for less "economically productive" departments but have GREAT value and should be communally supported
- People cross unit lines and collab all the time. Just needs money.
- I think a large College of Arts and Sciences also may make it easier to buffer outside legislative mandates that may be counter to our educational goals.
- Oh, so the problem we need to solve is that we have to find a workaround to the new budget model.
- The process and overlay approaches seem far less disruptive to the School of Art's current program strengths while providing opportunities to grow divisional support within the college. The three school of arts are already part of the same college and separating them out into their own affinity college offers no clear benefits and does not solve any major problems. Furthermore, the School of Art's national reputation is fundamentally based on our identity as an interdisciplinary program grounded in the Humanities and Liberal Arts. Placing our school in a separate College of Arts would silo our programs, faculty, and students and undercut what makes us unique and competitive nationally. Philosophically, we believe that artists thrive when their education is grounded in a broad liberal arts education.
- (I have to go to a meeting. Thank you so much, Mark, for facilitating.)
- So the provost needs some restructuring to justify clawing back more money from colleges?
- Amen, XXXX!
- Yes, what XXXX said ^^^
- Do we have data on how the ratio of faculty to admin positions has changed over time?
- @XXXX yes, UCW has collected a lot of that data
- And the data is dreadful
- We want money funding tenure track lines that facilitate overlay collaborations. We want money funding GRAs or postdocs to work on new connections between faculty.
- Overlay does seem destined to take more money for administrative roles: "The overlay model is designed to promote collaboration and interdisciplinarity across departments. This model introduces cross-cutting structures, leadership positions, or nodal centers to promote interdisciplinary activity."
- XXXX just asked the Provost for these data … maybe we will see those one day…
- @XXXX - oooohhh… share with XXXX!!
- Like support for the cluster hires that never materialized to the extent advertised.
- "artists thrive when their education is grounded in a broad liberal arts education" - that underpins the philosophy of the theatre program as well.
- @XXXX I'll have to see if UCW is OK with it going officially to FS. But I will check in
- Has UCW posted/shared those data where we can see them?
- Everyone thrives when their education is grounded in a broad liberal arts education…
- @XXXX cool. Or you can tell us specific things to ask the Provost for…

- :)
- I'll get back to y'all.
- We're assuming affinity model means breaking colleges apart (which makes sense given past leadership comments about "too big" colleges). But in theory, affinity could involve merging of colleges, right?
- We put together most of it by doing searches for job titles in the salary database, some of it using the wayback machine.
- XXXX, thank you for your important points and especially thinking about undergraduate education. Our College does a good job educating students in and outside of our college.
- ["makes sense" in that this is a read of the motivation, not something I agree with]
- Is it fair to say, everyone, that we seem to feel as faculty that our role is to empower students to become broad thinkers, and affinity models support a narrowing with depth of expertise, but not develop an internal depth and maturity in how to think?
- @XXXX, yes thank you!
- @XXXX yes
- I agree @XXXX. The affinity model would not help to develop the students as broad thinkers.
- Amplifying what XXXX, XXXX and others have said. The department heads and faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences do not want changes to the college structure. We are a vibrant community, collaborate and interact, and have been well led by our Dean. The upper administration and provost do not understand what the CAS faculty wants and needs. We need the freedom to implement our own overlay ideas.
- Overlay can be meaningfully bolstered by additional support staff - part of why senior folks have more options is we have some more flexibility
  I agree @XXXX
- I agree @XXXX
- 2nd that investment in staff can be really important on creating spaces for collaboration. Interested faculty with solid staff support can do a ton.
- If the administration really wants faculty to take part in the process and be transparent, maybe they can conduct a poll that allows faculty to vote on whether they support restructuring. If the majority of the faculty are against it, why bother spending extra time and energy doing it to make the majority unhappy? This can result in some unhappy faculty leaving UT.
- Yes to XXXX's point
- The challenge with the interdisciplinary life science programs was in part dealing with how to fund graduate students
- i support XXXX's idea of a vote
- Agree with XXXX on polling faculty
- As I remember, the Biology division didn't like how fragmented graduate training was perceived. Yes, faculty workload was also an issue, and the departments didn't like the dilution in GTA positions.
- agree as well!
- Agree with XXXX
- Abolish THEC
- On this page, scroll down to the feedback form… it may be ask close to a survey that we get to respond to…
- https://provost.utk.edu/academicstructure_updates/
- Agreed- there is no good metric for double majors/ degrees.
- Things seem to be top to bottom than bottom to top --

- To answer Mark's earlier question regarding tenure-track faculty and cross-disciplinary collaborations: I have an example to illustrate the issues I and others would face.. I am applying for NSF CAREER from the Natural Sciences. I am proposing a course with Professor Cary Staples in Design, where I bring scientific data to Graphics Design students for data visualization. I was told that I could propose it, but that if I got the grant, the course I would co-teach with Prof. Staples wouldn't "count" as part of my teaching hours. This is because it would non-CAS students. These approaches stifle collaborations and don't allow for our growth.
- XXXX- I agree wholeheartedly about having and making time to collaborate or create when we are so short on every support in every front
- AMEN!!
- spot-on!!
- Yes to XXXX: plus freedom from mindless service busiwork
- @XXXX - yes - we need time, support, and this will support the work we do!
- Yes XXXX!
- Which is not to say that vision isn't important- but the vision is in getting these passionate people together and supporting them!
- thanks, XXXX!
- XXXX, thank you!
- I also support XXXX's suggestion. ("the administration... can conduct a poll that allows faculty to vote on whether they support restructuring")
- What we need to make the overlay model work is attention to the resources needed. We may not all need the same thing. I am a big fan of having funded GRAs work between faculty and units, because that has worked so well for me. Others may need to figure out how to do team teaching and either have it count, or be given some buyout system that makes it irrelevant whether that teaching counts or counts fully. Other faculty may need support staff in their overlay group. Or more faculty in some area. Or, postdocs.
- I also have learned enormously from being on committees with my science colleagues in addition to the closer affinities I already knew I had with arts, humanities, social sciences - thank you!
- @XXXX, that's been my experience. When I collaborate with a colleague from a different unit i have to volunteer my time.
- Echoing what XXXX just said in chat! Yes!
- @XXXX, yes.
- (Not for this conversation: XXXX and XXXX, please come talk to me at NIMBioS to see if we already have some ways to help.)
- @XXXX, thanks for sharing. Perhaps there are ways to get around this that we are unaware of?
- I have to go, but my deep gratitude to EVERYONE for this passionate community
- ❤️
- Just to reiterate XXXX's earlier post. You can leave feeback (anonymous or not) for the provost at: https://provost.utk.edu/academicstructure_updates/
- Here here
- Great idea, XXXX!
- I think there are enough moving parts in the reorg discussion that adding merging departments to the conversation might not be helpful (as a member of one of the three bio departments) -- though it is a good example of how overlay has failed due to lack of support
- Do other colleges have as much interdisciplinarity as ours does? I feel like the very structure of our current college is part of what makes so much of our transdisciplinary work happen/possible
- I think most IDPs modesl are in CAS

- Thanks to everyone for speaking up with clarity, unity and passion! I have to leave meeting now!
- If that's the case, then breaking up CAS would be in order to help other colleges do more transdisciplinary work like we're already doing here? ai.
- Gotta run. Thank you everyone!
- Thanks, everyone - so many affirming things conveyed! (NOTE: Not affinity things)
- Thanks everybody!!
- Thank you Mark!
- Thank you all!
- Thanks, good and important meeting!
- Thanks everyone!
- Thanks, Mark - wonderful job!
- Thank you Mark.
- Thank you
- Thank you, Mark! Please tell the Provost and Chancellor that our College of Arts & Sciences is a vibrant, creative, and dynamic community of faculty who just need more resources, not more administrators!
- Thank you very much.
- Mark Nicely run. Thank you.
- Thank you for facilitating.
- Need to leave -- good to see everyone!
- If the State Legislature does not understand our value, that requires communication, not reorganization of Colleges!
- @XXXX, exactly! And it would help if the admin praised us, instead of denigrated us …
- or put out vapid "thank you for all you do" statements
- When I was hired at UT, many decades ago, my Dept. Head told me that most of our state legislators had not attended college, and we had to keep that in mind in our messaging. I don't know if that is still true.
- That was my experience when I joined UCW lobby day 8 or 10 years ago.
- Some of the folks who do have college degrees may have degrees from schools very different than UT, so even their college degree doesn't mean they can see things how we might. I wonder if some of the enthusiasm for the affinity model was to have colleges that would make more sense to folks who do not have experience in college? What a bad reason to reorganize, if so.
- Good to see you all, and thank you for your eloquent contributions! I need to go.
- Most cynical interpretation: isolate and eventually cut some units?
- Mark I think you can tell administrators that if they want to have a respected legacy, they better not blow this one. Reorgnization would blow it, in terms of increasing faculty productivity and research and improving undergrad education. Overlay, if done right, might enhance things we want to enhance. But the money can't go to more administrators.
- Ok, thanks again all. Gotta go.

Submitted feedback

Last updated June 24, 2022

June 2022 Web Feedback

What additional feedback would you like to share?

I just presented the following speech related to the possibility of breaking up Arts & Sciences to the Board of Trustees, and will email it directly to the Provost.

Presentation to Board of Trustees – June 2022

I am a professor and associate head of the department of Psychology, and the director of the College Scholars Honors Program; both of these units are in the College of Arts & Sciences (hereafter Arts & Sciences) at UTK.

Faculty, staff, and students in Arts & Sciences know that the Chancellor and Provost are considering breaking up Arts & Sciences into two colleges – a College of Natural Sciences and a College of Liberal Arts. The rationale for such a split has not been made publicly clear beyond a perception that Arts & Sciences is too large.

Colleagues and I are completely opposed to such an academic restructuring of Arts & Sciences, for several reasons.

Why does the size of Arts & Sciences matter? Many if not most of the Colleges of Arts and Sciences in Big Ten universities, are substantially larger than ours. In terms of undergraduate enrollment, Arts & Sciences is comparable in size to the Business School, after all, and not only is Business not being fragmented, that College is expanding into new buildings to be constructed.

How many millions of dollars will be necessary for the required administrative leadership and staff? Based upon the salaries paid to the Deans and supporting administrative staff in Arts & Sciences, it seems quite conservative to estimate that the costs for a new College of Natural Sciences administrative leadership and staff would be at least $4 million annually.

At least three departments in Arts & Sciences – Anthropology, Geography, and Psychology – have faculty who would not fit well into either a College of Liberal Arts or a College of Natural Sciences. Departments such as these are found in a College of Arts & Sciences in the vast majority of the other SEC universities, and in most of the Big Ten universities. In my own department of Psychology, and in my own research program involving graduate and undergraduate students, our identity includes needs of the natural sciences as well as needs of the liberal arts. Splitting the natural sciences from liberal arts would leave Psychology marooned in a college that does not reflect our identity or needs. The same goes for Anthropology and Geography. Finally, substantial collaborative work among faculty and students in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences departments – many examples of which are ongoing – would be diminished by such a restructuring. As Volunteers, we need to do better.

The 7 natural sciences departments within Arts & Sciences are dominated by male faculty. Only about 25% of tenured and tenure-track natural sciences faculty are women. In contrast, nearly 50% of faculty in the other departments and units in Arts & Sciences are women. Furthermore, non-tenure track faculty are overrepresented by women and minoritized people, and non-tenure track faculty are more common in departments in Arts & Sciences outside of the natural sciences. Breaking up Arts & Sciences will result in a resource-rich College of Natural Sciences that is dominated by male faculty and a relatively resource-poor College of Liberal Arts that is more gender-balanced. Such a breakup would increase gender disparities in salaries among our faculty. As Volunteers, we need to do better.

Beyond the gender disparities among faculty that would be increased by a breaking up of Arts & Sciences, such a move would send a terrible signal to women undergraduate and graduate students in the natural sciences, as they would not see themselves adequately represented in their College, let alone their department of study. As Volunteers, we need to do better. And we DO better with our current College of Arts & Sciences.

I call on you as Board of Trustees members to oppose any plan to break up the College of Arts & Sciences. Benefits of such a break-up have not been articulated in any substantive way. The costs – a subset of which I have raised here – are many and high. We know of some universities that imposed such a break-up years ago, but have come back to the Arts & Sciences model as the break-up did not work – Texas A&M in our own SEC is a case in point.

I thank you all for you work and for your time, and end by stating that I personally know of a number of current faculty who will go on the job market if Arts & Sciences is broken up, and I am one of them.

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Small group meetings
- Discussions in departmental/staff meetings
- Standing meetings
- Other: Please share your idea below

Share your campus engagement idea

Holding meetings with faculty that are advertised widely and well ahead of time would help get more faculty to these conversations, and having meetings at different times and days would help as well.

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What is your feedback related to the process model?

These questions about the process model, overlay model, and affinity model seem far less important than the relevant question: what is your feedback on splitting the College of Arts and Sciences. Here is my feedback on this:
> There is nothing that has been presented that leads me to conclude that there is any advantage for faculty. Placing grants people in colleges and dedicated to particular areas can be done regardless.
> Ideas about 'better representation at the Provost level' is curious -- presumably the Provosts are not losing a clear view of what is going on within the individual colleges. If they are, the onus should be on them.
> It has been offered that high performing peer institutions have separate College of Arts and College of Science is misguided as a reason to split. Splitting the College of Arts and Sciences will not just catapult UTK onto those levels, and those who believe it will should ask the question, "Why haven't the other colleges (e.g. TCE, Ag, Law) achieved top ranked status as 'independent' colleges?".
> The additional costs for a bunch of deans, admin staff, support personnel is a poor use of resources. Those are annual costs and they are significant -- a far better use would be to take an equivalent amount of funding and STRATEGICALLY invest it in the departments the university thinks can/should grow and have the potential to be leading.

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Small group meetings
- Discussions in departmental/staff meetings

May 2022 Web Feedback

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

The Chancellor is proposing taking the departments that have been historically dominated by men - and continue to be dominated by men at the undergrad, grad, and faculty levels - splitting them off from departments that are more evenly split or dominated by women, and giving those men-dominated departments more resources. For example, by my count, Chemistry has 5 women and 20 men faculty. Math has 7 women and 31 men faculty. Even "natural science" fields that may be more associated with women like biology are dominated by men. BCMB has 6 women and 18 men faculty. By comparison, Sociology has 10 women and 12 men faculty. Psychology has 26 women and 21 men faculty. With this proposed split, the University would be actively disadvantaging women and their careers.

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What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

The world is not divided into categories as cleanly as people like to think it is. There is no clean line to distinguish "social sciences" from "natural sciences". These terms are at best misnomers perpetuated because they align with stereotypically feminine and masculine domains. Dividing the college of arts and sciences into smaller colleges of social sciences and natural sciences will lead faculty who conduct interdisciplinary work and

departments who host faculty conducting a range of work to be disenfranchised and isolated. For example, I conduct a range of work encompassing topics typically labelled "natural sciences" and topics typically labelled "social sciences". I am fortunate enough to be in a department where I have colleagues with similar interests and expertise - regardless of whether I am conducting work closer to the "natural sciences" or the "social sciences". It is critical to be in a department where all of my colleagues feel supported and have like-minded colleagues in their college. There are multiple departments that rely on the interplay of these two kinds of work, such as anthropology, geography, and psychology. Furthermore, cutting-edge work in my own discipline continues to push the integration of "social" and "natural" approaches, combining biological measurements, sociological theories, or mathematical models, for example. Separating experts in these different fields works against our ability as a university to secure grant funding and against our goal of training students to excel in the workforce. Students need to understand the interplay between these domains and thus interdisciplinary work is exactly the kind of work that should be facilitated by a restructure, not hindered by it. The affinity model is not good, and I have yet to hear a single faculty member have a positive view on it.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Our perspectives and feedback as faculty are being ignored in favor of whatever goals the administration has for this restructure. I attended a listening session on Zoom with several dozen faculty from the college of arts and sciences who vehemently, eloquently, and consistently argued against the affinity model that is currently being pushed forward. (Reviews of the overlay model were also not great.) This is not shared governance and, as a result, the administration's actions are eroding the trust between faculty and administration.

What is your feedback related to the process model?

I think that this direction should be the first thing that the administration undertakes. There is a lot of low hanging fruit that could make faculty's lives better and create a better environment for innovation - and going this direction *first* might create more goodwill and trust that would serve as a better foundation to take a run later at more innovative reorganization efforts.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

This is my favorite possibility. If you can create overlay structures that *attract* faculty from different disciplines to work together - then that is where real innovation lies. This approach is much more likely to generate creative grant proposals and to make real change through surprising and unexpected collaborations around solving important issues or shared passions. I think second to the process model, this one is most likely to get you the highest impact AND the most goodwill from faculty without the huge investment of tedious hours and hours of work that would be necessary in a structural reorganization. I think it is the one most likely right *now* to be successful and to get you to the goals that you say you have. I also think going this direction will build more trust and allow you to consider a more structural reorganization if necessary in the future.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

I think going this direction right now when faculty are so anxious about how they will fare under BAM and they are so exhausted from the pandemic would be a huge mistake from a morale standpoint. I think it will further erode trust in higher administration and I don't think people are in the best position to be creative and innovative when they are operating from fear. Restructuring might be a good goal in the future but the timing is exceptionally bad for it to be successful right now. There needs to be more ground-level buy-in for the need. It will also take so many person hours to accomplish that I think might be wasted at this point because I'm not sure this process yielded the most creative and innovative ideas from what I have seen. All I have seen so far is a great deal of mistrust. This energy might be better spend in the process and overlay models for now, and perhaps using those processes to potentially build to a better structural plan that emerges over time and with more trust.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

I think this one is clearly the least favorite. It also doesn't really seem to be on the table.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

I think to create trust in this process the feedback from these surveys should be made publicly available. I think the goals of this process are exciting, and it has great potential when the timing is better and a groundwork of trust in the process has been laid. Based on what I've seen in the public meetings, people seem too fearful right now to provide creative input- their motivations seem all wrong for this process to be optimally effective.

However, if you publish the survey data and people are more positive about structural change than we've seen in meetings, that could help?

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Discussions in departmental/staff meetings

Thank you for taking the time to share feedback. If you are interested in being contacted or would like to share your name, please submit information below.

Affinity: Combine School of Art and College of Architecture and Design
The objective is to consolidate resources and link similar fields. These fields of study share the same building but have separate resources for space, facilities, classrooms and review areas. The art fields are more closely related to design fields than the sciences. Shared resources would benefit students and faculty from both fields.

Benefits
- Frees up space and resources across colleges
- Diversifies art and design education
- Simplifies hierarchical structure and leadership for building management
- Expands and simplifies cross registration between colleges

Challenges
- Requires agreement from both institutions
- May increase friction between fields
- BAM model may be more problematic for the School of Art without the support of the Collee of Arts and Sciences
- May render some redundant staff unnecessary.

Overlay: Redistribution of tenure lines with respect to growth and declining student enrollment
The objective is to evaluate the growth tendencies in student enrollment for various degree programs with shared governance across multiple colleges. For example, Landscape Architecture and Plant Sciences co-teach the Masters of Landscape Architecture program. Undergraduates in Sustainable Landscape design is housed in the plant science department and feed into the Masters of Landscape Architecture Program. The MLA program has tripled in size in recent years to over 60 students while the Sustainable Landscape program is down to around

20 students. However, there are at least 3 tenured/tenured track professors in plant science while Landscape Architecture on has 1. As faculty teaching in the shared programs retire, it should be considered which college most needs the tenure track line to fulfill the teaching requirements.

Benefits
- Colleges can more easily adapt to changes in enrollment
- Tenure -track lines become more flexible and transferrable across colleges.
- Shared resources are considered across shared programs

Challenges
- Tenure tack lines wouldn't change as fast as enrollment
- Fluid faculty lines make financial organization difficult.

April 2022 Web Feedback

What is your feedback related to the process model?
I think that you'd get a lot of good feedback on this, particularly on the College of Arts and Sciences, if you opened this to UTK staff.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?
We need to be careful to define what we mean by overlay. As articles such as this make clear https://theconversation.com/why-the-interdisciplinary-push-in-universities-is-actually-a-dangerous-antidisciplinary-trend-175511, "overlay" (like "interdisciplinarity") can be a word that works against field-specific expertise and department autonomy. We do not need a squishy "interdisciplinary college" that requires yet another layer of administrative staff to justify work that department heads, deans, or Centers can already do, nor do we need overlay units that syphon faculty away from deep work in their disciplines and support of their home departments (as the cluster model sometimes does and as the Center model often does). An overlay model that was useful and in keeping with current trends that recognize the *failures of older interdisciplinary models* might rely on Centers or colleges as hubs of connection between fields of deep knowledge. I like the "nodal hub" idea in the report. For example, rather than mixing up a goo of "interdisciplinary thought," Centers or Colleges could invest in databases of field experts in their represented populations, work with ORIED to compile pathways to research connections and teams research, and provide a kind of network for researchers to find one another. ORIED is already pursuing such a structure, but it doesn't know the faculty; if units that "knew their faculty" could work with ORIED and its resources connected to fostering teams research and funding, we might have an overlay model that would work. If we go with an overlay model, we need one that operates at very close range to faculty in different disciplines--ie, is operated by faculty or faculty center directors--not by another distanced layer of professional admins brought in to solve "our interdisciplinary challenge."

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?
I like this model if departments are central to its formation and if data about reconfigured units' funding is real.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?
Really bad idea. There is no logic in an academic culture to grouping things by size alone.

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.
• Discussions in departmental/staff meetings

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What is your feedback related to the process model?

I think this is the most effective model. I think we need fewer burdensome processes in place and fewer administrators. Adding colleges and other university-wide programs would just add more administrators. We need more faculty, not administrators.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

We don't need a College of Interdisciplinary Studies; we just need greater support of the interdisciplinary studies programs that we have. A lot of these were gutted due to poor administrative decisions. I could support nodal hubs, especially if these involved humanities.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

I am a humanities professor in a department with practicing artists. I would very much object to having the visual and performing arts siloed off into a separate College. I think that other humanities professors in these departments (musicologists, art historians, theatre historians) would feel the same.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

If this would result in decreased numbers of administrators and increased efficiencies, I would support it. I'm in the COllege of Arts and Sciences which is already very large, so this wouldn't effect me in particular.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

It may be that decreases in population will lead to smaller numbers of people going to college in the future, but I am skeptical that we are going to lose students to YouTube. Recent initiatives to make community college free for most people haven't resulted in decreased student numbers as many feared. I think we need to do more to educate the public and the legislature on the value of a university education and on a UT education - not just on professional degrees but on liberal arts education.

We REALLY need to reduce the service/administration burden on faculty. We are spending way too much time trying to navigate various systems to apply for outside money, apply to reimbursement for travel, for assessment, hiring, etc. Almost every process at this university has been made more burdensome and time-consuming because of various software put in place.

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What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

Support if it is being driven by the bottom up (faculty to admin) and includes/centered around additional TT faculty and funding for co-directed by graduate students and post-docs.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

Absolutely against

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Large Town Halls
- Small group meetings

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What is your feedback related to the process model?

I like the idea that there would be no structural changes to the college structure. It is super unclear which parts of the process are causing problems and need to be adjusted. It would be better if issues were first identified and then changes made to address them if we actually all think they are problems.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

We have a number of different overlay structures already on campus, such as NimBios. This could be a good idea if the funding was put toward postdocs and staff support to help may these new overlay models work and just don't result in more administrators being hired to "manage" us.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

This is going to silo faculty into small groups and not facilitate interactions and collaborations. I am completely opposed to this model.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

I am opposed to reducing the number of colleges.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

I do not trust the administration to make these changes without input and leadership from faculty. These changes are a top down approach to improving the university. Faculty need more time, less service, less teaching, and more tenure track faculty so that we have the time and space to collaborate more.

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What is your feedback related to the process model?

this should not be considered at all. This is undoubtedly the easiest option, but is also the most likely option to ensure that we do not make our University better in the end.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

I believe that our current college structure is antiquated and inadequate to support robust, modern, state-of-the-art, and forward-thinking research and educational efforts. A simple overlay of new policies and efforts will only ensure that our University maintains the status quo and remains a moderately ranked school in our nation.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

This is, in my opinion, the only option that is worth the time and effort of the restructuring committee and our University. If we as a University want to improve, we need to stand together and do what is best for our University, not just what is easy (i.e. the process and overlay models). To advance the educational and research missions of this University, which will drive this university to true national recognition, we need to rethink and reorganize how we operate. This includes re-envisioning the structure of all colleges. For example, the college of A&S currently houses ~40% of the university's faculty, but also houses some of the most disparate departments at our university (e.g. physics versus theatre). While I appreciate that the College of A&S exists in the traditional framework of a "liberal arts" education, this notion is archaic, outdated, and to be candid, it is broken at our university. Our first priority should be to dismantle A&S into two or more colleges, that may or may not include departments form other colleges, or require formerly A&S departments join other colleges. Lastly, I suspect that those in favor of this will naturally assume their should then be a "College of

Natural Sciences", but I would also argue that defaulting to the term "natural sciences" may be less than ideal. For example, one of our nations preeminent funding agencies, the NSF, has an entire directorate called "Mathematical and Physical Sciences" (MPS), but could also morphed into "Math and Natural Sciences" so as to include Biology, if so desired.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

not ideal. Some thought should be given to each college's size, but this should not be the primary determinant

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Discussions in departmental/staff meetings

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Please take a poll/vote of the faculty to gauge their opinions on restructuring.
The meeting today with CAS faculty made it clear that they are passionate about their college and its leadership, and that they are not interested in restructuring.

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What additional feedback would you like to share?

I do not see any reason to undertake a massive, expensive overhaul. Infuse funds into our existing programs via tenure-line faculty; infuse money into our existing interdisciplinary options, especially the grossly underfunded Humanities Center. Do more with what we have--this whole process seems like an excercise in finding a solution for a non-problem to show that we are doing something.

Share your campus engagement idea

No more general discussions in which no significant details are discussed. Feels like a huge waste of time for everyone. Listen to what the faculty are saying--consult the faculty in significant ways rather than paying outside "experts" to come and talk in generalities to us.

What is your feedback related to the process model?

The process model is inadequate to effect substantive change, although removal of roadblocks is desirable.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

The overlay model uses "umbrella" structures to catalyze collaboration. It is inedquate to effect substantive change.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

I favor the affinity model. Reorganization of some colleges would allow similar units to be organized within a college, and the dean could effectively advocate for the units and programs in the college. For example, the college of A&S might be split into a College of Humanities & Social Sciences and a College of Science and Mathematics. This is more and more common, and it would solve some of the administrative problems of

having a huge college. In addition, the College of Education, Health, & Human Sciences, could be considered for splitting into a College of Education and a College of Health Sciences.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

I do not believe reducing the number of colleges is desirable. Organizing units with similar missions/visions into colleges makes more sense than organizing units based on size or "scale."

What additional feedback would you like to share?

I would like to see UTK place more emphasis on preparing students for allied health professions. Granted, the state has chosen to locate medical schools in Memphis (UT Health Sciences Center) and Johnson City (ETSU). But UT has not done enough to meet the student demand for training in graduate health professional schools that lead to licensure (with the exception of nursing). Department of Labor statistics show future projected growth in the health sciences, and these are high-paying careers that UTK students are very desirous of pursuing (e.g., Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physician's Assistant, Respiratory Therapy, etc.). The reason that UTK doesn't have these programs is not that THEC forbids it, but rather that nobody at UTK has attempted to start these programs. The demand for these programs is not even close to being met by the programs in Memphis and Johnson City. As a result, programs have sprung up at Pelissippi State, Roan State, South College, and Lincoln Memorial University. What is wrong with this? Well, UTK could do a better job of training these students, UTK already has courses (Bioethics, Medical Terminology, Nuclear Physics, etc.) that would serve these students, and UTK has facilities such as the Nursing Simulation Lab that could also serve programs like Physician's assistant programs.

Starting such programs would require formation of new departments and it is unlikely that any of the current deans would undertake it. But a new College of Health Sciences might be charged with exploring the feasibility and viability of such programs. These new departments would need to charge differential tuition, which students would gladly pay in order to obtain a high-quality education at the state's land grant university. I suggest that a Physician's Assistant program would be something that THEC might approve, as there is only one such program found at a state university in Tennessee, and the number of students admitted is a very small fraction of those who apply. Physical Therapy programs already exist at UTC and ETSU, so THEC would be unlikely to approve another program in East Tennessee.

What additional feedback would you like to share? Nothing that I have read about this points to any credible benefit to changing the current structure, whether in terms of teaching, research or community engagement. On the contrary, it would introduce extra layers of administration, increase costs and less efficiently serve the goal of a comprehensive liberal education for our students (and even of interdisciplinary research). The idea of "affinity", for instance, seems in part based on misconceptions about certain disciplines (see the absurd "thought experiment" introduced by the president of the Faculty Senate.) The entire idea of restructuring by "affinity" or "scale" seems to have the goal of breaking up CAS (motivated by B.A.M, most likely), and to me seems more reflective of the values of a minor technical college than those of the state's flagship university. In other words, the whole idea is an unnecessary, expensive boondoggle.

What is your feedback related to the process model?

The process and overlay approaches seem far less disruptive to the School of Art's current program strengths while providing opportunities to grow divisional support within the college. The three arts school are already part of the same college and separating them out into their own affinity college offers no clear benefits and does not seem to solve any major problems. Furthermore, the School of Art's national reputation is fundamentally based on our identity as an interdisciplinary program grounded in the Humanities and Liberal Arts. Placing our school in a separate College of Arts would silo our programs, faculty, and students and undercut what makes us unique and competitive nationally. Philosophically, we believe that artists thrive when their education is grounded in a broad liberal arts education. UTK's strategic vision advocates for a "culture of collaboration" and innovation; our current interdisciplinary orientation does just that. Our current

interdisciplinarithy sets us apart from siloed professional art schools, enables us to recruit strong undergraduate and graduate applicants, and enables us to mentor students who are uniquely competitive in the academic and cultural sectors.

Three specific examples from our undergraduate programs:
— Our art history major and UG / GR minors intersect with history, anthropology, MFFL, and law. Courses in art history are requirements for 5-6 of our degree programs as required by the National Association of Art and Design. Those AH faculty are actively engaged in the interdisciplinary Humanities Center and MARCO.
— Cinema studies is a unique program nationally because of its focus across production and studies (history, foreign languages, art history, and critical theory). A recent graduate currently working on the Avatar movie sequel credits the program's interdisciplinarity for his ability to stand out within the incredibly competitive film industry.
— We have just launched a Museum and Curatorial Studies Minor that includes a very interdisciplinary menu of courses from many departments.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

Support exploration if overlay centers are adequately funded.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

Opposed.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

Opposed.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Our school currently feels very supported and valued by the leadership of our current college: the College of Arts and Sciences.

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Discussions in departmental/staff meetings

March 2022 Web Feedback

In thinking of benefits and challenges, you may want to consider effects on areas such as enrollment, budget, curriculum, experiential learning / practice, fundraising, and research.

Affinity: Establish a School of Public Policy to build on the affinity model already present in the Baker Center for Public Policy

Since its pivot to a research-focused Center in 2012, the Baker Center for Public Policy has been assembling faculty and students across campus to work in specific disciplinary areas. Center-driven collaborations are producing policy-focused research with faculty from many of UT's current colleges. Collaborations in Energy & Environment are a nexus for faculty in Business, Agriculture, Engineering, and Arts & Sciences. Collaborations in Global Security are based on collaborations between faculty in Arts & Sciences and CCI. These collaborations are also now supporting an undergraduate minor in Public Policy Analytics.

Baker Center activities are driving the University's engagement with the State of Tennessee and the Federal Government in several important policy areas.

A natural next step would be for a School of Public Policy to grow out of these faculty affiliations and nascent student degree options. Such a standalone school would allow the university to produce undergraduate and graduate students prepared to work in public policy and government, would enhance the ability of the university to engage in policy-related research and engagement, consistent with its land grant mission, and support interdisciplinary research where such collaborations already have substantial footing.

Benefits
- The university's mission of engaging with the greatest policy challenges of our time would be enhanced with a school dedicated to public policy.
- The school would be a natural extension of collaborations and affiliations (Baker Fellows for faculty; Baker Scholars, Baker Ambassadors, and Baker Interns for students) that already exist.
- High-impact interdisciplinary research is already occurring under the Baker Center structure and these collaborations have a proven track record in terms of grant receipt.
- With additional resources and a somewhat broader mandate, the Center's existing research programs in Energy and Environment and Global Security could easily be expanded and augmented to capture broader areas of public policy and policy research.
- No entity on campus is offering degrees in public policy; the establishment of new degrees in a School of Public Policy would be a net addition to the university's offerings.
- For interested undergraduate students, the Baker Center already provides a large number of experiential offerings, including internship programs, Washington learning trips, an Ambassadors program, and more. The pre-existing focus on the undergraduate experience ensures that co-curricular (and even curricular) options for students who major in the new School would be rich and impactful from the beginning. For example, a required internship program could easily be incorporated in the academic program, given the set of internship offerings present through the Baker Center already.
- The Baker Center has a build-in donor base from previous activities and relationships.

Challenges
- Faculty may be reluctant to move from well-established colleges and departments to nascent schools, especially under the BAM rollout.
- Such a school would need additional physical space to be successful.
- Recruiting undergraduate students into a new college may be challenging.
-

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Small group meetings

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What is your feedback related to the process model?

I agree completely with the need to update processes. As an example, I have now spent the last 4 weeks trying to learn the new Concur system, taking the quiz to get a travel card, and now just learned that my grad students have to submit requests in the system before I can purchase flights to a conference for them. By this point, the ticket prices have increased and we have lost hours of time - all because we don't have enough people in our office to help and because Concur has made a process that used to be easy (fill out a form) multiplicatively hard.

Other examples - human subjects system iMedRIS is the most obtuse difficult system I have ever worked with. I have literally cried over it and lost hours of time to that.

Post-grant budgeting office is pretty non-functional - really no help at all in helping with figuring out how to change budgets, rules, regulations, etc.

Having the required online training all due at one time at the end of the fall semester is a nightmare for those trying to teach. Could these not be spread out over time to reduce the burden?

The conflict of interest form has gotten ridiculously complicated. Last time I had to call my financial advisor to get information to fill it out. I felt this was unnecessarily intrusive.

I don't work directly with the timetable, but I do work at trying to assigning faculty to teaching times and rooms and it feels like a really clunky process. And then you get the added bonus that you are scheduling classes without knowing the fall enrollment of students or whether you have been granted lecturer lines needed to teach the classes. The whole coordination between budget, enrollment, and classes for fall classes causes a lot of stress.

Speaking of scheduling classes, the room reservation system is ridiculous. We used to just call Gail Mills and it was so easy. Why do we keep adding new online systems that are hard to use and take more time for faculty?

My point is... I have been here since 2009. Since that time, multiple online systems have been created and pushed on to faculty to use that have reduced my available time to do the core things I was hired to do - teach and do research. People always say "it's just a few minutes" but if things take even one hour a week, that is one less hour per week that I have to grad student work, plan a lecture, or do data analysis. This is real time that matters. And I haven't even mentioned the increase in e-mail load that makes getting anything done impossible some days. Can we consolidate e-mails announcing things into fewer per week?

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

We certainly have examples of overlay already, so it is less scary. However, scaling these up needs to be considered with care. Are these just going to give more funding to those who are already getting lots of funding for research - if so, how does it help the university? (Given that research is expensive and

actually does not bring in more money - it costs us). So can we create teaching or service overlays and use them to lift up faculty who have the potential to do great things with more support? But then how do we support those overlay units, assess their success, and make sure faculty are not being asked to now do MORE work. Who coordinates these new overlays? Who decides what is worthy - I know the answer will the "the colleges" because of the new budget model, but that doesn't seem like a great way to foster collaborations across units... so someone above the college level has to coordinate.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

I think this will just create new units that may SEEM to help create collaboration, but any reorganization creates silos for some folks, so it just seems like a lot of work and effort and chaos to end up with units that in two years we will go "huh, these units aren't fostering collaboration with these other people..." There is no perfect way to reorganize units. Overlay is a much better way to achieve the same objective I think.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

I think this is a terrible idea.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Please proceed slowly. Everyone is tired and there are so many things changing and happening (budget model, divisive concepts, civics institute, pandemic, etc) and people are really at their limit right now. I think with more time and a better articulation for WHY this is needed - to what end, what are we trying to attain (more research dollars? more interdisciplinary programs? more outreach?) people can sit back and think of creative ideas. Right now, there is very little capacity for creative thinking - we are all trying to get to summer.

Share your campus engagement idea

I enjoyed the meetings with the facilitators, but maybe a larger meeting with more faculty with administration talking about things they see as a possibility and why - just some examples. I know admin is trying to not get involved, but that leaves the feeling that something is being hidden and increases mistrust in the process. The process will only work if there is the opportunity to brainstorm together without fear.

What is your feedback related to the process model?

This is such a massive problem on campus that a portal will barely scratch the surface. It would be wise for the university to create a series of town halls so that the upper administration can truly grasp how so many processes needlessly inhibit research, teaching, and the day-to-day operations of the campus.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

No good overlay model would work without multiple changes to the process. Nonetheless, we need some overlay models. In order to train students for the jobs of tomorrow, we need ways for students to get the kind of broad training they need without running up against federal policies that limit the number of "non-required" credits a student can take. The Chancellor talks about stackable certificates, which I think are a good idea, but there has to be some kind of curricular oversight. Some kind of overlay to facilitate this would be excellent. Also, with BAM, for all of its benefits, it's clear that it's going to create a turf war over F&A, so some kind of overlay that would reduce competition for F&A and credit would be great, and maybe this is a process problem. Faculty Senate has suggested some overlays such as a School of Quantitative Studies. I suppose this would replace two existing overlays that don't work great: IGSDSP and the Data Science Ph.D. program at the Bredesen Center. Or we could just fix the processes that make these programs a lot less functional than they should be.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

Organizing colleges by affinity sets the university back at least 50 years which is why there are almost no faculty at UT in support of this. Indeed, faculty are prepared to mobilize to fight vigorously against a breakup of CAS and CEHHS. The university spends money every year funding STRIDE, and STRIDE provides overwhelming evidence that siloing people who already think the same way stifles innovation and inhibits productivity. We will not solve the problems of climate change, systemic racism, and emerging pandemics by putting faculty in greater contact with likeminded faculty and further away from other fields. I have year to hear one compelling reason that this is a good idea. (I've heard "naming opportunities" and "identity." If we cannot get funding for a new chemistry building as a naming opportunity, how does a new college present a naming opportunity?) A preponderance of data (including that data from Bill Fox) shows that employers want highly adaptable workers. By removing opportunities for students to get a true liberal arts degree, you train students to be less employable and less prepared for a future workforce.
That being said, there is some value in creating a new College of Public Health that would be comprised of Public Health and Nutrition along with any other department that wants to move there. This is a very different idea from creating a College of Allied Health Sciences that could include a number of departments that do not want to move (and for good reason). It would be very risky, for example, move

the College of Nursing into a college with other departments. One requirement of Nursing is clinicals. If you create a College of Allied Health Sciences and hire a Dean that doesn't completely understand what nursing does, do you have the oversight to ensure that none of the nursing students conducting clinicals aren't going to kill someone? It's better to have a College of Nursing that will always have a Dean that understands nursing.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

Honestly, putting all the colleges together in a big sack, shaking it up, and randomly selecting departments into colleges makes a lot more sense than the affinity model. This method would at least generate some interesting new science. But we all know this is a weird idea that's going nowhere.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

It would be a mistake not to really, really listen to the faculty on this.

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Large Town Halls

Share your campus engagement idea

Actual town halls where the Chancellor and Provost listen to faculty instead of pushing an agenda would be great. Also, there needs to be a process for Deans to provide feedback into the process without having their superiors in the room.

What is your feedback related to the process model?

Alternative A: Process: Process never solved anything. All it creates is mediocrity. This model states that "Change concentrates on process, policy and procedures". Change should concentrate on outcomes! What problem needs to be solved, what is the biggest obstacle to solving that problem, and how are you removing that obstacle? This requires innovative leadership, not more process, policies and procedures. You seem to think that by setting up some sort of rubric it will help solve everyone's problems. Process

never solves problems. Creatively removing obstacles solves problems. Each administrator has to identify the biggest obstacle for each faculty – then individually solve that problem. What is the biggest problem for faculty? Answer: TIME. If you want to increase productivity, give faculty the time to do the job they were hired to do. The solution to this specific issue is most likely different for each type of faculty member, each level of faculty member, each unit, program, department, and college. Thus, you have to focus on each person's obstacle. I know, this requires creativity. It is easier to "cookie-cut" everything. Creative administrators can increase TIME to increase productivity. It can't be legislated from the top down with a rubric. Just tell the Deans and Department Heads, "I don't care how you do it, increase TIME to help faculty do their jobs". It isn't that hard. Just do it. Let them do the administrative jobs they were hired to do. Don't micromanage everything, thinking "big brother" can solve everyone's problems with one big edict.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

Alternative B: Overlay: As stated in the Preliminary Report: "The Overlay model is designed to promote collaboration and interdisciplinary across departments". I don't know what this means, but in other sections of the report it emphasizes that the Overlay model will solve the problem of collaboration. What makes upper administration think there is a problem with collaboration? This document mentions the need to improve collaboration on this campus 23 times; however, there is no "collaboration" problem. Virtually everyone at the University of Tennessee collaborates. At the Town Hall, a gentleman got up to express his frustration at the concept that if you put the same kinds of people in a room they will naturally collaborate. He indicated that this is the furthest thing from the truth; this is a false premise. He is absolutely correct. You cannot legislate collaboration. You can make people work together on the same project, but that is not the same thing as a collaboration. I will give one example, but there are a lot more. This was tried in CEHHS shortly after it was formed. Dr. XXXX (Assoc Dean for Research) met every week with groups of faculty to foster collaborative efforts. As she put it, we will have tea together, tell each other what we do and that will foster collaboration. She did this every week for 1.5 years. It didn't work; it was a complete failure and Dr. Long resigned. She didn't understand how collaboration works. This sounds good on paper, but it doesn't work. It really doesn't work.

The gentlemen at the Town Hall was correct when he said that he felt the panelist didn't realize how collaborations work (his words not mine), and he was correct. I am in Nutrition, I collaborated for 20 years with a pathologist on the Ag campus, and before that with a pulmonologist at UTMC (with each collaboration we have many, many manuscripts and grants together). They were not in my Unit, or even on my campus. Where they were located had no impact on whether I collaborated with them or not. Proximity and/or similarity of field (i.e., they were not nutritionist) had no impact on the collaboration. In fact, the opposite was true. Most people collaborate with individuals outside of their disciplines. They are looking for people who provide expertise that they don't have. They are looking for interpersonal relationships where the individual can be trusted and will put more in to the project than expected. You

have their back and they have yours. The collaboration is mutually beneficial not because it is only financially beneficial, but also intellectually and socially. You both feed off of each other. Collaborations are very complex relationships. You can't legislate collaborations.

The other issue regarding collaborations is how people evaluate your productivity. I have been here 31 years and have spent ~25 years as an administrator. Even though there are expectations in "Bylaws" for collaborative work, P&T review panels (particularly during Annual Reviews) have a bias against the collaborations. They just do. I have seen it over and over again where the faculty member undergoing the review is "hammered" because the committee questions the faculty members involvement on each paper that they are a middle author on manuscripts. Please don't suggest that we can easily change how people are evaluated. It is very difficult to control implicit bias.

Now what is more concerning is the proposal to "Appoint a Vice Provost of Interdisciplinary Studies, Innovation, and Technology" to facilitate collaboration. We don't have a collaboration problem. We don't need another Provost. We don't need more administrative layers. That provost is going to require a salary, an office, a staff and operating supplies. They will then come up with their own strategic plan that will have to be implemented by the Deans of the Colleges. Guess who will pay for all of this? That Assoc. Provost doesn't bring in any money for this, so the faculty will be shackled to generate the resources. Then you have the idea of "Nodal Hubs". "Create, reorganize, and fund research centers that act as collaborative research, and perhaps, interdisciplinary research hubs". If you don't know the history, you will inevitably repeat it. We have done this and it didn't work. We are "professionals" at repeating ideas and concepts that sound good on paper, but are failures, over and over again. Every new administration makes the same mistake. Unbelievable. For example: Years ago, the University established seed money for "Centers" to develop collaborative research to attract more research dollars and grants. One such Center was the UT Obesity Research Center (UTORC). The University awarded $500,000 to develop an integrative/collaborative research program addressing the obesity pandemic in this country. It was a hot topic at that moment in time. The two directors assembled 30-40 top obesity researchers at UT to develop and foster collaboration and the acquisition of grants. They met regularly as a group. After 5-years and $500,000, this group never received a single grant. It was a total bust, but everybody does the same thing expecting a different result; if you bring "like together", this will foster collaboration and increases productivity ☹. Unfortunately, it actually doesn't. The seed money was actually a disincentive to get funding because if nothing resulted from it, there were no penalties. Everyone who becomes a new administrator repeats the same thing.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

Alternative C: Affinity: "The Affinity model organizes college structure by groupings of like-minded subjects". This may sound sarcastic, but it isn't intended to be. How tolerable to different ideas will people be if you put all people who believe that the 2020 election was stolen into one grouping? Do I need to say more? Please do not form a College of Allied Health Sciences. I don't even know what that

means, any more than knowing what a College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences is. I will expound upon this later, but identify what problem you want to solve, or what you want to accomplish, and THEN evaluate whether reorganization of Units helps to achieve what you want to achieve. Don't generate an organizational structure based on a theoretical idea and then go looking for problems to solve afterwards.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

Alternative D: Scale: "Reduced Number of Colleges: Colleges are more even in size. UTK moves from 11 colleges to fewer colleges."
Should "size" be based on number of departments, revenue, research dollars, number of undergraduate majors, number of graduate programs, number of student credit hours, expenditures, number of faculty? For scaling, what is the "unit of size"?
The following rationale was provided. "The resulting administrative structure may be less costly due to fewer administrators and a greater ability to share resources across a larger college base. Diversity in disciplines might promote innovation in the college." Why would any college Dean agree to giving their resources to another college? Their job is to make their college fiscally solvent and to operate in the "black".
This is actually a false narrative, that we save money with less colleges. It has been used in the past by upper administration, but the opposite can occur. For example, the rationale for combining Education with Human Ecology to form CEHHS was supposed to save administrative cost that would go back to the new college. The opposite happened. I was a new Department Head and I was told 2 existing NTT faculty and one staff person had to be let go due to "budget cuts". There is no way to predict how upper administration and Deans will react to these changes and how the reorganization will impact departments and programs. The disruption that would occur from this would be astronomical.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Under "III. ALTERNATIVES", the working group outlined four alternatives (A-D) to the existing structure that might form a starting point for campus engagement. I suggest a 5th alternative be included.
E. Outcomes: The college structure is organized by outcomes, productivity and success, not primarily by structure. This is a targeted approach designed to be productive; meaning, you decide what outcomes you are looking for and then decide whether Unit rearrangements would enhance the success you are trying to achieve. Strategically, realignments are not based on the desire to realign, but rather on a desire to accomplish something.
I believe in providing concrete suggestions with my commentary.
For example, Health is one of the weakest areas on this campus, with the greatest growth potential. Therefore, your outcome is to create a strong and viable health presence. UTK should create a

College/School of Public Health (CPH) because colleges of public health bring in an average of $15M-$20M per year in federal funding. Given the recent pandemic, lack of a CPH left UTK on the sidelines. This can be accomplished very easily with little need for additional resources. How? The national accrediting body, CEPH, recently changed their accreditation criteria for schools/colleges of public health. If you combine the Department of Nutrition with the Department of Public Health they have all of the necessary requirements for immediate NATIONAL ACCREDITATION. The only additional requirement is an autonomous Unit at the college level (regardless of whether you call it a School or College). You can create a CPH by doing almost nothing, with full national accreditation. This is a targeted reallocation of academic units that results in a meaningful outcome. If other units believe they will benefit by joining this new College, then let them do so. Therefore, you identify what you are trying to do and then decide if Unit reorganization will significantly contribute to that. This is in opposition of the "Process", "Overlay", "Affinity" and "Scale" proposals. With those, you reorganize the Units first and then assume that an increase in productivity will magically happen. But those are false assumptions. For example, don't create a College of Allied Health Sciences just to put similar Units together; that does nothing unless you have a real and achievable targeted outcome. The last time that happened was the creation of CEHHS from Education and Human Ecology and nothing magical happened.

The second suggestion is the formation of a clinical research Unit on campus that collaborates with UTMC. We have a lot of faculty who do basic biomedical research and want to move to the next phase of the research, setting up Clinical Trials. There is no mechanism for that to happen. If you establish a Division for Translational Research that directly works with the research arm of UTMC and its physicians, this would help develop closer relationships. An interdisciplinary program can be developed. There is a lot of federal funding to be had with these kinds of collaborations. A research facility in Cherokee Farms would provide the laboratory space to develop these close relationships, and access between the two facilities is only a golf cart away (through the tunnel connecting UTMC with Cherokee Farms). New degrees could be developed. For example, people are always looking for qualified Clinical Trial Coordinators. I certainly was trying to find someone with my clinical trials and it was hard finding one. The UTMC says they have them, that is not exactly true. There are also other programmatic possibilities.

The Third suggestion has been proposed by XXXX that is to form a statistical, analytical core at the University of Tennessee by bringing together those units that would make this happen. However, as XXX starts it, why would the various Deans let computing science go to this new unit, or statistics from business go to this new unit, etc? He has a create idea. The OUTCOME MODEL says, if you can, solve his problem by bring together those existing units that will result in success. You rearrange the units based on OUTCOME, not Process, not Overlay, not Affinity, and not Scale.

So, the final thought is that you shouldn't reorganize just to reorganize. When it is appropriate and there is a clear and sustainable outcome, then reorganize to strengthen the probability for success. Don't reorganize without really knowing you will have something that is better than what you had.

Academic Structures Suggestion Template

The following is a basic format to share an idea or suggestion for academic structure or process following three alternatives presented by the working group: Process, Overlay, and Affinity.

1. Summarize the idea…
   E. Outcomes: The college or *Unit* structure is organized by outcomes, productivity and success, not primarily by structure. This is a targeted approach designed to be productive; meaning, you decide what outcomes you are looking for and then decide whether Unit rearrangements would enhance the success you are trying to achieve. *Strategically, realignments are not based on the desire to realign, but rather on a desire to accomplish something.*
2. List benefits of the idea
   - You are focusing on accomplishing something, while all the other modalities hypothesize that something positive will magically happen through Process, Overlay, Affinity or Scale.
   - The rearrangement is logical and will attract units that believe they will benefit.
   - It is targeted; thus, unintended consequences are avoided.
   - You are not forcing anyone to participate.
   - It should help the faculty do their jobs because they are all working for a common goal.
3. List challenges associated with the idea
   - Upper administration will never go with this idea, it is too out-of-the-box.

In thinking of benefits and challenges, you may want to consider effects on areas such as enrollment, budget, curriculum, experiential learning / practice, fundraising, and research.

Example:

1. **Health** is one of the weakest areas on this campus, with the greatest growth potential. Therefore, your outcome is to create a strong and viable health presence. UTK <u>should</u> create a *College/School of Public Health* (CPH) because colleges of public health bring in an average of $15M-$20M per year in federal funding. Given the recent pandemic, lack of a CPH left UTK on the sidelines. This can be accomplished very easily with little need for additional resources. How? The national accrediting body, CEPH, recently changed their accreditation criteria for schools/colleges of public health. If you combine the Department of Nutrition with the Department of Public Health they have all of the necessary requirements for immediate NATIONAL ACCREDITATION. The only additional requirement is an autonomous Unit at the college level (regardless of whether you call it a School or College). You can create a CPH by doing almost nothing, with full national accreditation. This is a targeted reallocation of academic units that results in a meaningful outcome. If other units believe they will benefit by joining this new College, then let them do so. Therefore, you identify what you are trying to do and then decide if Unit reorganization will significantly contribute to that. This is in opposition of the "Overlay" and "Affinity" proposals. With those, you reorganize the Units first and then assume that an increase in productivity will magically happen. But those are false assumptions. For example, **don't create a College of Allied Health Sciences** just to put similar Units together; that does nothing unless you have a real and achievable targeted

outcome. The last time that happened was the creation of CEHHS from Education and Human Ecology and nothing magical happened.

2. The second suggestion is the formation of a clinical research Unit on campus that collaborates with UTMC. We have a lot of faculty who do basic biomedical research and want to move to the next phase of the research, setting up Clinical Trials. There is no mechanism for that to happen. If you establish a *Division for Translational Research* that directly works with the research arm of UTMC and its physicians, this would help develop closer relationships. An interdisciplinary program can be developed. There is a lot of federal funding to be had with these kinds of collaborations. A research facility in Cherokee Farms would provide the laboratory space to develop these close relationships, and access between the two facilities is only a golf cart away (through the tunnel connecting UTMC with Cherokee Farms). New degrees could be developed. For example, people are always looking for qualified Clinical Trial Coordinators. I certainly was trying to find someone with my clinical trials and it was hard finding one. The UTMC says they have them, that is not exactly true. There are also other programmatic possibilities.

3. The Third suggestion has been proposed by XXXX, that is form a statistical, analytical core at the University of Tennessee by bringing together those units that would make this happen. However, as Lou starts it, why would the various Deans let computing science go to this new unit, or statistics from business go to this new unit, etc. He has a create idea. The OUTCOME MODEL says, if you can, solve his problem by bring together those existing units that will result in success. You rearrange the units based on OUTCOME, not Process, not Overlay, not Affinity, and not Scale.

Benefits
- The units want to be aligned with each other based on a common goal or objective
- It increases the likelihood of grants and awards
- It becomes easier to create new curricula (i.e., a whole new UG curriculum in public health, or a new program is analytics that XXXX proposes.
- Increases the likelihood of productive collaborations with external units such as UTMC or Cherokee Health Systems, etc.

Challenges
- Upper administration lacks the real vision to do this.
- BAM: this new budget model forces everyone to develop silos. Each college is doing everything they can to garner as many student credit hours as possible and the Deans don't want any of that to go elsewhere. Developing an outcome-based Unit goes against everything that is being implemented.

What is your feedback related to the process model?

Excellent option. Streamlining processes has a strong chance of being budget sustainable and creating opportunities for interdisciplinary majors and research collaborations across disciplines.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

Excellent option as well.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

This model will not work. Smaller 'affinity' siloed colleges will destroy the university's ability to offer students classes in most areas outside their major.

Under the new seat-based revenue budget model, funds from the tuition produced from each class will be allocated 50% to the home of a student's major, and 50% to the College of the instructor of a course. The College of Arts and Sciences, as a whole, supports the ability of a microbiology major to takes classes in music, math, political science, philosophy, or Spanish. It also enables supply chain management majors to take those classes and be supported by the Haslam College of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences. Alone, smaller Colleges of General Studies, Humanities, or Fine Arts will not have the funding or bandwidth to offer classes to students outside their majors. Entire disciplines may vanish. The stated aim of interdisciplinarity cannot be achieved through more division.

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a financially thriving, flagship institution of research. Our record-breaking undergraduate enrollment is a sign that UTK is poised to tackle the State's low rate of educational attainment. (Tennessee ranks 8th to last nationally in citizens with college degrees.) Equity is achieved not only through educational attainment, but how that education is attained. Do our citizens deserve the ability to study agriculture, architecture, or art? To learn about ecology, economics, or English? To take classes in computer science and psychology?

Plainly, the stated aim of creating nimbler and more flexible paths toward education will not be achieved by creating the financial, curricular, and intellectual silos that the affinity model of colleges proposes.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

Interesting idea.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

The overlay model could be well achieved with the new budget model, perhaps with tweaks. The College of Interdisciplinary Studies would eventually be funded by the 50% revenue of students who major in it. This would need to fund the administration of the unit. To initiate the program, faculty might be

incentivized to develop curriculum for the College of Interdisciplinary Studies through course banking. Course banking is an underutilized incentive by UTK. It is an attractive option that enables the university to retain 100% of their tuition revenue while providing the most active faculty dedicated semesters for research-- research which will in turn reflect well on the institution through grants, awards, etc. Additionally, UTK could create a competitive application (annually or every 2 years) for a cohort to be Faculty Fellows in the College of Interdisciplinary Studies. Faculty in the cohort would offer classes in the College and mentor students. In return, faculty would receive funding for summer research to support their interdisciplinary projects.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

Scholarship focused on the environment on the campus (incl. ecology, environmental engineering, natural resource economics, environmental law, environmental humanities, geography, and many other fields) suffers for being broken up across multiple departments. Various initiatives on the campus seek to work around this fragmentation (e.g., the Baker Center Energy and Environment Forum, the Watersheds group, the Sustainability group, ISSE). But most of those efforts are stood up by a few key faculty giving their time and remain largely unsupported by the University. One obvious danger with little of that community-building having been supported and systematized is that if we lose the wrong faculty member then all of the informal collaboration "structures" that have been created will just unravel. The overlay model could potentially help a lot here, depending on how it is implemented. Institutes of the environment with which large numbers of faculty have "dry" affiliations while retaining their home departments are one of the most commonly used models to address this issue by our peers and aspirational peers. It is much less challenging to implement than standing up schools of the environment de novo.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

The redundancies and inefficiencies caused by UTIA and UTK having separate research offices were left unaddressed by the "unification" effort of two years ago. It is crazy that I have to subcontract with UTenn colleagues just as I would collaborators at other universities. It causes pointless headaches and has resulted in us leaving $s in the funders' pocket because the two research offices couldn't get on the same page about what the relevant costings were. If looking at organizational changes, how about tackling that?

What is your feedback related to the process model?

It's quite important that we do more to remove roadblocks and streamline processes, especially in hiring. That should be done whatever the outcome of this process.

What is your feedback related to the overlay model?

Faculty already enjoy interactions via this model.

What is your feedback related to the affinity model?

People already reach out across colleges to interact across college boundaries.

What is your feedback related to the scale model?

Colleges should be the size that best suits their mission.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

I don't know what problems we're trying to solve by talking about structure. So I don't know what the answers could possibly be.

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Other: Please share your idea below

Share your campus engagement idea

Meetings of department heads, within their colleges, with campus leadership might be useful to give input to the campus leadership on this matter.

What is your feedback related to the process model?

I have heard repeatedly from many faculty that there are hosts of proceeds constraints that reduce the effectiveness of faculty too do their jobs. So I was surprised that this area from the Working Groups report has not been included in the March meetings with the facilitators. This area is the one that I believe will generate the most benefits long-term here and it doesn't serve the process well to have it not be included in the facilitators meetings.

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Large Town Halls

February 2022 Web Feedback

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Based on what I've read and heard so far, the information that directs the committee comes from two areas: 1) projected data about population demographics, technological expansion, and economic futures and 2) faculty and administration feedback. However, I haven't seen any feedback from current UT students about the roadblocks to their education, from current high school students about their expectations and needs, or from parents of K - 12 students about their attitudes and expectations for higher ed.

Is that information anywhere, and if so how did it play into the report or the committee's discussions about academic structures?

Campus engagement: What types of campus engagement would be helpful to you? Check all that apply.

- Small group meetings
- Discussions in departmental/staff meetings

August 2021 Web Feedback

What additional feedback would you like to share?

There should be an advising director on this committee. There are implications here of cross and/or multidisciplinary evolution in curricula as well as organization that would affect students. Professional advising understands how curriculum on the broadest sense (i.e. beyond the student's major department) impacts students' retention, progression, and success.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

All,
In the working group narrative there is the following statement, "Per the Chancellor, these discussions have been guided by three key desired outcomes for UT as stated in our strategic vision: flexible, agility, and interdisciplinary capability." While Donde has said this publicly many times what I am seeing in practice across many processes is the exact opposite, more red tape and slowing down innovation. If we are truly going to be a "flexible, agile" organization, we not only need structures but processes that facilitate the potential to "flexible and agile". I have been here almost 30 years and everything thing we try to do to be innovative, flexible, and agile is being hindered at every level/stage, much more than it used to be. In trying to work through these issues, it is taking its toll on our employee's motivation and work satisfaction. While changing structures may help some of this, leaning out processes (including approval processes) across campus may even have a more significant impact on our university.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Really nice work on this document. However, when I think about the vision, I think about setting a very lofty goal that might make people uncomfortable but also has more tangibility associated with it. There's a great Harvard Business Review article (a must read in strategy) by Collins and Porras that talks about vision statements being comprised, in part, of BHAGs, or @ big hairy audacious goals. But ultimately, these are dream statements and I think it would be good to have something in the statement that, when we achieve it, we would know that we have arrived.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

1. Consider developing a focused college of health that could align various academic disciplines. The Colleges of Nursing and Social Work are health focused but they hold single professional identities and are not broad enough to cover the range of disciplines that would be in a college of health.

2. The College of Arts and Sciences is very large in terms of faculty, departments, and students. It may be useful to consider ways to divide or restructure it into two or three seperate colleges with a focused identify. While I appreciate the core of liberal arts within the college, it may be beneficial to consider a structural realignment.

3. It may be worth considering a College of Ag and Environment. As the Ag Institute is integrated back into UT, it might be beneficial to consider how that alignment may occur.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Our current structure is based more on history than on reason. We need to carefully examine options that will bring our university into an alignment that creates greater opportunities. Higher education is changing and UTK needs to be willing to change. I encourage us to dare to explore options and to look for more reasoned alignments. We need to be organized in ways that will allow us to create programs that meet the needs of students - this generation isn't looking backwards, they are looking forward. These alignments should also help bring together our faculty in ways that promote our research and scholarly work. If we are to achieve the things outlined in the newest Strategic Vision, we need an organizational structure that promotes new opportunities.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Academic unity and focus is critical. We need a stronger health science emphasis on this campus. We could form a health sciences college with schools of nursing and public health. Then, add some additional areas such as physical and occupational therapy. About 10 years ago we had an ad hoc committee study the feasibility of a medical school at UTK. Given the high demand for medical doctors it would be a good time to reconsider this proposal and seek funding to develop a college of medicine at UTK.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

At present, we have an Instructional Technology MA program and a Learning, Design, and Technology PhD program in the Educational Psychology and Counseling department, but have an Educational Technology EdS program in the Theory and Practice in Teacher Education program. I believe we would be stronger by unifying these two closely related disciplines.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

For interdisciplinary collaborations, discussions need to occur regarding how faculty are evaluated. Many bylaws don't acknowledge this type of work well, and encourage faculty to be isolated. This would also be true for the development of interdisciplinary graduate programs - which are very much needed on campus.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

For new faculty, there has been significant challenges to feeling valued and included. Yes, some of this has been the pandemic, but in this new post-pandemic era, the University and/or college needs to thoughtfully consider how to foster the sense that new faculty are valued and a part of UT.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

I would like to see a thoughtful consideration of whether the tenure track needs to be what it has always been. There was some discussion of shifting to teaching-focused tenure track and research-focused tenure track. I would like to see that seriously considered.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

The size disparity among colleges should be addressed. Some colleges such as Arts and Sciences or Education, Health, and Human Sciences are composed of many unrelated disciplines while other other colleges such as Nursing or Social Work contain only a single discipline. I would recommend splitting Arts and Sciences as well as education and health.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

First, I thank the group for their service on this important task for the university. My main comment regarding this group is that its purpose might be misconstrued as a way to reduce workforce and cause employees to lose their jobs. This is especially a possibility for staff and faculty who are not tenured or not tenure-track. I urge the group to over communicate the purpose of this task force to reassure folks and get ahead of potential rumors.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

After reading your information, I am not exactly sure where this group is going. However, what comes immediately to mind is the UTIA vs. UTK issue. If you are looking at big picture structure, I would look at that. I have never understood why we have 2 campuses, but I do not have enough information to know whether having two adjacent Knoxville campuses is a good, indifferent, or bad idea. I want to make sure Agriculture does not lose the spotlight, and yet it is important for students and faculty to easily navigate within and between these campuses in all aspects- courses, research, service, outreach. I do not want to lose parking to all the students who attend classes across the bridge, but I also want to have easy access to library systems, computer support, infrastructure, etc.

If academic structure is about classifying departments and keeping majors within departments, then I think we are missing a huge opportunity. I would guess that many graduates use very little of the knowledge they've gained in their "major" and learn more with advanced or on the job training. Wouldn't it be great to have a degree where these types of students prepared for their future jobs/professions/careers through a broad-based degree- once that provided exposure to literature, politics, foreign language, conflict resolution, educational premises, health and fitness, problem solving,

critical thinking, scientific analysis, evaluating validity of media, etc.? If someone is going to sell insurance, he or she does not need a business degree. What they need is to be widely read, have a basic understanding of national and world geography and politics, be able to communicate effectively, know techniques for resolving conflict or providing customer service, etc. That would be a college degree that could span multiple departments.

What additional feedback would you like to share?

Principle 2: In my experiences trying to collaborate with a team of interdisciplinary scholars and students, across colleges and departments, I have found several obstacles that must be overcome to do so. Many of these challenges arise from decentralized policies and procedures regarding the management of grants. We are worried that the new budget model will only intensify some of these challenges, as departments are incentivized to keep funds within the department, rather than to spread them out across departments or even colleges.

A creative overlay option that takes advantage of an existing structure is to repurpose University Studies, which already exists in the undergraduate catalog. Lecturers who teach entry-level, high enrollment 100 and 200 level courses could be organized under University Studies and report centrally. This would allow more for a more cohesive experience for students and closer alignment of entry-level course instruction with university goals of retention. Likewise, the move would allow colleges to focus more energy on college priorities such as research, service, and upper-division courses. University Studies is an unused organizational unit in the UT catalog and would allow us to move ahead quickly, with approval of campus leadership.

Summary of comments at office hours with provost (Spring 2022)
- An attendee noted the belief that a lot comes down to money & management and wonders how BAM affects a 'small' college. Person is concerned about diminished support for smaller departments [philosophy, classics, religious studies] and says that most of this person's department doesn't trust campus leadership. Many feel restructuring adds to administrative bloat and that big decisions are made without faculty input. Many are concerned about divisive concepts legislation passed by the state. (More information here: https://provost.utk.edu/divisive-concepts-legislation)
- An attendee thinks splitting CAS makes sense. He used an example how the associate dean for research is spread so thin assisting research folks and how if a split occurred,

then it might end up meaning more support and opportunities. The person also noted that leadership could have closer relationship to disciplines in smaller colleges.

- Attendee noted that smaller college could provider better opportunities for fundraising.
- Question of how reorganization changes opinions of higher ed.
- Discussion of decline in humanities and what can be done to help humanities. What structures help humanities thrive?
- Desire not to lose collaboration opportunities
- Interest in more coordination, less management.
- Why create task force? Goals? Why are we thinking about Academic Structures?
- What will a structure be that prepares us best for higher ed landscape?
- Do we have the structures that have the needs of students and needs of our faculty in mind?
- It can be hard to be a small unit in a big college. No real say. No real voice. Always potentially on the chopping block.
- Companies that use bots and other automation on resume creates a need for SEO for degrees, which can pressure degrees like English, whose title does not have a specific job in the name
- Interest in embedding skills in certain majors that maybe don't have a direct career tie to give students options.
- Hard to see overlay being successful from a faculty perspective. Might create more problems than it solves.
- Barrier to collaboration is disparity in pay when working on grants. Can create a "what's in it for me?" mentality if you are outside the discipline that gets paid more. How do you make it more attractive for faculty in the lower-salary positions and recognize the contributions of everyone?
- It's not just about research affiliations but about space and place affiliations when you talk about collaboration and working relationships.
- Physical offices are less critical from a teaching perspective.
- Limited conversations about budget. There is a perception that centralization is equity and consistency. Perception that there is little arbiter if one dean for example, chooses not to address salaries, do they have oversight?
- Strong interest in checks and balances with budget under BAM model.
- Need to show how majors such as literature connect to career opportunities and coach students on how to present their skills.
- How much do we promote dual degrees where there are partnerships with humanities and business, for example.