



# LAKE SUPERIOR STATE UNIVERSITY

## MEMORANDUM

## PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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**TO:** Campus Community

**FROM:** Morrie Walworth *MW*

**DATE:** August 4, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Academic Restructuring Plan Update

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Thank you to those who responded to the proposed restructuring plan. Although the number responding was small, the vast majority were supportive. I have responded to every individual that provided a comment. A summary of the comments is provided at the end of this letter.

Due to the generally positive comments, I will proceed with the restructuring. Rather than implementing a date of effective implementation, I will instead be working with the deans, chairs, registrar, and business office to completely transition into the new structure. However, effective immediately, we will refer to academic areas as one of the four colleges, or one of the 12 schools as denoted in the proposed plan. I will await feedback from the new colleges on what they wish to name their college and will assume the school names will remain unchanged at this time.

I don't expect to see many changes in the budgeting FOPAL designations, but the Business Office will provide details shortly.

Effective immediately, Dr. Gordier will assume her role as Interim Dean of the College of Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences. Dr. Keller will serve as Dean of the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences. I wish to thank Drs. Balfantz and Shannon for their service as administrators for the last few years. Both of them will be returning to the faculty for the fall.

Dr. Barb Searight has resigned her position as Associate Dean since my initial restructuring proposal. We have begun the search for a Director of Education. Two years ago we chose to search for a director seeking an individual to provide administrative support, and coordination of the faculty initiatives. Director roles are very common for schools of education. That is the structure at NMU and CMU and U of M , and these programs are much larger than our program.

### **Next Steps:**

The School of Business and the School of Engineering & Technology have begun meeting and have indicated a desire to move forward quickly with a posting for a Dean. They have asked for release time

and no interim dean appointment for the upcoming semester. We will be doing so. I'm waiting to hear from the Schools of Nursing and Recreation & Exercise Science.

I am developing new release time models for the chairs of the schools. These models will incorporate general oversight activities; assessment needs; accredited programs; number of programs, students, and faculty; as well as other factors. I hope to have these available for review and comment shortly.

**Conclusion:**

As mentioned in the initial plan, I am asking for interim dean recommendations from the Schools of Nursing and Recreation & Exercise Science anytime before September 15, 2011. Recommendations must be provided by the college with a majority of the faculty from each school within the college supporting the recommendation. More than one candidate may be submitted. Appointments will be made as soon as possible. (The School of Business and the School of Engineering & Technology have asked to pursue a different route and I have agreed as noted above.)

I also ask that colleges without dean appointments draft search criteria for those positions before October 28, 2011. Search criteria should be approved by a majority of the faculty from each school within the college. Criteria should ensure that candidates possess the credentials necessary to oversee all the schools within the college.

My hope is that we can accomplish these tasks well before these dates.

Thank you again for the responses. I will see all of you shortly. The summer certainly has gone by quickly. The following is a summary of the responses received regarding the restructuring plan.

**Summary of Responses:**

Students who responded were mostly concerned about the School of Education and its future at LSSU. I provided assurances that we would be taking the necessary steps (all steps within our control) to ensure program continuation. I also provided some information that indicated we had already begun the review and improvement process this past year. Unfortunately the Michigan Department of Education uses three-year rolling averages to determine school performance. Even with good performance, it will take LSSU some time to recover.

Staff members who responded were generally positive but concerned about leadership voids in the areas where deans would initially be absent. We will provide additional release time in those areas and move as quickly as possible to identify new deans or an interim dean. The existing deans, associate provost, and I will provide the needed administrative oversight in the interim period as necessary.

Faculty responses were nearly all positive. The most significant concern was from one school that questioned whether I would consider a dean from their academic discipline (assuming that the other school's needs carried a greater weight in my mind). I assured them that I had already had conversations with the existing deans and that we have plans in place for deans to emerge from any of the four dean-less schools.

