August 24, 2005

To: Standing Committees of Academic Governance

From: Provost Kim Wilcox


The final report of the Summer Task Force has been referred to your committee by ECAC, which met in special session on August 23, 2005. I had an opportunity to meet with ECAC at that time, and provided brief commentary related to the report. In summary, I strongly commended the Summer Task Force, and the working groups which preceded them, on their excellent work which has yielded such an exciting proposal. Their proposal represents sound scholarship, innovative strategies in teaching and learning, and a distinctive interdisciplinary approach to undergraduate study in the arts and humanities. The proposed program expands high quality options for our students while expanding opportunities in the arts and humanities.

In endorsing the program and the supporting rationale in the proposal, I am recommending that the new residential program be organized as an autonomous college. I believe there are compelling programmatic reasons for endorsing an independent college, which are well outlined in the Task Force’s report.

I look forward to commentary from your committee as we move forward in honoring the December, 2004, resolution by Academic Council to establish the residential program in the arts and humanities during the Sesquicentennial Year. As ECAC chairperson Jon Sticklen has indicated to you, expedited discussions are necessary so that your committee can report on its deliberations to Academic Council at its September 27, 2005 meeting.

cc. J. Sticklen
J. Youatt
R. Banks
J. Hudzik
September 16, 2005

To: Academic Council  
    Executive Committee of Academic Council

From: Ralph Putnam  
    Chair, University Committee on Academic Policy

Re: UCAP commentary on Residential College/School Report

The Executive Committee of Academic Council (ECAC) asked the University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP) to review and comment on the *Report of the Summer Task Force 2005 for the New Residential College/School*. UCAP discussed the report with Steve Esquith at our September 1, 2005, meeting, following a presentation of the work of the summer task force and its report by Professor Esquith. We also discussed the report at our September 15 meeting, after UCAP members had read the full report.

UCAP commends Professor Esquith and the summer task force for the outstanding work they have done to build on the work of previous working groups to continue developing a vision and curriculum for the new residential college or school. It was a pleasure to read such a thoughtful and clearly written report.

UCAP endorses the vision, structure, and plans for the Residential College laid out in the task force report, including the recommendation that it be created as an autonomous college. The plan holds great potential for creating a vibrant residential program that creates rich educational opportunities for its students while complementing other programs and activities across the MSU campus.

We hope that the new residential college envisioned in this task force report continues to develop. In our role of considering issues of undergraduate academic policy, we look forward to reviewing more detailed plans and policies as they are developed, to support the creation of a truly unique addition to the MSU academic community.

In that spirit, we share here a number of issues raised in UCAP’s discussion of the task force report. These should be viewed as issues or tensions that we encourage faculty further developing plans for the new college to consider:
1. Continue to develop the college in ways that will enhance existing humanities and liberal arts colleges, programs, and activities, rather than drawing away existing resources from them. When reviewing the recommendations of a previous task force on a residential program (the predecessor of the current task force) UCAP urged consideration of a number of issues of the relationship with an autonomous college with existing programs and colleges. The current task force has clearly been mindful of these issues and we encourage future planners to continue in this spirit.

2. To make sense of a new institution, various players (e.g., students, faculty, the general public) may categorize, or “label,” that institution and its purpose in varied ways. Already, one hears talk about this new residential college as “another James Madison,” “a cultural studies” program, or a “liberal arts” program (with the varied meanings that term connotes for different individuals). We feel it is important that, as this new residential college develops, its developers and leaders be proactive in communicating and establishing the “shorthand” and images by which others describe and understand its vision and mission.

3. With the focus on developing proficiency in a foreign language, it is interesting to note the absence of any required basic coursework dealing with the more general issues of language, for example, the linguistic structure and history of languages, the acquisition of language, and the role of language in human communication, society and culture. Introductory courses that deal with these issues are Linguistics 200 (Introduction to Language) and 401 (Introduction to Linguistics). In addition, given the emphasis on both language and culture, it seems natural to consider a 'language and culture' elective pathway. We encourage those developing the curriculum for the new residential college to consider incorporating this sort of language content to further strengthen the goals of language proficiency and trans-cultural understanding.

4. The addition of required credits in the addendum to the task force report raised some concern that receiving a double major (encouraged in the spirit of the proposed college) may require more credits than is reasonable for four years of undergraduate study. We encourage careful consideration to achieve an appropriate number of required credits.
5. UCAP members lauded the inclusion of graduate students in the work and mentoring of the new college. UCAP members raised two questions related to graduate students:

a. Will graduate students (i.e., special fellows) be recruited to participate from a national and/or international pool?
b. What form of support will there be for graduate students in various short-term mentoring roles? (support as TAs? Course credit?)

We encourage involvement of a variety of graduate students through these activities and structures.

6. Admissions criteria are not explicitly addressed in the task force report, although it is UCAP’s understanding that these would be the same as for other general undergraduate applicants. UCAP recommends that there be no minimum GPA requirements other than those already set by the University. This policy is important (a) to support the creation of a diverse student body in the new college and (b) to avoid creating a more selective program that could compete with other undergraduate programs for strong students.
University Committee on Faculty Affairs
Chair: Ross B. Emmett

Commentary on New Residential College Proposal
September 15, 2005

Committee Deliberation on NRC Proposal
The Budget Subcommittee of the University Committee on Faculty Affairs met on September 6, 2005 with Dr. Stephen Esquith to discuss the budgetary implications of the New Residential College. On September 13, 2005, Dr. Esquith returned to meet with the full UCFA committee. He made a short presentation and answered questions. The Committee continued discussion of questions and concerns after his departure for the remainder of the meeting.

Budgetary Implications of the NRC Proposal
Some members of Academic Council may already be familiar with the following, and I apologize to those who already understand it. Most faculty, however, have not seen this, because it is not in the proposal or any of the reports available on the Academic Governance website. Because so much of our Committee’s discussion revolved around these issues, a summary of the proposal’s impact on the University budget is included as a reference point for the subsequent commentary.

College’s Recurring Budget Assumptions:
1) A total student body of approximately 450 students once fully operational in 2010-2011; a freshmen cohort of 100-125.
2) Tuition revenue of approximately $3.5 million (450 x $8000 = $3.6 million)
3) A teaching faculty complement of 16 FTE once fully operational (see faculty assignment information in the addendum to the Summer 2005 New Residential College Report). The expectation is that the Dean and Assistant Dean will both participate in teaching.

An additional assumption regarding the University’s budget needs to be included. Currently, the University budget includes an assumption that the incoming freshmen cohort will be 7,050 each fall. Admissions procedures are set to produce that intake. The addition of the NRC would involve moving this University budget assumption from 7,050 to 7,150 new freshmen. For comparison’s sake, in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 MSU exceeded the budgeted assumption: approximately 7,400 new students enrolled in 2004-2005 and 7,250 in 2005-2006.

College’s Recurring Budget (450 students):
The recurring College budget contains both college and non-college expenditures.
1) College expenditures: administrative personnel, supplies and services would comprise somewhat less than 10% of the total budget; student services would comprise slightly more than 10%; and faculty salaries would be 25% of the budget. College expenditures, therefore, would comprise approximately 45% of the total budget.
2) Non-College expenditures include facilities maintenance, costs associated with teaching College students in other parts of the University; and financial aid. Non-College expenditures are estimated at 45 – 50% of the total budget.
3) College and Non-College expenditures would absorb approximately 90% of the tuition revenue received from the NRC students.
Put in dollar terms, the College’s recurring expenditures would run approximately $1.5 million and non-College recurring expenditures would be approximately the same. Thus, the ratio of Total Revenue ($3.5 million) to Total Expenditures (College and Non-College) would be 117%. That ratio compares quite favorably with the ratio of tuition revenue to expenditures in other colleges across MSU.

*Ramp-Up Investment*
The budget numbers presented above represent the operation of the New Residential College at its normal capacity of 450 students. Between 2007-08 and 2010-11, the College would go through a ramp-up period, adding 100-125 students per year. Expenditures during that ramp-up period, however, cannot move in step with the addition of students. Prior to the NRC’s first year of operation, some funds will be necessary to recruit students and faculty, and set up the NRC’s office space. Year 1 will see fairly significant start up costs as the initial teaching complement of 16 FTE is added and administrative and student services are initiated. Years 2 and 3 will see smaller, gradual additions to faculty and other costs which are dependent upon the addition of students. Year 4 will see another significant addition to the faculty complement in order to provide the capstone and other upper-level course experiences. Thus, the University will need to make a significant investment prior to the College’s startup and during its first two years (and perhaps the third), while operating costs of the College exceed tuition revenues. From discussion during the full Committee meeting devoted to this topic, our understanding is that these initial investments will come from requests for TLE funds and from the Provost’s Quality Enhancement Fund.

*Commentary*
Most of the time members of UCFA spent on the Proposal for the NRC in both the Subcommittee and full Committee settings was devoted to understanding its budget implications. The need for a speedy response to meet the timeline set by Academic Council left little time for Committee members to discuss the budgetary implications with colleagues in their colleges or to engage in a Committee discussion that would produce a professional response that carefully weighed the implications on faculty across the university. I will confine my remarks, therefore, to the two questions regarding the content of the proposal around which our discussion seemed to focus.

1. Why a new residential college in the humanities now?
While the answer to this question may already be settled – an expansion of choices that will enhance the learning opportunities for undergraduate students in the humanities – the focus of our discussion of this question was most often on the comparative benefits of alternative offerings. For example, would alternative uses of a million or more dollars over the next two years within existing colleges produce more beneficial results for students and the University in terms of enhancing undergraduate education? Would offering similar residential choices in some of the professional colleges provide equal or perhaps even more substantial gains for students and the University?

The creation of the Quality Enhancement Fund increases the likelihood that some other options that benefit students and the University will be exploited, although the chances that the Fund will receive single proposals as large as the creation of more residential colleges seem
unlikely. So the question “Why this, why now?” was frequently echoed during our discussion. Throughout that discussion, members of the Committee pointed out that the original decision to pursue this option was made through a process outside the normal channels of Academic Governance.

2. How confident are we that the Non-College expenditure budget accurately represents the costs imposed on other units of the university from the establishment of the NRC?

The Committee applauded Steve Esquith for the work he and others charged with looking at these issues have done in trying to estimate the non-College costs, especially those related to instructional demands placed upon other units. As well, the Committee recognizes that the College’s non-College expenditures are similar in nature to the non-College expenditures of other units on campus, a fact that the budget estimates reflects. However, some doubts remained as to whether other units, especially in the Colleges of Arts and Letters and Communication Arts and Sciences, would have resources available to them to handle the extra demands placed upon them by the students in the NRC. Again, the time line for commentary from the Committee did not allow enough investigation to provide a satisfactory answer.
Draft Minutes
Special Meeting of
University Committee on Student Affairs (UCSA)
September 12, 2005
www.msu.edu/~assmci/ucsa

Present: Jason Ardanowski (Guest), Crystal Eddins, Stephen L. Esquith (Guest), Jeremy Hernandez, Lee June, Kyle Martin, Denise Maybank, Alison Rautman, Jim Roper, Andrew Schepers, Susan Selke, Rick Shafer, Hallee Winnie

Absent: Kyle Martin, Stan Soffin, Tom Rios

With a quorum present, this special meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by chairperson Jeremy Hernandez to discuss and provide feedback to the Executive Committee on Academic Council (ECAC) regarding the proposed New Residential College (NRC). To facilitate the discussion, Dr. Steve Esquith, was present.

Dr. Esquith provided extensive background information regarding the origin of the concept of a NRC and updated the group on the current thinking and status.

After the background presentation by Professor Esquith, the discussion focused mainly on clarifications and suggestions. The following questions/suggestions were raised/presented and provided the context for a broad discussion:

- What about required internship?
- What, if any, are the implications of the proposed college for future discussions/considerations of a college of liberal arts and sciences at MSU?
- Will the curriculum attract students who normally would not come to Michigan State University?
- What were the factors that led the University to believe that there would be an interest in such a college? Was such an assessment done?
- Is the college designed to attract primarily out of state students?
- What is the stated mission of the College?
- Will the listing of certain first year courses at the 200-level cause confusion and concern for first year students?
- What is the purpose of the NRC Proficiency Center and how will it operate?
- What will be the relationship/emphasis of the college in regards to the natural sciences as well as technology (wherever and in what context it is found)?
- Why did Lyman Briggs survive and not Justin Morrill? What lessons can be learned from them?
- There needs to be some emphasis over time on determining the effectiveness and value of the new college to the University. How will this assessed/determined?

Each of the above questions/suggestions were responded to by Professor Esquith.

Professor Esquith concluded by indicating that a written report should be submitted by September 16, 2005 to ECAC and that at the next Academic Council meeting the feedback and the overall Report on the NRC will be discussed.

Overall, UCSA wishes to convey to ECAC that UCSA continues to endorse the concept of the NRC as an independent entity. UCSA also stated that the minutes of this meeting will serve as the feedback to ECAC.

While the above reflects the sentiment of UCSA, Chairperson Hernandez indicated that if members have additional comments or thoughts, they should submit them to him via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

- Minutes compiled by Anna Yokoyama and Lee June