To: Chancellor Carlo Montemagno  
President Randy Dunn  
SIU Board of Trustees

From: Kathleen Chwalisz  
President, SIUC Faculty Senate

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Subject: SIUC is Alive and Well!

Despite what you may be seeing and hearing from some faculty or stories in the local media, SIUC is alive and well. The SIUC Faculty Senate Executive Council members and I met recently (1/23/18-1/31/18) with the Deans (and some associate deans) of all SIUC colleges, except the School of Medicine Dean who did not respond to our invitation. We asked deans to tell us about things happening in their colleges. Although we did not specifically ask about the reorganization process, some deans chose to share information and perceptions related to their colleges, and those comments are summarized toward the end of this report.

We requested 30 minutes with each dean, but these enjoyable meetings lasted at least an hour, and two were around 90 minutes—yielding more than 30 pages of notes plus handouts and follow-up documents provided by some of the deans. Allow me to present some of the highlights. There are a lot of exciting things happening on the SIUC campus.

College Efforts to Address Department, College, and University Needs/Issues: Several deans reported that their colleges had been talking and working, prior to FY18, about strategies to grow their colleges and/or individual programs/departments and to address particular issues in their colleges or more broadly.

- Several Deans talked about excitement surrounding efforts toward creating makerspaces on campus which will be vital resources for collaboration among students, faculty, staff, and the community.
- The University Museum had been moved to Library Affairs, which “makes sense” as it contains distinctive collections.
- The College of Education had been holding faculty retreats at the college level, and reorganization proposals had been developed.
- Efforts had been underway to address staffing issues in the College of Education.
- CASA had been reorganized into a school structure several years ago, and for a variety of reasons, has seen great success (e.g., 18% increase in enrollment 2013-2016; when university enrollment dropped 9%, CASA dropped 3%; generates 1/3 of the SIUC Distance Education revenue; Automotive Technology graduates have on average 2.7 job offers upon graduation; Radiologic Sciences program had to cap enrollment and has a 100-person waiting list).
- Engineering has been working on building bachelor’s degree programs in high demand areas (i.e., biomedical engineering, environmental engineering), expected to attract more, and diverse, students.
- The College of Agricultural Sciences has had a very active international presence, attracting international students and working in other countries (e.g., faculty working with small farmers in Morocco).
- An innovative online master’s degree concentration in Ecological Urban Landscapes was developed in the College of Agricultural Sciences, but it was sidelined during the state budget impasse.
- MCMA had been engaged in restructuring processes prior to the current proposals, with faculty looking to their professions and what students need. The Dean noted that the current proposed school looks like what they had proposed previously, although they would have liked to be a college.
- In MCMA, Cinema & Photography had reworked their curriculum to create a new set of foundation courses—8-week production and studies courses in the areas of cinema, still image, audio, and performance.
MCMA has been collaborating with CoLA and other colleges regarding virtual and blended reality initiatives and grants—mentioned by multiple deans.

In the College of Science, they had been talking about a school structure for the last 3-4 years—as suggested by an outside review of Life Sciences. There had been a life science taskforce that had been meeting—these are “not new conversations.”

Library Affairs brought in a consultant to look at the SIU Press, which has been struggling in the face of budget cuts, and they have generated ideas to make the press more successful.

Recruitment Efforts: All of the Colleges have been actively involved in student recruitment.

- CASA has seen an 18% increase in enrollment from 2013-2016.
- Engineering has been working on enrollment for years; particularly focusing on diversity (SIUC 2x the national average for racial/ethnic diversity, but currently a bit below than national average for women); building resources to bolster Biomedical Engineering and create a bachelor’s degree program in this very popular area that draws more women. Environmental Engineering is also expected to attract students.
- The Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences is actively working to re-engage their alumni base, which is expected to have multiple benefits including student recruitment.
- CoLA has been engaged in active recruitment efforts involving faculty outreach targeting admitted students, and the yield rate is going up.
- CoLA units (e.g., Art & Design, Music, Theatre, Communication Studies, English, Radio & TV, Journalism, Cinema & Photography) are showcased in an arts-related feature column in the Southern Illinoisan, every 4th Sunday.
- CoLA hosted a speech tournament involving 246 high school students from 13-14 schools.
- MCMA recruiter makes trips to career fairs and participates in open houses and an admitted student day.
- MCMA holds a Media Workshop Day for 80 high school students.
- Science has conducted a faculty calling campaign for students who have expressed interest but hadn’t yet applied.

Innovative Programs for Student Retention and Success: We heard about a number of innovative retention and support programs developed and administered in the various colleges.

- CASA has had a 4-stage retention effort in place since 2014, involving systematic efforts to identify and reach out to students who are not attending and/or doing poorly in classes and providing various interventions at the different stages. The CASA retention rate is greater than 90%.
- LAW developed a comprehensive Bar Improvement Project to increase retention and improve the Bar passage rate of its graduates. They changed both their curriculum and assessment procedures to provide earlier feedback to first year students--1st year performance predicts Bar passage. At risk students are provided with a variety of academic support and other services.
- Law has an active RSO, and the organization and college bring in numerous guest speakers; the Law School blocks off 12:15-1:30 every day to “increase the intellectual life in the college.”
- CoLA has an active Living Learning Community, and various units have retention programs in which faculty reach out to provide a more personal experience for students (e.g., finals week care packages).
- CoLA is reaching out systematically to students whose grades will put them in danger of being placed on academic probation.
- Science has an “active and aggressive retention team” in the dean’s office.
- The Saluki Science Ambassadors RSO (College of Science) has been actively involved in engaging students (e.g., open houses, tailgates, etc.). There is also a new umbrella RSO coordinating all of the different science RSOs—participated in the homecoming parade.
- The library staff are situating the library as a central place to provide innovative equipment and resources to facilitate collaboration and leaning, including non-textual formats (e.g., sound lab, 3D printing).
**Deans’ Perceptions re: Reorganization:** Although the goal of the meetings was not to talk about reorganization, several deans volunteered comments related to the reorganization process. Some made more comments about reorganization than others. Deans are quoted from the meeting notes, but the sources are not cited (and not presented in alphabetical or interview order), to protect their identities—individual deans/associate deans are indicated by letters representing their respective colleges.

- **College A:** “The proposed school looks like how professional practice is moving.”
- **A:** “Have to make sure everyone is respected—need to find ways.”
- **B:** “We are at a point of catastrophic inflection. Inaction is not an option.”
- **College B:** “There is not a single voice of dissent in the College of [insert college name]. The college has been moving into [insert academic area], and they are excited about the talent they are gaining. We have already begun to look at curriculum in anticipation of incoming units and faculty.”
- **College C:** [summary from notes] There is variability in reactions of faculty across units in this college. Some units are still grappling with their placement in the proposed structure. Other units are happy with their placement. The dean is working with chairs to develop alternate ideas that faculty can embrace, in areas where faculty are less enthusiastic about their placement in the proposed structure.
- **C:** “Nothing is wrong with reorganization—but we need to do it well. If we do it well, it will help us with recruitment.”
- **College D:** “Reorganization is going to succeed—it has to.” “Most of the college of [name omitted] is now placed in one school.” The dean talked about one program that is excited about being moved to another school/college, and another program is being moved but is a bit concerned about to being moved into a school with units that have more faculty and fewer students.
- **D:** “The Chancellor put something up there for people to talk about—like it or not. Trust is where people are weak.”
- **College E:** “Every unit asks for things and expects to be treated equally—not willing to wait their turn and give resources where there will be a greater return on investment.”
- **E:** “Faculty are working on what the vision/structure will be.”
- **E:** “A difference in attitudes can be seen between newer faculty and those who’ve been here longer—more junior faculty are more attuned to changes in higher education (who’s paying our salary).”
- **E:** “Faculty are afraid to speak up. Faculty are getting grants, developing innovative programs—not getting involved in these political discussions.”
- **E:** “Initial awareness of Chancellor Montemagno as an innovator, but that’s gotten lost in all of this.”
- **College F:** [Referring to faculty] “They have been active in taking possession of the proposals.” “When faculty come to the Chancellor, he listens and makes changes.”
- **F:** “Most faculty/departments are focused on where they will be placed in the restructured institution.”
- **F:** “Students have shared fears about not having departments. Others are excited about having access to faculty from other departments. Many students are anticipating the school structure to be positive.”
- **F:** “We would like to work with faculty to develop interdisciplinary projects that are grant funded.”
- **Dean F** talked about the benefits of rearranging the staff to be more supportive of faculty.
- **F:** “Moving forward, we need to create opportunities to foster collaboration—everybody coming together.”
- **College G:** “Although the college is going away, programs stay.” This Dean is continuing to actively engage in the activities of the college.
- **College H:** “This college is much happier with new reorganization proposal, which makes more sense than what had been proposed in the [insert name] report.”
- **H:** “If I took a straw poll, I think most of the faculty will accept the restructuring.”
- **H:** “The news is the farthest thing from the truth.”
- **College I:** “In our situation, there aren’t any big alternatives.”
- **I:** “I’m excited. (Referring to Delyte Morris) Look what a strong visionary leader did for this place.”
- **College J:** “[Insert college] faculty are already doing a lot of interdisciplinary collaborations across campus. Faculty are excited to see barriers come down.”
Suggestions from the Deans: There were a few general suggestions from the deans as they discussed various issues facing SIUC.

- The university should conduct enrollment-related research.
- One dean noted that the deans would like to see proactive budget planning (e.g., what to do when a college increases or decreases in enrollment).
- Many facilities are in need of upgrades (e.g., SIU Farms, Communications Building facilities from the 1950s)—the quality of facilities can be a factor in program rankings and accreditation.
- The Law school dean noted that they have good operating papers that respect the different disciplines.

Miscellaneous College Achievements and Events: Despite budget crises and other challenges, it appears to be “business as usual” among the highly talented and productive SIUC faculty. Faculty and students are actively involved in scholarly, research, teaching, artistic, and service activities—on campus, in the community, nationally, and internationally. Here are just a few examples shared by the deans—in alphabetical order. There is obviously much more going on than this, but our time (in the meetings) and space (in this memo) was limited.

- Ag: Forestry program is exceptional—2nd in the nation at the bachelor’s level. The graduate program is currently 14th in producing graduate students and could be ranked 5th if had the faculty to take on 5-6 more students.
- Ag has an excellent track record for grant-writing and publications, including a publication in *Nature*.
- CASA: Fall Research Symposium; Spring Flash Talk Program—this year inviting new school colleagues to promote synergy/collaboration in new schools involving CASA programs, inviting community members and high school students; CASA/VTI Alumni Reunion on Honors Day
- Engineering: The Robotics Team won its 2nd consecutive national competition. SIUC will be hosting the American Society of Civil Engineering Steel Bridge and Concrete Canoe Competition (4/19-21), organized by Engineering students and inviting high schools to participate.
- Law offers a two-day Women in Leadership workshop with guest speakers and awards for alumni.
- The Law School offers a partially grant-funded Business Boot Camp during the intersession.
- Law Student, Cody Benway, was selected for the prestigious Department of Justice Honors Program, through which he will serve in the Drug Enforcement Agency in Washington, DC.
- Law Student, Sheena Hart, was selected to participate in the Ms. JD NWLSO Leadership Academy at Harvard Law School.
- The Law School’s Legal Globalization and Comparative Law Program offers a semester-long course which culminates in a 10-day to 2-week study abroad experience in countries including Australia, Cuba, Germany, and South Africa.
- The Law School is a part of the Illinois Innocence Project, which is a collaboration between 4 state universities and all three public law schools in the state.
- MCMA Alumnus Steve James has been nominated for an Oscar this year for his feature length documentary. Alum Edgar Barens received an Oscar nomination for a short documentary in 2014.
- MCMA will be hosting the 40th Anniversary Big Muddy Film Festival.
- MCMA has had a successful and productive association for the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, and their Pulitzer Symposium brings renowned crisis reporters to campus each year.
- The Daily Egyptian is in its 101st year.
- Science: The Fermentation Science program is growing, and recently received a donation of a large still that will contribute significantly to their research. There is at least one industry partner who wants to collaborate for research and development.
- Science: Computer Science enrollment continues to increase (“busting at the seams”). They are developing three new programs in cyber security, graphics and gaming, and data science.
- Science: Geology Associate Professor, Justin Filiberto, has been appointed to NASA’s Planetary Advisory Committee.
- Science: Chemistry recently two large donations from alumni.