

Pre-Proposal for Informal Review by the University of Maine Faculty Senate Program Creation and Reorganization Review Committee

Transfer of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry and Agriculture.

Part I. Description of Proposed Changes

The Department will be moved to a new college. All members of the department will be retained and the teaching, research, and outreach missions of the unit will remain unchanged. The entire current base E&G budget, plus all associated scholarship, grants and endowment accounts will be transferred. Academic unit governance and promotion criteria will remain the same.

The idea and justification for this restructuring was articulated by President Robert Kennedy during his May 4th address to the campus. An excerpt of his presentation is included below.

"We absolutely must continue our focus on interdisciplinary program development.

I'll go so far as to say that much of the notable impact UMaine has created in recent years has come from that synergy that arises from these collaborations. This is the direction of higher education and science worldwide in 2010. UMaine is a recognized leader in interdisciplinary activities. We need to build on the collaborative programs we have and we need to create more.

Today, I'm announcing a new interdisciplinary structure that will capitalize on core strengths, provide opportunity in areas where there's job growth and student interest, and create new teaching and research collaborations in important fields, all while using existing resources.

We will create a University of Maine Division of Health and Biomedical Sciences (HBS), within the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture. This division will feature undergraduate educational opportunities paired with research programs related to health sciences. This structure will lead to new programs for our students while creating flexibility to adjust to the state's changing demographics, workforce needs and business opportunities.

I envision bringing together units with connections to health sciences including nursing, food science and human nutrition, social work, the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, and biomedically-related units such as the Department of Molecular and Biomedical Sciences. It will also include strong connections to the School of Biology and Ecology, biological engineering, psychology, chemistry and other units."

Part II. Concise Responses to Questions

CSD is presently an academic unit within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The unit offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Faculty members within CSD have research responsibilities as well. CSD manages the Conley Speech, Language and Hearing Center. The Conley Center provides clinical services to the general public while providing a venue for clinical teaching and research.

Benefits to moving CSD to NSFA are linked to concentrating most of UMaine's health and biomedical education and research programs into a single college. It is envisioned that this will foster student recruiting efforts through shared resources and coordinated efforts. Having the health-related programs linked may also assist students as they explore opportunities in different health-related fields and career choices. Opportunities for shared courses and seminars among the health profession programs will be explored. Increased collaborative research in the health sciences is anticipated. A steering committee appointed by President Kennedy is charged with exploring such options. CSD may also benefit as the department is co-located in Dunn Hall with the School of Nursing, a health science program currently in NSFA. These academic units may be able to share administrative staff, computer laboratories, clinical observation areas and other resources.

Discussions related to the proposed administrative changes were initiated by President Robert Kennedy in April 2010. Dean Hecker and Dean Ashworth were each informed about this proposal during separate meetings with the President and Provost. We were asked to consider the potential advantages and disadvantages of this action. Dean Hecker met with the CSD faculty and staff to inform them of the President's proposal. President Kennedy announced his plan to form a Division of Health and Biomedical Sciences and relocate CSD to NSFA on May 4, 2010. Dean Ashworth subsequently met with the CSD faculty and staff regarding the proposed relocation of unit to NSFA. There have been subsequent meetings and information exchange.

Faculty and staff within CSD would become associated with a new College. Their departmental affiliation would not change nor would their assigned duties. A list of personnel in CSD is provided below.

Allen, Marybeth*	Lecturer II in Communication Sciences
Booth, Amy Engler*	Staff Audiologist & Lecturer
Boyd, Margaret	Administrative Assistant II
Burgess, Susan*	Lecturer II in Communication Sciences
Hall, Nancy	Associate Professor, CSD
Mahan, Lorriann*	Lecturer III in Communication Sciences
Smith, Allan	Associate Professor, CSD
Smith, Susan	Asst. Professor, CSD
Stickles, Judith	Lecturer, Staff Pathologist
Walker, Judy	Associate Professor, CSD
Wasson, Luanne*	Secretary

* Conley Clinic

The department chair systematically polled CSD faculty regarding their support for relocating to NSFA. The Chair distributed a draft of the pre-proposal prepared for informal review by PCRRC and asked faculty and staff to provide her with “their positions relative to the proposed changes” via e-mail response. Of the ten CSD faculty and staff members polled, nine voted in favor of the proposed reorganization and one voted “neutral.”

Comments gathered in this process that arose against or in support of the proposed reorganization included:

- “I believe that there will be more opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration within this unit involving grant writing, class offerings and recruitment.”
- “I believe it would be much less confusing all around if the effective date would be July 1, 2011.”
- “I am sure that some CSD students might find having their degree coming from the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry and agriculture to be a bit off from their major in Communication Sciences and Disorders but that said, perhaps the folks graduating in Nursing had the same feeling.”
- “Seems like a done deal. I am neutral about it.”
- “I look forward to collaborations with other “clinical” programs.
- “I’m hopeful that the synergy President Kennedy described will actually occur.”
- “I hope that the central administration will provide support for the new division to enable potential collaboration to occur.”

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders has a significant staffing issue. In a 2009 report by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, the site visitors reported that they were unable to confirm compliance with standard 2.2 – *that the number of full-time doctoral-level faculty is sufficient*. At the time of the site visit, CSD had 3.75 tenure-stream faculty FTEs and it was reported as not being adequate to meet program needs. An additional full-time doctoral-level faculty position was recommended by the site visit team in their report. Since that time, a junior tenure-stream faculty member in CSD was not reappointed. Unless this position is filled, the program will be further out of compliance. A staffing plan that adds at least two doctoral level faculty members and brings CSD into compliance for accreditation needs to be developed and financed prior to the unit’s transfer to NSFA. CSD students can not practice unless they graduate from an accredited program. Thus, maintaining accreditation is crucial for our students, essential for the graduate program, and important to the state of Maine, which has a shortage of speech pathologists and audiologists.