

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

Transfer of the School of Social Work (SSW) from the College of Business, Public Policy and Health to the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry and Agriculture (NSFA).

Part 1. Description of Proposed Changes

The School of Social Work will be moved to a new college. All members of the school 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, grant 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 biomedical-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

SSW is presently an academic unit within the College of Business, Public Policy and Health. The unit offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Faculty members within SSW have research responsibilities as well. Several SSW faculty members are active in the Center on Aging and the Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

Benefits to moving SSW 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.

Discussions related to the proposed administrative changes were initiated by President Robert Kennedy in April 2010. Dean Mahon and Dean Ashworth were each informed about the proposal to relocate SSW and dissolve the College of Business, Public Policy and Health during separate meetings with the President and Provost. We were asked to consider the potential advantages and disadvantages of this action. Deans Mahon and Ashworth met with the SSW faculty and staff on May 3, 2010 to inform them of the President's proposal. President Kennedy announced his plan to form a Division of Health and Biomedical Sciences and relocate SSW to NSFA on May 4, 2010. Dean Ashworth subsequently met with Dr. Robin Russel and Dr. Gail Werrbach, the current and incoming Directors of SSW respectively, about the proposed relocation of SSW to NSFA. There have been subsequent meetings and information exchange.

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

Arnold, Robin	Administrative Assistant II
Deirdre Finney Boylan	MSW site coordinator
Butler, Sandra	Professor of Social Work
Depoy, Elizabeth	Professor of Social Work
Gilson, Stephen	Professor of Social Work
Kane, Victoria	Administrative Assistant II
Kaye, Leonard	Professor/Director
Kelly, Nancy	Field Coordinator Social Work
Russel, Robin	Professor of Social Work
Werrbach, Gail	Associate Professor of Social Work

Hutchinson Center

Kelly Ann Jaksa	Instructor Social Work
Susan Kaye	MSW Calais Site Coordinator
Elaine Oleary	Clerk- Typist

The school director polled the SSW full-time faculty (6) and professionals (3) about moving to NSFA. All three professionals (SSW field staff) found it acceptable to move to NSFA. Of the six full-time faculty members, four found this move acceptable and two faculty members abstained as they felt that they did not have sufficient information to make an informed decision. No arguments against the proposed change were identified.

The School of Social Work needs to fill two recent vacancies within the faculty to meet accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education. It is important that these searches be initiated prior to the scheduled accreditation review. A self-study is due August 1, 2011 with a site visit of the accreditation team to follow during the period November 2011-February 2012. The vacancies were created upon the departure of two faculty members. Dr. Cary Jenson applied for long-term disability and will not be returning to the faculty. SSW expects to be able to recruit to replace Dr. Jenson. In addition Dr. John (Jay) Peters retired at the conclusion of the 2009-2010 academic year. SSW was informed by BPPH that Dr. Peters' salary had been supported through using a portion of the Dean of BPPH's salary line and that funding to replace Dr. Peters is not available. Not refilling Dr. Peters' position, which was formerly a tenure-stream faculty line held by Dr. Diane Haslett, will result in SSW having one fewer tenure-stream FTE than required for accreditation. A commitment to fill the necessary faculty positions to maintain accreditation is critical.