

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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FROM: Faculty Senate Office, University of Massachusetts Amherst

SUBJECT: UMass reorganization plan to undergo Faculty Senate votes

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### **FACULTY SENATE TO VOTE ON CHANCELLOR'S REORGANIZATION PLAN**

*Faculty working hard to determine details of the plan before vote*

Whether to adopt each of the elements that comprise University Chancellor Robert C. Holub's academic reorganization plan will be the focus of the May 14 Faculty Senate meeting. Holub called for an examination of the structure of academic administration when it became apparent that the campus would be facing large cuts to its budget and needed to find ways to save money.

In a March 12 statement to the campus, Holub wrote that, during the conversation about restructuring, people began to consider how the university could best "position itself for the future," and he said the proposal under current consideration is only an initial step remaking the campus "to compete with the top public research institutions."

"The reorganization proposal is pretty complicated," said Ernest May, secretary of the Faculty Senate. "This is the biggest reorganization at UMass in 30-some years."

In his March 12 proposal, Holub called for consolidating much of the natural and applied sciences in a new College of Natural Sciences, after closing the current College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and the College of Natural Resources and the Environment, and for renaming the School of Public Health and Health Sciences as a college and adding the School of Nursing to it as an administrative unit. Other departments that he proposes to move are Resource Economics to the Isenberg School of Management, Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning to the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and Psychology to the new college.

"Things *have* been happening quickly," said Kathleen Debevec, chair of the senate's Academic Priorities Council, "[but] a lot of the details have to be worked out."

The council has heard from departments "that aren't feeling they are being placed in the right area," Debevec said. "There is debate about where these departments should be and concern about the processes needed to find the right place. They are telling us that where they are placed plays a big role in how they are viewed by their peers and by students. It affects their focus, how research is conducted, and the direction they want to go in."

“Also, many of the academic deans have expressed concern about the effect of these changes on students. There are so many *details* with students—different colleges have different requirements [for graduation]—it may take years to phase in. The difficulty in Working those things out can’t be overstated. People are working behind the scenes to see how to make it happen.”

“In the past, moving *one* department has been a fairly lengthy process,” said May. “There are letters from deans, memos of understanding etc., and this is a good idea because it gets people to talk about the details. By the time things got to the Faculty Senate meeting, all the ‘i’s had been dotted and the ‘t’s crossed. This is not going to be the case this time because it’s happening on such a large scale. There are a lot of moving parts, and it is possible that not all of the parts will have come to rest by the time we are scheduled to vote.”

In other business, the senate will be electing a presiding officer and a new delegate to the Board of Trustees.

The University’s principal administrative officers will offer updates on their areas of responsibility and take questions from the audience.

The meeting is at 3:30 p.m. in 227 Herter Hall and is open to the public.

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