

# University of Alberta for Tomorrow: Academic Restructuring

GFC June 22, 2020

Steve Dew

Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

# Overview

- Motivations for academic restructuring
- Current state
- What's feasible?
- Academic restructuring vs Service Excellence Transformation (SET)
- ARWG roles and timeline
- Constraints
- Draft principles and objectives
- Consultation and engagement

# Non-financial benefits of academic reorganization

- Opportunity to refocus on more forward-looking structures for scholarship and academic programming
- Smaller group of more engaged leaders at Deans' Council
  - More nimble, more strategic discussions
- More opportunities for collaboration, interdisciplinarity (fewer silos)
- Opportunity to rethink about the organization from a student perspective

# Financial benefits of academic reorganization

- There are economies of scale in administering larger units
- The costs to recruit, second, support leaders are reduced
  - Fewer professors taken away from teaching and research
- Can identify and potentially cut units that no longer support core focus
- More opportunities to consolidate courses and academic programs to find efficiencies in delivery and reduce duplication
- Greater potential for consolidating space and mothballing buildings
- Synergistic with SET initiative to create administrative efficiencies

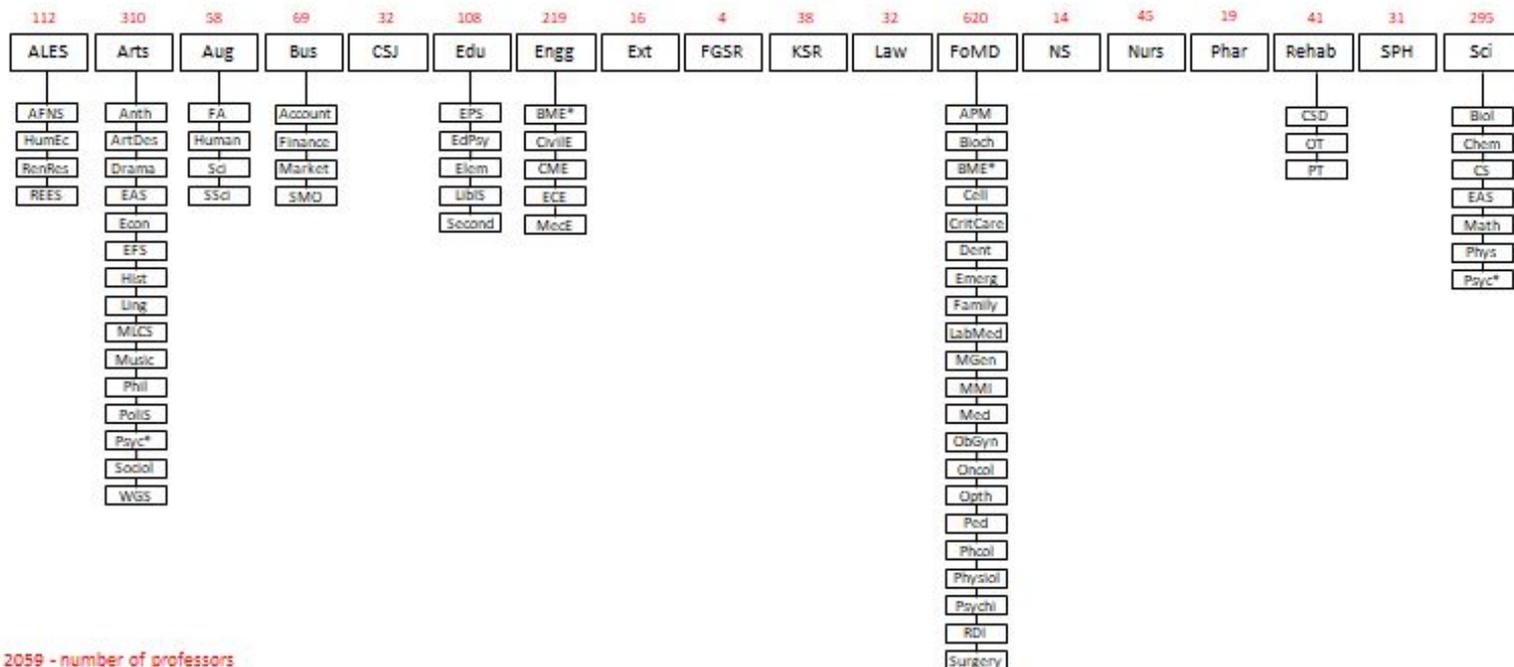
## Other Jurisdictions

- Many institutions have seen funding cuts of similar magnitudes (but usually not this suddenly)
- Our core funding (tuition + grant) is still U15 competitive
- US approach of raising tuition probably not feasible
- Ontario approach of increasing student:faculty feasible only in medium term
  - Lots of capacity for growth but government controlling expenditures
- Australia and UK provide examples of efficiency initiatives

# Current State

- 18 Faculties, 66 Departments, 82 Institutes
  - Highly variable in size, organization and division of responsibilities
  - Overly generalist people, nonstandard roles, highly transactional processes, little strategic function
- Compared to other Canadian institutions, we are at the more complex end of the organizational spectrum
- Faculties have long traditions and histories and roots to their external communities. Many staff identify strongly with their current units.

## Academic Structure

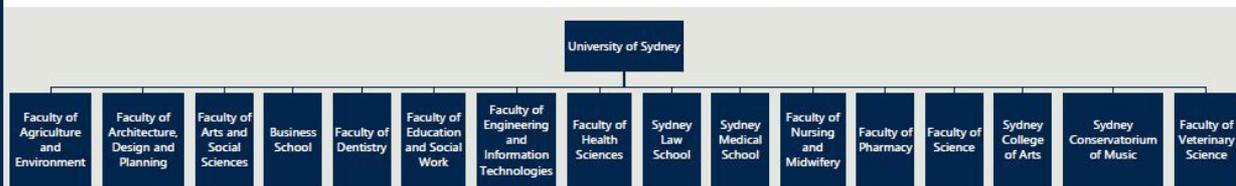


2059 - number of professors

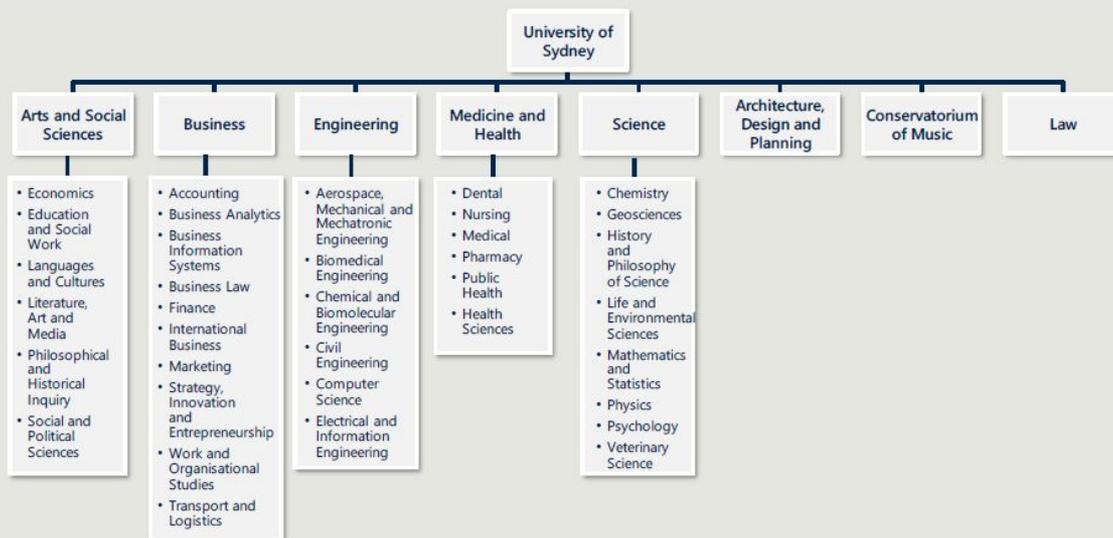
\*joint department

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

## PREVIOUS: SIXTEEN FACULTIES OR EQUIVALENT



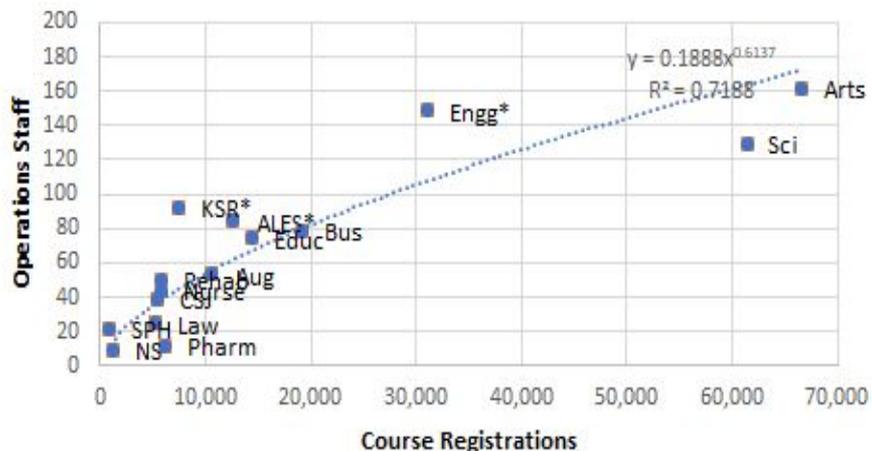
## CURRENT: FIVE FACULTIES AND THREE SCHOOLS



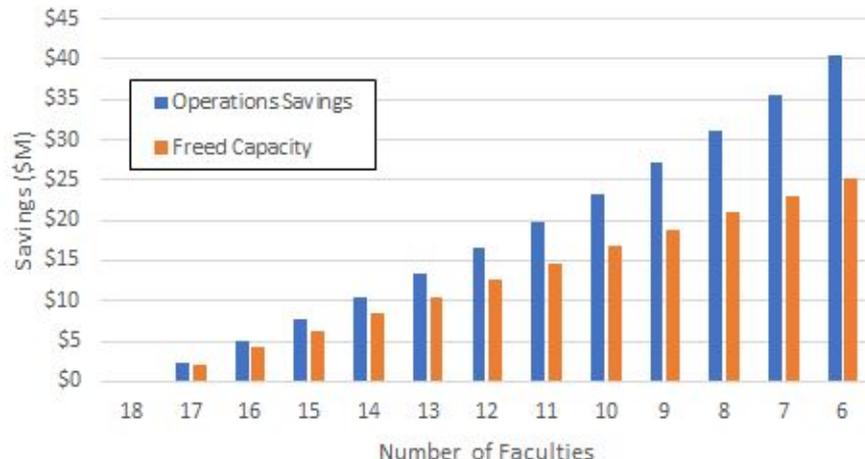
# Operational Efficiency Modelling

Operations = HR, finance, external relations, governance, general administration, facilities management, IT, research + teaching admin

### Operations Staff vs Teaching



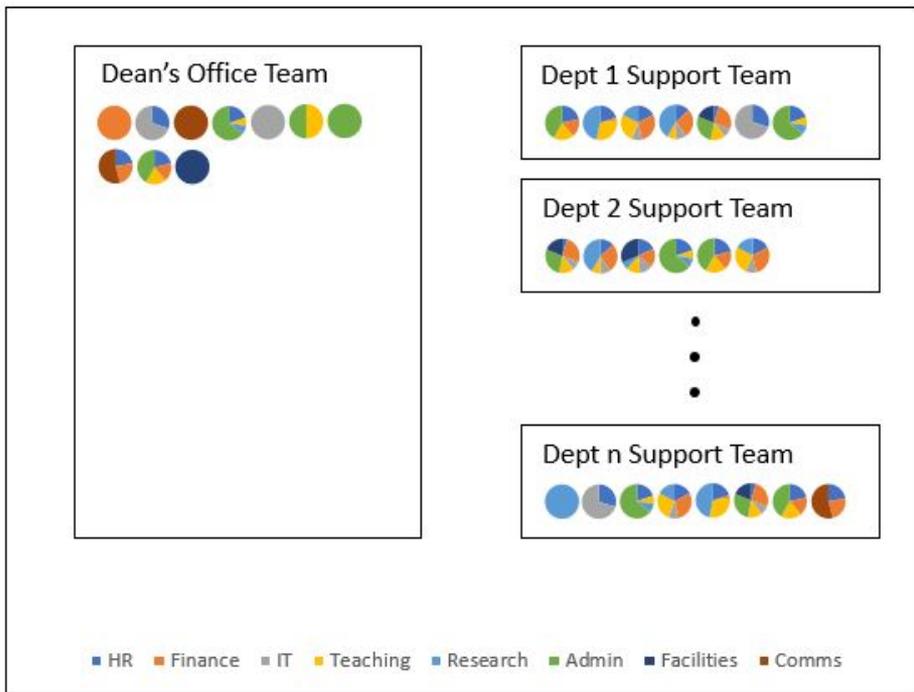
### Operations Savings and Released Capacity (excl. FoMD)



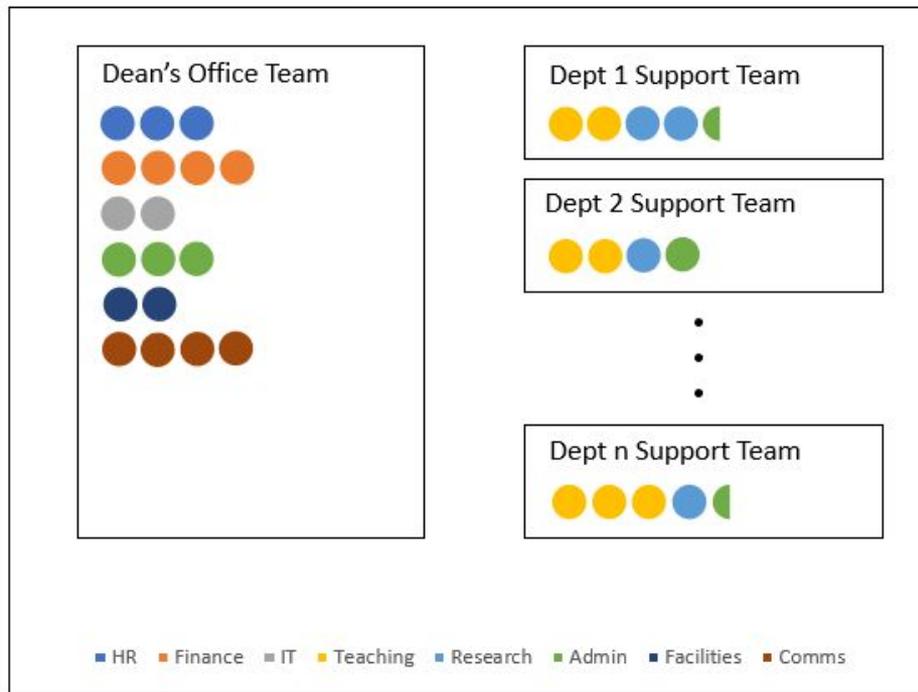
## Service Excellence Transformation vs Academic Restructuring

- Academic Restructuring creates economies of scale, opportunities for a reset of the support model including standardization of roles and processes, reduction of number of players to coordinate
- SET exploits economies of scale, standardization of processes to simplify workflows, automate processes, reduce bureaucracy, find efficiencies and improve quality of service
- Coordination between initiatives will be essential, but the processes themselves are highly complementary

## Embedded Support Model



## Aligned Support Model



## Academic Restructuring Working Group

- Group of deans, chairs, academics, students charged with developing a proposal and leading consultation. Led by Provost
- Environmental review by consultant (Nous Group)
- Three phases anticipated, each with consultation round
  - Stage setting and development of principles (May-June)
  - Development of ~3 viable scenarios (June-Sept.)
  - Refinement to final proposal (Oct.-Nov.)
- Once structure is approved, need to build implementation/staffing plan
- Aiming for July 1, 2021 implementation

# Constraints

- The magnitude of necessary change will make many very uncomfortable.
- Any vertical cuts will need to comply with collective agreements.
- AE Minister is conducting a system review which could dictate academic focus or force institutional consolidation/coordination
- Government may expect a say in any budget or reorganization plan
- Budget constraints mandate very quick action
- COVID 19 crisis will complicate consultation

# Highlights of Draft Principles

- Explicitly reference the Vision, Mission, and Values in *For the Public Good*.
- Additional principles include:
  - A consultative approach, with regular engagement of GFC and the Board
  - The importance of expediency
  - The importance of data-informed decision-making
  - Acting in the best interests of the institution
  - EDI

# Objectives:

- Position the University for future success
  - Resources for teaching and research
  - Collaboration and interdisciplinarity
  - Consistency, agility, alignment of academic structures
- Reducing costs
  - Reducing the number of academic units
  - Reducing the number of academics in leadership roles
  - Reducing duplication and consolidating business functions

# Consultation and Engagement

- Early opportunities to learn more and send input and ideas:
  - UAT website: [www.ualberta.ca/uofa-tomorrow](http://www.ualberta.ca/uofa-tomorrow)
  - Email address: [provost@ualberta.ca](mailto:provost@ualberta.ca) (for now)
- There will be many opportunities for discussion and engagement on this process.
- We welcome ideas, questions, and input from all stakeholders.
- Final proposal will be presented to GFC and the Board for approval.

**Questions?**