

# University of Alberta for Tomorrow Feedback

September 21 - October 21

Below are comments shared by members of the U of A community in response to the [Academic Restructuring Working Group's Interim Report](#). All feedback shared through the UAT website ([Interim Report Feedback Form](#) and [UAT Feedback Form](#)) is, and will continue to be, shared with the Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG) for consideration as they refine and revise the proposed scenarios. A list of all University of Alberta for Tomorrow (UAT) consultations is available on the [UAT website](#).

Responses to frequently asked questions and comments can be found on the [UAT FAQ website](#), and in regular [UAT Updates](#) from President Flanagan, Provost Dew, and SET Executive Lead Rob Munro.

## General Questions and Comments

I think this is a great step, let's also put work into being financially sustainable while being environmentally sustainable.

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EDI is one of the guiding principles of University of Alberta for Tomorrow. However there is no mention at all of whether and how EDI positions and initiatives within Faculties will be incorporated into the proposed scenarios. The University recently cut back on EDI positions, and in the past year Faculties have recruited EDI leaders to champion and implement EDI efforts within Faculties. Will these positions and efforts continue under the proposed restructuring? If so, where will EDI positions within faculties be located? Still within faculties? In 'divisions'? If these positions are lost, this will have an enormous negative impact on EDI efforts at the University of Alberta.

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The focus needs to be less on cost, and more on value. Everything we do should be asking one simple question: "how is this affecting our teaching and our research". We also need to be focused on how the proposed changes will affect the revenue generating capacity of the University as well, so far we have only heard about the cost side of things.

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When looking at the UK or Australian post-secondary systems we know that they are about 5-10 years behind North America in their fundraising efforts. So how are you evaluating the contribution of Advancement in the new structure?

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Have you considered moving to a quarter system instead of a semester system. I'm thinking of the U of California system as an example. It seems to me that an additional term would contribute additional revenue. It also provides more opportunities for students to explore more diverse topics. I think there could be pedagogical and academic benefits, as well as benefits for well-being. <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/semesters-trimesters/>

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Will alumni be consulted about the change in university structure, how do you think they will feel connected to a "newly named" faculty especially if the department that they graduated from no longer exists. How are transformational donations going to happen without such connected and invested donors?

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I have a few general comments/suggestions (beyond academic & administrative restructuring) that the UAT leadership might consider thinking about:

1. We have been a leader in Canada when it comes to MOOCs. Some like Dino 101 have been immensely popular. How about we start making some money out of online education now? Comparable public universities like UW Seattle, CU Boulder, UMN Twin Cities, etc have been closely partnering with platforms like Coursera, edX, Udemy to offer paid courses & certifications. Given our size & depth, we can easily make something around \$10 million a year through this stream.

2. Many American public universities depend on their athletics as a major revenue stream. The University of Michigan athletic program makes about \$100 million per year from ticketing, telecast rights, and merchandising. SFU in BC joined the NCAA a decade ago and started reaping a major windfall immediately. We have excellent athletic programs (both Golden Bears & Pandas) that would easily pull \$10 million a year if we joined the NCAA. It would also bring athletic scholarships and stop talented local western Canadian students from going down south to attend college.

3. Corporate training & executive MBA programs are big sources of revenue for many smaller schools like York. We can certainly re-furbish and market attractive programs for the oil & gas industry through our world-class business school to bring in another additional \$5 million a year...

That's \$25 million right there, with some smart planning, packaging, and polishing!

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Voluntary Severance should be considered for this unique undertaking. Although UAlberta has identified voluntary severance does not have as large of cost savings, it is more important to keep staff who are committed to building a new positive culture rather than keep those who may already be half way out the door. I am nervous to "survive" the cuts, but then be left with only those folks who have jaded attitudes about the institution. Voluntary Severance should not only be offered to older employees, but be made available to everyone

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I attended GFC [in September]. I would like to disagree with the final comment that "what we heard today was that GFC disagrees". I heard maybe 15-20 people express disagreement to many different parts of this change, but without hearing from every member of GFC I think it is overgeneralizing to say GFC disagrees. I am so very concerned about "group think" that I see on both sides and I think without perspective taking we end up in a confirmation bias that I do not think will help UAlberta deliver its vision and mission. I am in favour of change, but I struggle to see which of these alternatives will actually improve my wellbeing as a faculty member at

UAlberta so that I can enact the mission. Which of these scenarios will return my teaching load to 4 instead of 5? Which of these scenarios will reduce the number of forms I need to fill out to graduate a PhD? Which of these scenarios will recognize the work associated with holding a tri-council grant? When we say "The University delivers its vision" we're using an anthropomorphism - the university can't do anything without the faculty and staff. Those are the real nouns that can put a verb into action. I think we need to focus less on transforming the U and more on transforming the people who actually do the work of the university.

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The University of Alberta vision and mission includes academics and collegial governance as well as representation via ASSUA. I find it unthinkable that UAT is proceeding without more input from professors and academics. It is clear that ASSUA and professors MUST have a seat at the table for UAT if the process is to be well informed and collegial, but also respected by students and the public as well as competitor institutions. If U of A is to stand competitive, it needs the input of academics and ASSUA at the table. I am deeply concerned that university leadership and process would exclude academics (ASSUA) from a massive restructuring and change process such as UAT. It will be to the detriment of the public university and institution to omit professors and their bargaining unit from this process. It also undermines any confidence in our senior leadership and changes being wrought by a forced and disempowering process. Even if UAT is proceeding fast, it MUST include ASSUA at the table. To do otherwise is anti-democratic and will lead to disunity and poor outcomes that are detrimental to the whole institution. It creates too many blind spots and erodes U of A's reputation internally and externally.

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We need to restructure the academic salary process. We cannot "ride" merit across our whole careers; it should expire after some number (10?) of years and we should be compensated by rank with, say, 10-years of cumulative merit. All other public sectors have salary caps, but we don't and that's got to be a big part of why our institution's finances are unsustainable. It makes for a disincentive to retire, and robs younger people of deserved Assistant Professor positions, and a chance for us to truly commit to EDI by bringing new faces and experiences to the University.

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It seems that ARWG is likely to take the path of least resistance and avoid fundamental changes to Faculty and Departmental structures, apart from the Dean level. While this may seem like the right choice as it minimizes alienating academic staff. The end result is likely to be that changes to administrative processes/structure don't achieve the required savings as the new administrative processes/structures will not meet the unique needs of the Faculties and Departments. If the University wants to get the value out of administrative restructuring, academic restructuring

needs to be done in a way that means that relatively standardized services effectively support academic missions.

A re-org of Academic and Admin Structures without cultural and behavioural changes will not lead to much progress.

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In light of the unprecedented budget situation, a mass consolidation of faculties is probably a good idea. Personally, I agree with the 3 large faculties approach to restructuring, out of the 3 possibilities currently being considered.

However, I feel there are additionally a handful of vertical cuts that should be considered and probably are not yet being considered. While I believe the U of A provides world-class education in many subjects, the sad and unfortunate reality of modern education is that there are a non-trivial amount of sub-disciplines (naturally marketing themselves as providing essential life skills) which, after 2-8 years, leave many of their students indebted (with a poor return-on-investment outlook), depressed, nihilistic, and chronically and pathologically resentful of their own society. Why, in a situation like this, would we risk reducing quality of education in nearly all subjects to protect our most dubious offerings?

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Yes - please do not be deterred by the naysayers. Many of us are encouraged by the restructuring. It is long overdue.

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We need to have more senior professors teaching first year courses and undergraduate courses. When I was at Yale, the best professors were expected to teach the undergrads because they were paying big money to be there. Parents called and made sure their kids were getting access to the researchers. We should have the same culture here. At this university, we "reward" research and admin by almost eliminating large-scale teaching. It does not make sense.

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Didn't this absolutely mangle the university experience for the University of Sydney who underwent restructuring under the same company's direction? Is it worth making the university so much more impersonal?

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Financial viability and accessibility of programs should be paramount, as this helps ensure that government budget cuts aren't passed on to students in the form of tuition increases. As a current student who has pursued both undergraduate and professional degrees at the UofA (in the Faculty of KSR, and Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry), I wholeheartedly support reducing the number of faculties as a cost-saving measure.

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Slow down!! The first thing that should have been addressed was pushing back with the provincial government with their unreasonable cuts, with too little time. And more push back and argument should be happening/have happened in light of the pandemic we are in. It is very shameful to lay people off during a pandemic. No huge university restructure should be done in this unprecedented time. People's mental health is very sensitive right now. More consideration and respect needs to be shown for the workers at the university. This is not about the almighty dollar.

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The student experience is front and foremost - ensure that the possible impacts to students is conveyed - what does it mean for current students to graduate from a merged faculty? Do they go from having a diploma in engineering to one in "insert faculty name here"? On top of COVID and remote learning, loss of connection, how is student wellness being addressed?

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I feel it was a mistake to hold the town hall regarding the U of A for Tomorrow before the town hall about SET. The employees of the University understand that change is necessary, but based on the questions asked at the town hall it is clear that employees need to know about their future at the University first. It's difficult to worry or even care about what will happen to the Faculties sense of self and community in the future, when we all feel it's unlikely we will be a part of it. The complete disregard for the anxieties placed upon staff facing unemployment by committees filled with people completely safe and comfortable in their knowledge of their continued future at the University is inexcusable. The Board of Governor's Chair Kate Chisholm would like for us to accept and move on, but this is out of touch with reality. I am sure it is much easier to "move on" when you know that your employment is safe, and I am disappointed in knowing that our upper administration could be so cruel and out of touch. Perhaps if you were concerned about feeding your families you could also understand why employees are more focused on SET and the importance of being clear regarding changes to administrative staff.

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The lack of NASA and AASUA representative at both ARWG and SET is very concerning, given that the effects of academic and administrative structuring would be felt by support staff. University has fallen short on communication and transparency with NASA and AASUA absent from the table. I would like the University to let us know when NASA and AASUA will be allowed at the table; when will support staff find out about layoffs; and will support packages provided to staff that will be laid off.

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Not a question but a comment about the town hall in relation to the Academic Working group. I am concerned that support staff may have too strong a voice in matters that are largely academic. I appreciate their concerns over job loss but I find that input is largely focused on preserving the status quo and it is not useful to re-imagining the university.

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Yes, more tailored town halls - academics, vs support staff vs students. I'd like to hear the concerns of professors as we are the primary ones who deliver the core of the university mandate - teaching and research. Yes support staff are needed but academic re-organization is about academics first and not about support first.

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It was really disappointing to hear how the chair of the board of governors- Kate - spoke about the people who work at the university, I found it very upsetting to hear that I was not entitled to feel what I feel and that I should just get on with and if I couldn't do this then she would do it for me - this lack of understanding of humanity and the humanness of education and the importance of this concept is a great disappointment and it makes me wonder what she sees as the role of a university and education in community. I would suggest connecting with how education can make a profound difference to life maybe by reading the pedagogy of the oppressed would be a good starting point and then acknowledging that we are all able to do our jobs despite how we might feel - this concept is known as emotional intelligence and maybe education on this would help with understanding how professionals and professors work.

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Feedback: Thoughexchange as a forum for a Town Hall meeting is not working. There is no consolidation of ideas in the platform (as one would hope such a "machine learning" approach would take, and after encouraging everyone to write thoughts, there is massive duplication. Reading out some of these is inefficient and, for example in today's Academic Restructuring townhall, led to mostly to questions about the SET. More insight needs to go into this. Real issues are not addressed through this platform. If you want to use something like this, there needs to be a very limited number (e.g., 20 instead of 900) re-submitted questions that could be voted on.

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Make a condo community in the NW corner of the North Campus and get that \$\$ by selling condos with a sweet river valley view and charging condo fees, like this one:

<https://www.polyhomes.com/community/eton/>

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Please do not force the university into a position where its main academic governing body rejects the restructuring plan and the BoG goes ahead anyways. This would be disastrous for the future of the university.

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The cost of tenure track faculty needs more immediate attention - salary caps would be a good start. Even the massive downsizing of the admin support and teaching faculty that is well underway, will not save the UA for tomorrow. Unless tenure track faculty are currently teaching, they are really removed from the downsizing reality.



## Academic Restructuring

I think the idea of the 3 tri-council arranged divisions sounds interesting. However, why make them divisions and not just faculties? It seems like a division is adding another layer of administration, when we are trying to reduce administration. If this is not the case, the AWRG needs to explicitly outline how this approach will achieve the desired cost savings.

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Under no circumstances should Arts be merged with Science. These are little like oil and water being mixed. The teaching loads are different, the way research is conducted is different, the way we treat graduate students/teaching is different. The undergraduate research courses are unique and part of science culture. This will diminish the view that Science at the U of A is serious - a little like the U of Toronto where Science is merged with Arts and is a definite second tier research endeavor compared to Medicine at the U of T. Alignment along Tri-council lines ignores the need to have multi-disciplinary research. What about those people who are both CIHR and NSERC funded? This division make no practical sense.

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Seems like things are leaning towards scenario B, if this is the final restructuring plan, could the School of Dentistry be it's own Faculty and be at the same level as Pharmacy and Nursing for accreditation purposes? A Faculty designation would not cost anymore but is required for accreditation approval and allow U of A to maintain the high standard reputation it has.

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I have looked at all of the scenarios and believe that any of these should be viable. What worries me, and it has for some time, is that human nutrition and especially the Dietetics Specialization program is placed in a faculty that is totally unrelated to human nutrition. The majority of students in human nutrition or dietetics specialization are working towards becoming a Registered Dietitian and working in health care. Therefore, in this restructuring, it seems valuable to place it within the Health Science or Health Science and Medical Science faculty in each of the scenarios. If human nutrition remains outside of this new faculty, the valuable interdisciplinary contacts and classes are more likely to be lost or at least the work to maintain them, will be challenging. This specialization does need some contact and classwork in the area of food preparation and food safety, but this could be linked to the staff in ALES with that expertise.

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Maintaining FoMD as is, without grouping it in with other health professions is critical for the ongoing success of this large program. If FoMD is grouped in with other programs, further damage to the medical and auxiliary health professional programs will likely occur. Do not let

cuts from the UCP to the U of A compound the damage that is currently being done to our healthcare system.

Even if some administrative duties are spread between health care professional programs, a certain degree of autonomy needs to be maintained.

The need for autonomy with programs such as Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy are critical. Not only is autonomy required for accreditation purposes, it is imperative to help maintain key external relationships. The needs between health professional programs are unique compared to other undergraduate science/arts programs. We also need to ensure that these programs are maintained as they serve an underserved population in our community. The School of Dentistry for example serves thousands of patients that would not otherwise be able to see a dentist, which builds in other societal costs if the School was negatively impacted.

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I am concerned about the viability of the three standalone campuses in Scenario B. I do not think it is to Augustana's benefit to be so separate from the rest of the U of A. I am also concerned about the lack of a position on the Executive Dean's Council. I fear that sidelining Augustana in this way will lead to its ultimate demise. I do not think Augustana needs to be a faculty, however, I think it is important that it remain a campus. I would encourage the committee to explore more options that would see Augustana integrated more into the University.

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I would like to know how the UofA will make Augustana and the other 'small' units of CSJ and Native Studies appealing to students when being looked at alongside the 'big 3' of Scenario B (assuming that is what they go with... it seems to be the way they are leaning)? The money and appeal of the 'big 3' I think will make us naturally less appealing and work needs to be done from all ends to ensure we remain relevant.

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How would Scenario B impact cross-over researchers working between these divisions?  
Otherwise.... looks exciting!

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It is not clear how (if) EDI is addressed in the three proposed models. In particular, for the second option (which seems to be the direction we are heading), there is no mention of a role for "associate/vice dean for outreach or diversity". For many Faculties (particularly STEM fields), this is especially significant. Not including a prominent role for EDI (at the same level as other

associate Deans) would imply that we are more concerned about academic and research, and EDI initiatives are secondary issues.

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I feel that the only acceptable one, as in it is the only one that doesn't completely disrupt current students and staff, is scenario A. Both B and C are completely outrageously terrible and would harm the current culture and learning environment that I love about the University of Alberta. I strongly urge the UofA for Tomorrow team to implement scenario A.

The President is correct that the U o A needs restructuring especially at the Faculty level. For example; a lot of European Universities have there applied sciences as one faculty. At the U of A it makes perfect sense that ALES be part of the Faculty Science. Also the U of A needs to start looking at changing or adding fields of study, I was inspired by Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, I took a trip to these countries touring their universities, within their heath sciences and sciences faculty some of there main studies focused on tackling environmental issues from rising sea waters to finding ways to reuse plastic in space to developing machines that collect plastic in oceans not to mention taking food waste and converting to animal feed for agriculture.

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None of the three scenarios discusses administration of the graduate admissions, graduate funding allocation decisions, or awards or placements for graduate students. Centralizing FGSR will not centralize these functions which as a matter of practical necessity must be done within departments. Someone must oversee and coordinate these decisions. As no Assoc. Chair Grad. Studies positions are included in any of the scenarios, the role would appear to fall to chairs of consolidated academic departments, enormously increasing the burdens upon them. This seems to me to be completely unworkable. How is this challenge to be addressed?

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How is interdisciplinary research and teaching supported within the models - which still create silos between health, natural science, and social sciences? How will these models coordinate with the current funding model?

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I really like scenario B. It is such a natural alignment. As a member of the Science Faculty, we work with Engineers all the time, and it has always felt strange that we are separated by a faculty border. Sometimes we've even had to use "backdoor tricks" to pursue collaborative research because of the barriers erected by the faculties. I could share many stories. Scenario B could really lift some of these barriers in addition to the administrative saving it would provide. That's really exciting.

That said, Scenario C really does NOT work for me. I don't want to be lumped with Arts, I would much prefer ENGG. There is so much common benefit we would get by being closer to our collaborators in Engineering. Linking Science with Arts feels like a more-or-less random

alignment that comes only from old, crusty traditions and does not reflect the modern university and what really happens here.

In addition, as pointed out, Scenario B is in Tricouncil alignment and I think that strengthens us and will increase efficiency.

Scenario B: Great, I love it!

Scenario C: please, please no!

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The entire professoriate should be represented on the Executive Dean Council (or its equivalent) and that the representation should be somewhat linked to the relative sizes of professoriate levels. This can and should have some consideration of EDI and optics, so it should not be a strict representation.

Any AR that creates a new level of administration should have specific limits on its growth and should have specific structures that reinforce collegial governance, as opposed to reduce it.

The Tri-council alignment aspect of Scenario B should be considered a non-starter as it would leave us locked into a system from the past.

The ARWG needs to come up with a scenario that does not consolidate large existing faculties that have achieved economies of scale and one that maintains representative membership on a reduced size Executive Dean Council (~8-10 members).

What is the expected administrative activity load on Faculties, especially those that are on the smaller side?

Why are Arts and Sciences being consolidated in Scenario C of the ARWG interim report given the current size and administrative efficiencies achieved in both Faculties?

How does the ARWG expect single Associate Deans will be able to be responsible for faculties bigger than Arts and Sciences are now, given that the current Associate Deans (at least in Science) have needed deputized ADs to meet the current workload.

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According to the Interim Report of the ARWG, the Faculty of Science does 23% of all the teaching, holds 21% of all the research grants, but accounts for only 8% of the operations spending.

If the Faculty of Science is already very efficient, why does it have to turn into something different (scenario 2 favoured by the ARWG), adding new administrative layers and leadership by a (very likely) non-scientist Executive Dean, possibly losing the features that make it great?

If some faculties have already achieved efficiency at scale, I'd suggest concentrating on bringing those who are not in that position to the same level of efficiency by applying best practices from the Faculty of Science and possibly by re-organization via the Division or Faculty Merger model. Don't try to fix what's not broken, especially if you'd like to continue improving UofA's position in the worldwide rankings.

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I think route A with amendments is the best course of action. I do not want to see Science and Arts lumped together as one faculty as purposed with route C. I do not see the synergy that has been proposed and do not see the advantage this merger has as a current graduate student in the Science faculty. Route A could be changed to include mergers with the faculty of Science with parts of ALES and certain FoMD programs.

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First, thanks for providing this opportunity for feedback. I will be succinct given that the ARWG likely has thousands of responses to read through. (1) Must all restructuring be done at once? Could the first step be conglomeration of the many small Health Sciences-oriented units, and then knowledge gained from how that went (including unforeseen side effects) can be used for subsequent, more major restructuring? (2) Any restructuring that results in the Faculty of Science being larger than it currently is will make administration even more unwieldy and will require addition of more Associate Deans or some other level of admin. At most, Science can take on a few colleagues with highly relevant research areas from units such as Renewable Resources without becoming too bloated.

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It has been clearly said and understood that the process of restructuring would achieve considerable changes to the administrative sector of U of A, aiming to reduce the very heavy expenses in that area.

However, when one sees the extra step of having divisions to group the different faculties, it seems that there will be more rather than less administrative steps/bureaucracy?

We have faculties with deans and chairs with their administrative offices, and then other deans and their offices for each division will be added. My question is how does that help to simplify, how is that efficient?

Thanks in advance for clarifying at some point, as many in the community do not understand this.

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It is essential to conserve CSJ's academic, administrative, and cultural independence and uniqueness. Please consider the federated model for CSJ and other community studies faculties.

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I have a question about option B for restructuring (i.e., big tri-council faculties). I understand that having larger faculties will save on admin costs but I also saw in the document that each sub-faculty (e.g., business, law, education etc) would retain deans and chairs. So my question is this - how does this option actually put deans and chairs back in the classroom? My understanding was that having fewer deans and chairs in admin positions (and back in the classroom) would be another way of making us more teaching efficient (and help us save money).

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What is the breakdown of the potential cost saving currently outlined in the interim report? Please outline in more detail the distinct roles of executive deans, vice deans and deans of students. Are we not going to have to pay more money for these hire positions and take away jobs of way more support staff doing excellent work?

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I believe, for the benefit of all, option b makes the most sense practicality wise. the other scenarios just don't seem as organized and cohesive.

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I support option/scenario B, it makes sense and is the most efficient plan out of all of them

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The ARWG should present only options that would allow reducing operating expenses by the required amount (about \$100 million within 3 years ?).

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For years, I have watched Augustana duplicate courses being offered on main campus, with much lower class sizes, and at what I presume is a much higher cost. Courses that on main campus are taught in classes of 100 students have been taught at Augustana with classes of 20 students. The cost savings of closing Augustana or absorbing it into the existing faculties are obvious, and yet it seems protected. It would be enormously appreciated if an honest answer regarding the protected status of Augustana could be made public. Is this a requirement of the government, and if so, could we please just acknowledge this?

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Grouping faculties is the same as across-the-board budget cuts. That style of cut weakens excellence. The time for those style of cuts has long passed. To seriously cut our budget we have

to do less. That means cutting something large. Vertical cuts. Make a decision and cut something to improve what is left behind.

Feedback #1: The 3 options fail to meet the lofty initial goals of the ARWG. This outcome looks like this group used sticky-notes and a whiteboard to decide how to re-arrange the various academic units. Creating a new level of 'executive oversight' of monster faculties is going to ADD costs, not cut costs. One more layer is going to slow things down, not speed them up. Aren't we already supposed to have an 'oversight' layer above the faculties? If we create "executive Deans" why don't we cut the VPs, AVPs, AAVPs, etc, etc?

Feedback #2: The proposal to "release" faculty members back to research and teaching makes the absolutely false assumption that the admin work that they currently do will go away after a merger. For example, merging Ales+Engineering+Science will apparently take 20+28+38 'Academic Admin Positions' and reduce them somehow to save millions of dollars? That is just nonsense. After years of budget cuts, and budget re-allocations to central admin, these 'Academic Admin Positions' have already been streamlined. Merging faculties is not going to make the admin work go away.

Feedback #3: If the goal is to reduce faculties, why weren't the obvious ones reduced: FGSR, Extension, Augustana, Native Studies, FSJ? None of these need to be full "faculties".

Feedback #4: Given our newfound understanding of remote learning, why wasn't consideration given to merging programs with our sister university down the road? That would have been innovative and transformative.

Feedback #5: Given the threat by the Chair of the BOG at the recent GFC meeting, why is so much of our time being wasted on this sham consultation? It is clear to anyone who reads these documents that Admin has decided what it wants to do, and is going through the 'motions'. Just go ahead and get this over with.

Feedback #6: Lost in the noise of all this re-organization is your own data that shows dumping menial tasks on 'generalists' (faculty members) is inefficient. Admin should consider that when 'empowering' generalist faculty members with dozens of tasks that would more efficiently be completed by specialists. Think travel claims, expenses, grant management, reporting, OHS, payroll, etc etc. Want more efficiency? start there.

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In merging faculties, we cannot cut profs or instructors!! If we have to get rid of jobs, please make them administrative one. We need academics in all areas, including/especially the underfunded Faculty of Arts.

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1) It is critical that we protect early career (non-tenured) faculty throughout the budget cuts/restructuring process. These Assistant Professors/early career faculty members are the future of the U of A and are on the "bleeding edge" of teaching and research. They are also extremely vulnerable to the effects of budget and salary cuts. Furthermore, it how early career faculty members are treated and succeed at the U of A will effect who applies for academic/research positions in the future. 2) Scenario A > Scenario B >> Scenario C. The Faculty of Science should be distinct from Engineering, and has little/no overlap with the Arts.

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The decision to leave CSJ and Augustana largely untouched is a lost opportunity to make a real structural change. Especially because of the enormous infrastructure costs associated with running these specialized institutes, they cannot be left to the status quo. In discussing with, for example, students who went through CSJ, they indeed loved it, for the reason it gave them opportunities not afforded to the majority of our students: "It was the only time in my life I had my own bathroom," (regarding the residences there); and "The class sizes are so much smaller" -- an opportunity we cannot afford to give our whole undergraduate population, it seems unfair that we give it to this small number of students. If they want that highly personalized experience, they should be going to small, liberal arts type institution, not the flagship public university in our province. In a world of decreasing budgets, we cannot be both, and we need to decide who we are. We can offer community opportunities on main campus, but we can't pour all of our resources into these few while cutting the student experience of so many others -- many others who also belong to marginalized communities, who find their communities on main campus through vibrant student organizations.

CSJ and Augustana should to be brought to main campus and made part of the larger community. Their identity can be retained, but identity does not equal access to their own buildings and other infrastructure.

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Widen your scope from the limits of the x amount of universities you have looked at - you are trying to copy something instead of reimagining. Also - SLOW DOWN! Finally - in SO many of the examples they list unique departments as distinct (ie: music). We lose all distinction (except in heavily funded HEALTH/MEDICINE who get distinct areas retained). As a prof in a small department I feel completely buried and undervalued/represented in the broad "Arts and Science" or "Arts, Business, Law, Education" - these are TOO big and too broad. Some awareness/representation of our importance/significance would be great. I suggest looking at a School of Fine Arts for Music/Art&Design/Drama as one example, and make it a flagship for this university. We have NO representation in most of this report.

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I am a postdoc in [redacted for privacy], but before I was a visiting graduate student doing my PhD research at the UofA. I have always wondered why there were so many different faculties that are all part of health sciences, because the university I did my undergrad and medical degrees in had a fewer faculties. Therefore, I wanted to share my experience. I went to medical school at Ghent University in Ghent, Belgium at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. This faculty covers: medicine, dentistry, biomedical sciences, rehabilitation medicine and kinesiology, physical education and sports medicine, speech therapy and audiological sciences. Ghent University does have a separate Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, while there is no university-level nursing program in Belgium.

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As a faculty member in Science, of the 3 scenarios presented, the one that makes the most sense is the Tri-Council-motivated merger. There is already significant course and research overlap between Science, Engineering and Ales. The three should be put together.

It makes absolutely no sense to me to put Science with Arts and ALES with Engineering. Yes, I know that U. Toronto has a Faculty of Arts and Science. But, if the point of this exercise is to cut costs, this in part means avoiding duplications particularly in course offerings.

Students should easily be able to move their degree around disciplines (e.g. from interests in environmental science to explore specialization whether in Agriculture, Civil Engineering, Biological Sciences, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences, etc). Moving within a Faculty is much easier than across Faculties.

Faculties inevitably put up silos, which most people agree is deleterious to research progress. I hope the university takes this unprecedented opportunity to remove these barriers and consolidate into a small number of faculties as in the Tri-Council option.

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Adding in executive leadership from outside a post-secondary institution and team them in with our academic staff to allow these merged business units (super faculties) to work like a they are supposed to.

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Out of the 3 plans, Plan C is the most aligned with academic culture. Arts and Sciences Faculties are common and the two do share a culture that is different from the applied sciences. However, I think if this plan is followed, there needs to be a separate subDean for Arts and Sciences as there are issues that are truly unique to the faculties regarding research and teaching laboratories that require a different understanding. This is also true in recruiting faculty.

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Scrap the plans and just ask science to figure it out for everyone. Seriously. That faculty is rocking it based on the data. Punching way over their weight in terms of delivering teaching and research, while having an incredibly low administrative overhead.

Oh, and don't touch the faculty of science when you restructure. Likely anything you do will unbalance their systems and degrade the quality of what they do and efficiency with which they do it.

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Please, please, please DO NOT go with option B (Tri-Council). It just doesn't make sense moving forward with this archaic model when we, as professors, are being asked to be more, not less, cross- and inter-disciplinary. I liked the third option, but with ARTs and Science broken up and ALES departments moved to the appropriate new faculty.,

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Eliminate Augustana. Students there can finish their degrees at the North Campus without disruption, and it would eliminate space costs. Also- their class sizes are so small compared to North Campus - it's not fair that we continue to subsidize them at our detriment. The government really can't make things any worse so why not just cut it? Why does their community get to go through this unscathed but we suffer? ""It's time for tough decisions"", isn't it?

Academics need a wage cap and rollbacks, and some folks need to take retirement packages. Those salaries are the big budget issue. There is NO reason why some of those profs in business need to make that much \$\$\$. Cut their wages and you could save a lot of support staff

Divisions model is confusing and a recipe for bad PR - just bite the bullet and merge some faculties. Merge ALES with Science, but leave Engineering as is. Do the Health Sciences merger proposed in A. Maybe merge business and law?

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In all discussions, it sounds like the 4 divisions model is likely where we are headed. What has the ARWG discussed in terms of principles, consistency, etc. within the divisions or will that be up to the Exec Dean? The first round of restructuring is really an amalgamation of existing units. The challenges will come in the following revisions. Decisions being made now about tenure track and ATS positions in my Faculty are still based on the dream assumption of remaining as an autonomous Faculty unit within the Division. We could be hooped from a budget perspective if the Exec Dean decides to regroup.

Has the ARWG looked at how the new budget and tuition models will affect the proposed structures? These were developed with the current structure in mind so has there been any evaluation of the possible impacts within the new structures? Really seems like there are 3 major areas of change and wonder if there is any analysis going on across these?

## SET

Please also let us know what kinds of restructuring are happening at central, are we reducing workload created by central units (like all the extra work downloaded to Profs as created by RSO financial services, animal care, radiation services, EH& S etc. These units need to be pared and the workload downloaded streamlined to allow Profs to actually work on getting grants rather than filling in useless forms.

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How does SET concretely intend to find the right balance between tailoring services to faculty specific needs while also standardizing administrative services to actually achieve efficiencies? The current information on the SET website is quite vague, and as such it is difficult to grasp what the changes will actually look like. While I realize decisions have not been made as of yet; this reinforces the perception that the University is not being transparent. For example, the distinction between "transactional vs. non-transactional work" is not something that is well understood, which makes it relatively meaningless. Furthermore, talking about front end service centers, service partners and transactional processing hubs without additional context does not provide much information.

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Academics should not be appointed to tasks such a career counselling or program advising (ie. Faculty of Science, Faculty of ALES). Their hourly wage is far too expensive for tasks that should have never been appointed to them. Additionally - PhDs are not experts on the labour market, especially as they themselves have not experienced it

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With a move to a ""specialist"" model, can Central Administration provide front line, middle and senior managers with guidance and advice on how to keep individuals who would consider themselves as ""generalists"" motivated during this change management process? Clearly the motivation for such staff will be diminished as they will view themselves as being ""screwed over"" by the government and university so such staff, hopefully only in very few cases, could even become disruptive. And, it will not be enough to simply say that, ""by continuing to work hard, you may be one of the individuals selected for a role in the new model"".

Associated with the above, it has already been mentioned that service levels will take a dip. I would suggest that this messaging needs to be much stronger as faculty are often unwilling to accept any changes in support levels and this stronger messaging needs to start immediately as staff anxiety and stress have increased and motivation is already declining (as per above).

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Student services are best situated within faculties as advisors offer knowledge-based interpersonal academic guidance and pastoral care to our students.

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It is absolutely crucial that Academic Advising, co-op advising, and Career advising remain within the Engineering faculty itself. Engineering is so specific that if these services were moved to a division, they would need dedicated engineering advisors anyways. The student experience must be IMPROVED through the restructuring, not remain the same or decline.

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We need to trust more in our processes. We currently have an exceptional amount of waste in the many layers of approvals and oversights in all of our processes. If we are hiring people, we should be trusting them to do their jobs. Most of our workflow seems to be that we are afraid of auditors and so we overdesign everything when it could be much simpler.

We need to design our processes for the 98+ percent of correct work, not put excessive checks in place to catch the <2% errors. We spend too much time/money in making the main workflows complicated when it would be simpler and cheaper to design for the best case.

Why are we hearing no updates from the SET team about the VP portfolios and what they are doing to change and reduce costs. The focus seems to be entirely on the Faculties and Departments even though the VP portfolios are where 35-40% of all the money goes.

Give Staff a way to provide actionable feedback to the SET team on how to solve specific challenges. Publish the main areas of focus that SET is working on and then ask for solutions from those who actually do the work. Democratize the process and work collaboratively rather than small central teams

Why are we basing so much of our analysis of costs using consolidated budgets. Operating, Endowments, Research, and Ancillary services are all different and those should be looked at differently. Some of the basic assumptions in the data are false (ie lumping research staff in with operating staff) because of the way our financial systems work.

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There should be very significant focus placed on what groups should stay near the point of service. The current proposal has student services, Advancement, etc at the divisional level but those kinds of functions need to stay in the Faculties to make sure that it stays student focused.

There has been way too little of a focus on the student experience in this process, every change that we make should be viewed under the lens of 'how does this impact the students'

There has not been a lot of discussion on why we need to change, but very little articulation of our values or any kind of clear change management plan. There doesn't seem to be any recognition that there are a lot of overworked staff who are afraid for their jobs and very little reassurance about the future.

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Eliminate or significantly reduce intra University billing. The amount of overhead created by intra unit and intra U of A billing is significant, and it does not provide any value to the University. Furthermore, it discourages collaboration as the work that is completed is determined by internal politics, and who has the funds, rather than what will improve teaching and research at the University.

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If you combine faculties for a division (following Plan B model), would you have a merge of all faculties' Student Services office to provide a "central" Student Services Office for all faculties' students to seek information from that central office? If so, how will it be determined which members of each separated Student Services office will retain their position? Will technology advancements be supported to be shared amongst all the faculties in each division?

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With the proposed large reduction of academic leaders, accompanied by unprecedented and simultaneous layoffs and losses of administrative staff, where do these workloads truly go? There is surely a clear understanding that "efficiencies" cannot possibly on their own offset such huge personnel reductions, "transactional hubs" or no "transactional hubs". Widespread "streamlining" of processes will obviously be necessary, but this in itself is surely a process that takes an extended period of time to both develop and operationalize in any effective manner - and the streamlining still won't provide unlimited "efficiencies".

Overlaid and simultaneous with the reduction of academic leaders and administrative staff: major amounts of time (and in some cases money) will clearly be required for physical relocations, layoff processes, position adjustments, retraining, unit mergers/creations, governance adjustments, new relationships building, and other consuming aspects of this massive and unprecedented transition.

Let's be realistic: a significant amount of important, non-trivial work and services is going to have to be abandoned. Why are we not conducting widespread discussions to meaningfully and collectively identify what non-trivial services and support we must \*stop\* delivering? The focus on "streamlining" and "efficiencies" by themselves is otherwise just magical thinking for avoiding utterly unmanageable workloads for everyone involved.

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If we go with any model in which a faculty that doesn't typically follow the standard \*3 credits class system and they are in a division with a majority of faculties that do follow the standard \*3 credits class system, would that faculty consider changing their credit system to have a consistent credit system in the same division?

The Academic Requirements Report found in People Soft has been utilized by several faculties on campus and this has drastically reduced some of the transactional requests from students. If all faculties in the same division are able to utilize the Academic Requirements Report this would allow consistency within the division so if students go from one faculty to another within the same division then they have access to the same tools and resources.

For increasing efficiencies in services to students within each division/faculty the relationships between division/faculty and the Registrar's Office should be evaluated. Certain processes, for example - declaring a course extra to degree, could be reviewed to see if the division/faculty can take sole responsibility of administering this so that we can provide services to students faster. Currently there is a delay from when the faculty informs the student a course will be declared extra to degree and then waiting for the Registrar's Office to perform that administrative task.

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I served as [redacted to protect privacy] 2017 to 2020. While performing this (enjoyable and worthwhile) role, I was sometimes surprised by the degree of duplication between the Dept. and FGSR. Moving forward, what of the idea of leaving student admission decisions solely in the hands of individual departments? This would allow those hardworking individuals in FGSR admissions to redirect their talents to frontline services for students already registered within an academic program. If this idea is too radical, would it be possible to avoid performing the Weighted-Average-Calculation (WAC) for admission GPA at both administrative levels? This duplication seems to me especially unnecessary although perhaps there's a dimension here that I do not understand.

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Are the projected job losses based on the total number of positions or how many people will lose their current roles/grade & class and have to reapply for new positions?

When will SET demonstrate that it understands what people at lower administrative levels do? I would never expect everyone to know what everyone else does but when new processes are being designed and time- & value-added activities are reworked, the current state must be known. Supervisors do not have extensive knowledge of their employees' day to day activities and there are various skill-sets, competencies, and accuracy levels across campus.

When will the end-users be involved in the decision-making process for acquiring & testing new applications & systems that meet administrative needs & modern standards? HCM was poorly

rolled out and didn't involve the proper testing or testers. Financials is inadequate in almost every area and hampers most processes.

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It would be great if we could stop using silly names to describe budget cuts. Names like 'Service Excellence Transformation' assumes we are all idiots. It's insulting. Call them what they are: cuts. No matter how much you dress this up, these cuts will lead to less being achieved and more work falling on faculty and staff. I spend much more time doing routine administrative things now that I did when I arrived 17 years ago. That's neither here nor there, but don't assume we are naive and stupid by pushing the notion that we are going to be better off after this is done. No one believes that.

Like many institutions UofA has taken the approach of punishing the masses for the transgressions of a few. This has led to ridiculous amounts of silly paperwork. Submitting a grant, requires the Chair and Dean to sign. Why both? Why not one? Then RSO takes a look. Recently the FoS approved a contract with an overhead less than 30% as that sponsor had a maximum below that number and it was an organization I had recently worked with. RSO now wants a letter from the Faculty to approve that. Why not just assume if the Faculty has signed off, it's OK?

FGSR (why that has not been signaled out for cuts in beyond me), seems to exist solely to create work. Non-voting chairs on graduate exam committees - lets waste the 2-3 hours of another colleagues' valuable time. An obsession with handwritten signatures on thesis approval (and other) forms - why not just an electronic form? If a PI does a terrible job mentoring their students prevent them from supervision, don't punish the rest of us. Show some leadership beyond just introducing more forms and processes.

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All of these options put the student experience in jeopardy. Centralized advising cannot work - there are too many Department specific things to deal with. This should be obvious at the outset.

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Why is the pulse survey limited to 5% of all employees per month? Decisions will have been made long before the mass can be surveyed.

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Please careful consider cutting/restructuring admin within our departments - in some cases, centralizing admin is going to be less efficient because some of our staff/admin have very specialized knowledge (e.g., ordering supplies, grant applications, etc.). Also, try and keep the new centralized admin procedures and protocols as much the same as possible - if we have to learn new systems, forms, etc., this is going to take a lot time, which of course is a cost.

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Remember that eliminating roles does not help unless there is actually a reduction in expectations/duties as well. Otherwise the work is just being handed to someone else who is likely already overwhelmed due to the multiple layoffs/rescturings of the past.

Please remember the errors of the past, notably that the recent IST consolidation is considered a failure by much of the Science Faculty/Researchers and that the previous Dean of Science himself admitted it was not a success and there has been a drastic reduction in the Quality of Service as a result which has a direct impact on their Research/Teaching.

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Support staff are concerned that the uniform data doesn't reflect their actual work. I know none of the categories I had to choose from reflected my job. How are you going to make good decisions if the data isn't reflective of the work at the university?

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Yes - There does not appear to be ANY designated units for Instructor Support, similar to Researcher and Student Support. Sadly this seems to reflect a very poor understanding generally on campus about the current and future shift of teaching tasks to instructors. Many of these tasks are not directly related to teaching but more specifically to course delivery. The committee members are encourage to join any of the CTL eClass Courses for instructors and read the ongoing postings regarding the many, many new tasks and hours required to teach a course. This is not ensuring 'the right person for the right task at the right time' that we have been told is a principle??

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## Suggestions for Alternative Academic Restructuring Scenarios

Please review the [\*Alternative Restructuring Proposals from the Community report\*](#).