

CALS Organizational Redesign FAQs

December 9, 2016

Why is CALS looking into an organizational redesign?

As a college, we need to respond to increasingly rapid changes in higher education, resource availability, scientific advancement and complex multi-disciplinary challenges. The motivation for the project is not specifically to save costs, but rather to make the most of the financial, human and time resources that we have. As such, the new conceptual design will align resource allocation with priorities, performance and efficiency, resulting in robust departments that are resilient over time and adaptable to change.

What are the goals of this project?

The appointed committee will evaluate trends, data and peer institutions (including identifying comparative advantages for CALS at UW-Madison); analyze key functions to invest in because of comparative advantage and/or strength; prioritize what needs to be divested, cut and rearranged in the future to meet the desired state; and determine benefits and implications (including revenue generation and cost implications) of the recommended changes.

What does it mean to be a “robust” department?

A robust department will have cutting-edge scholarship as well as teaching, extension and service that attract and retain world-class faculty, staff and students; enough critical mass to assure excellence in programs, appropriate coverage of priorities and responsibilities and optimum administrative efficiency; capacity to generate revenue sufficient to sustain and grow activities; and a culture of interdependence and collaboration with other departments.

What will the outcome be?

The committee will provide an evaluation of trends, guidelines for resource allocation, at least one conceptual design of a restructured college for administration and/or the Academic Planning Council (APC) to consider, and a proposed process for implementation.

What resources will the committee have to help make decisions?

The committee will be provided with background documents such as the UW-Madison budget model overview, the CALS Strategic Framework, and trend data currently being gathered. A facilitator and project manager have been appointed to assist the committee, and regular check-ins with the project sponsors (Dean Kate VandenBosch and Senior Associate Dean Dick Straub) will occur.

How was the committee selected?

CALS department chairs and members of the CALS Academic Planning Council were asked to nominate committee members. The project sponsors selected members based on those recommendations, and considered the experiences and background of individuals as well as the diversity of disciplines in the college.

Will you get feedback from others in the college?

The committee will consult broadly and gather information as needed, including engaging appropriately with governance groups.

What is the timeline?

A conceptual design and implementation recommendations will be submitted to the CALS Academic Planning Council in November, 2017.