

October 21, 2009

Colleagues:

As you know, Dr. Rush has re-considered the structure of committees to reduce redundancy while maintaining the balance of perspectives. In the case of the STEM Committee, he has requested that I appoint a facilitator to take the project forward. Therefore, I have asked Dr. *Ching-Hua* Wang to serve in this capacity as my representative. Dr. Wang and I have discussed the need for a broad based approach and structure that should be created inclusive of faculty development, undergraduate research, teacher education, program coordination, outreach, etc.

At the end of last semester, several of you volunteered to serve on a subcommittee to consider the creation of a STEM Institute and provide leadership to improve our position for success. I will ask those original volunteers (AJ Bieszczad, Jeanne Grier, Bob Bleicher, Phil Hampton, Amy Denton) if they are still able to serve, and recombine as a temporary task force to provide leadership and strategic direction to improve our position for success in the STEM areas. We will, of course, continue to gather perspectives from the entire group.

I will ask task force to work within the following principles:

1. Programs should align with the mission of the University,
2. Programs should be responsive to a demonstrated need,
3. Programs are to be well integrated with existing programs and those already on the master plan.

Deliverables: I will ask the task force to report on the following:

- A portfolio of courses and programs currently offered by the University,
- A summary list of programs; evaluate positioning within the overall educational landscape (learning objectives and curriculum),
- Recommendation as to how programs should be conducted at the University while paying special attention to providing a rigorous academic experience,
- Consideration of self-supporting programs (in times of budget restrictions)
- Funding assessment
- Outline the implementation, facilities, budget and other key considerations.

I will ask the task force to provide recommendations to us by February 15, 2010.

Yours Sincerely,

Dawn Neuman

Provost & Vice President