Faculty Senate Resolution 398, as amended

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MEANINGFUL DELIBERATIONS FOR THE UW CAMPUS COMMUNITY TO EVALUATE THE PROPOSAL TO RESTRUCTURE UW COLLEGES

WHEREAS, President Seidel’s administration’s proposal to restructure the UW colleges involves substantial and complex change for the entire University, affecting the constitution and alignment of colleges at the University of Wyoming. These changes will likely result in intended and unintended consequences of cultural, logistic, and financial significance to the entire campus community, including students, staff, and faculty, as well as for the state; and

WHEREAS, the college restructuring proposal was made known to faculty and others in the campus community in July 2021, presented concurrently with proposed program/unit discontinuances, mergers, and consolidations aimed at budget reduction and reallocation and subject to UW Regulation 2-13 with its attendant time restrictions, thus effectively affording only a few months (including summer time) for campus-wide consideration of the pros and cons of the proposal for comprehensive restructuring; and

WHEREAS, despite its emergence in conjunction with specific budget reduction proposals, the college restructuring proposal has not been explicitly tied to immediate budget remedies but has instead been framed as better positioning the University for future endeavors; and

WHEREAS, the totality of the proposed reconfiguration of the UW colleges has not yet been subjected to campus or community discussion, review by committee, or solicited feedback, which would afford opportunity to explore unintended consequences and address unanswered questions, including but not limited to accreditation issues, continuity of degrees, and the impact on undergraduate education; and

WHEREAS, a recent survey of faculty conducted by the UW Faculty Senate Executive Committee shows that a majority of respondents do not favor the restructuring proposal, do not believe their views have been considered in its construction, and do not feel the campus community has had sufficient time to consider the proposal; and

WHEREAS, a recent survey of UW students conducted by ASUW indicates that most students are unaware of the proposed changes and, of those who are aware, nearly half do not favor the proposal; and

WHEREAS, shared governance focused on aligning priorities is valued at UW (Regulation 1-4), but faculty have not yet been afforded opportunity to engage in the formulation of the comprehensive proposal for college restructuring; and
WHEREAS, the proposed plan does not address the existential issues at UW (faculty numbers, staffing, workforce development, salaries, funding and morale) that need to be considered in any plan to move UW forward; and

WHEREAS, the President will develop and present a Final Plan to the Board of Trustees at the November meeting, yet the faculty will not have access to the plan until just prior to that meeting; and

WHEREAS, given the timeline as proposed, the Faculty will only have a few weeks to consider large-scale changes to the institution; and

WHEREAS, the faculty and staff have a responsibility and a right to diligently review the opportunities, obstacles, benefits and consequences of the Final Plan and the budgetary impacts and implications of the plan prior to the Board of Trustees consideration of the plan;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Faculty Senate of the University of Wyoming does not endorse the current restructuring proposal and instead advocates that the UW campus community engage in meaningful deliberation of comprehensive reconfiguration as part of future strategic planning.

AUTHENTICATION: The foregoing Faculty Senate Resolution 398, as amended, duly adopted by the Faculty Senate of the University of Wyoming under date of October 25, 2021, is hereby transmitted to the President of the University of Wyoming for review in accordance with UW Regulations.

Treva E. Sprout Ahrenholtz
Secretary, Faculty Senate
Dated: October 26, 2021