



**PURDUE UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST**

**Office of the Chancellor**

March 18, 2021

Jay T. Akridge, Ph.D.

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity  
Purdue University

Dear Provost Akridge,

In order to better align the departments and allow for greater collaboration among the faculty in the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences (CHESS), Dean Elaine Carey has requested the three current departments in CHESS be reorganized into two. This proposal was reviewed and supported by the consensus of faculty in CHESS. The PNW Faculty Senate was notified of the intent to make the structural change in December and unanimously passed a motion to endorse the proposal at the February 12, 2021, meeting. We ask that this request for a structural change be moved to your office for review and subsequently placed on the agenda for the Board of Trustees approval.

Currently, the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences has the following three departments: English; History and Philosophy; and Political Science, Economics, and World Languages and Culture. The proposed reorganization would establish the following two departments: Department of English and World Languages and the Department of History, Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. By combining these departments, CHESS will be able to promote interdisciplinarity through innovative approaches that promote the unique and shared areas of inquiry such as, applied ethics, digital humanities, legal studies, public administration, public humanities, social studies education, and study abroad.

The restructuring also allows for some cost savings as well as additional revenue to the college. PNW's English Language Program, which returned to the college in Fall 2020, will be part of the new department English and World Languages. The restructured departments will add additional cost savings in the college by eliminating one department chair. More significant, the new departments will receive increased revenue due to contributions in general education and the CHESS core.

The new department of English and World Languages will reassert the college's support of international students by housing the English Language Program. Along with ELP, a couple of the faculty in the new department have been working with the School of Education and Counseling to develop a TESOL certificate that will enhance language skills of candidates in SOEC or interested educators in NW Indiana.

The department will better serve the students by allowing for the expansion of world literature offerings while maintaining the significance of the study of Spanish and French. Moreover, the department will oversee the Writing Center and the International Media Center which will further enhance the student experience and allow for collaboration of the faculty across disciplines. Lastly, the combined department

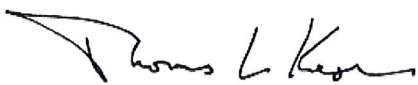
will be a center for PNW Study Abroad because these areas have historically hosted the most successful programs.

This realignment in English and World Languages is also in line with trends in the new department's shared professional association. The Modern Language Association (MLA) is the professional association for both English and World Languages. Recently, the MLA has encouraged greater collaboration across the disciplines to promote the study of literature (in all languages) and language. The MLA encompasses the Associations of Department of English (ADE) and the Associations of Department of Foreign Languages (ADFL).

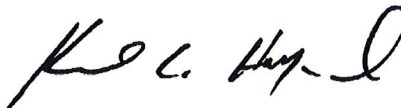
The new Department of History, Philosophy, Politics, and Economics also allows for greater collaboration to support the programs and social studies education. Currently, the faculty of the newly proposed department have been collaborating on a proposal for a new degree in public administration and policy. They have also discussed collaborations in applied ethics, legal studies, and liberal studies. Moreover, there is a growing need for social studies teachers in Indiana, and the combined department meets the three key areas of social studies: Economics, History, and Political Science. Having these areas in one department will facilitate the collaboration with SOEC to enhance social studies education.

Similar to the MLA, the National Council for Social Studies collaborates with the American Bar Association, American Historical Association, Center for Civic Education, and the Council for Economic Education. Again, the new department will assist in the development of new programs and offer secondary education students' greater opportunities within one department. Lastly, many social studies teachers are MA students in history. The combined department would further enhance their experience in a combined department that covers the primary areas of social studies.

Sincerely,

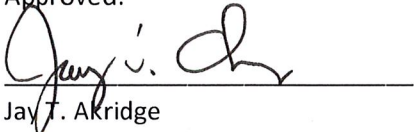


Thomas L. Keon  
Chancellor



Kenneth C. Holford  
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Approved:

  
Jay T. Akridge

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity

5/17/21

Date



Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.  
President

5/21/21

Date



May 6, 2021

Jay Akridge, PhD  
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity

Candiss Vibbert, Ph.D.  
Associate Provost for Special Initiatives

**Re: Purdue Northwest Proposal for Reorganizing the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences (CHESS)**

Dear Provost Akridge and Associate Provost Vibbert,

On behalf of the Academic Organization Committee (AOC), I am pleased to provide our review of the proposal from the Chancellor and Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of Purdue University Northwest (PNW) to reorganize the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences (CHESS). The proposal requests that the three current departments in CHESS be reorganized into two departments. The three current departments in CHESS are 1) English; 2) History and Philosophy; and 3) Political Science, Economics, and World Languages and Culture. The proposal would reorganize the disciplines into two departments: Department of English and World Languages and the Department of History, Philosophy, Politics, and Economics.

The committee was provided only a short 2-page memo describing the proposed reorganization with no supporting documents. The committee reviewed these documents and identified two primary concerns. The first major concern was that it was not clear if the proposal was faculty-led or driven by the administration. Language in the memo regarding “cost savings” and “additional revenue” suggested that the proposal might be motivated primarily by financial concerns and not the desires and ambitions of the affected faculty. The second major concern that the committee had was that the memo provided very little information about the process that led to the proposal and the degree of faculty input and involvement.

To address these concerns, the AOC chair spoke with the Dean of CHESS, Dr. Elaine Carey. Dean Carey strongly emphasized that the proposal was entirely faculty-driven, and while there are some financial implications of the proposal, these are quite minor and were not driving factors. Discussions among the faculty about reorganizing the departments have been ongoing for at least the past two years, as the faculty felt that they would benefit from a more strategic grouping of the disciplines than the current three departments formed during unification of the Purdue Calumet and North Central campuses in 2016. The regrouping of disciplines into the two proposed departments are based on long-held and ongoing collaborations as well as guidance from the associated professional societies.

Dean Carey also provided further detail about the process that was followed in developing the proposal. The Department Chairs facilitated multiple meetings with faculty and solicited feedback, then surveyed the faculty and passed resolutions. Dean Carey provided additional documents related to the department voting and resolutions that can be provided by the AOC chair if needed. The resolutions were provided to the CHESS council who reviewed and approved them before passing them to the Senate. The Senate requested that the CHESS council run another survey

of the affected faculty and the result was overwhelmingly positive. Therefore, faculty were closely involved in every step of development and approval of the proposal.

Finally, the AOC chair discussed potential impacts on the faculty and students should the proposed reorganization be approved. Dean Carey confirmed that there would be no significant impacts on the P&T process and the reorganization may actually help current tenure-track faculty by adding additional faculty in their areas to their committees. The proposed reorganization would have no impact on faculty teaching load, would make current and future collaborations easier, and would actually help with generation of additional resources for the new departments. In addition, the proposed reorganization would align the disciplines in ways more consistent with important professional societies and would provide opportunities for expanding programs for training teachers in the social sciences. Finally, the proposal would have no significant effect on students currently enrolled in CHESS, and would in fact expand the range of courses available to the students.

The content of this conversations was reported to the AOC by the chair and after further discussions, the committee members unanimously agreed that the proposed reorganization would benefit the current faculty and students, that the proposal was faculty-driven and that faculty were significantly involved throughout the entire process. Therefore, after doing our due diligence, the Academic Organization Committee supports the proposal and recommends that it be accepted. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the AOC chair.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "S Bane".

Sally Bane, Ph.D.  
Chair, Academic Organization Committee

cc. Members of the Academic Organization Committee

Nour Abdelfattah  
Robin Adams  
Nancy Edwards  
Levon Esters  
Libby Richards