

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **MIAMI UNIVERSITY**

**April 7, 2010**

#### **Minutes of the Academic/Student Affairs Committee Meeting**

The Academic/Student Affairs Committee of the Miami University Board of Trustees met on April 7, 2010 in Room 257 Engineering Building on the Oxford campus, Oxford, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Committee Chair Sue Henry. Trustees Dennis Lieberman and Jagdish Bhati were present, and Student Trustee Matthew Shroder was also in attendance.

In addition to the Trustees, the following Miami staff members attended the meeting: Jeffrey Herbst, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs; Barbara Jones, Vice President for Student Affairs; Mary Woodworth, Senior Associate Provost and Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs; Michael Dantley, Associate Provost and Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs; Susan Mosley-Howard, Associate Vice President, Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Karen Schilling, Dean, College of Arts & Science; Judith Sessions, Dean, University Libraries; Dionn Tron, Associate Vice President, University Communications; Stephen Snyder, Secretary to the Board of Trustees; John Bailer, Distinguished Professor and Chair, Statistics; Claire Wagner, Associate Director, University Communications; and Lisa Dankovich, Associate Director, External Communications.

#### **Academic and Student Affairs Announcements**

Committee Chair Henry introduced newly-appointed Board of Trustee member Jagdish Bhati, and Student Trustee Matthew Shroder. Mr. Shroder reported that Associated Student Government elections are scheduled for April 8, 2010.

Provost Herbst reported on three recent actions endorsed by the University Senate. Student faculty evaluations henceforth for all course evaluations will include six standard questions, although departments may include additional questions. The six common questions will aid in standardizing student teaching evaluations across all departments. In the second action, University Senate endorsed a protocol in which all Associate Professors will receive written evaluations once every three years, outlining conditions and actions required to be considered for the rank of full professor. Senate also endorsed the establishment of a new Western interdisciplinary major.

Vice President Jones reported that the Rinella Learning Center recently won a national award for tutoring. She also reported that the Student Health Services Center has implemented an on-line appointment process.

#### **Pathways Committee Final Report**

Professor John Bailer, Chair of the Pathways Committee, reviewed the findings and recommendations of the Committee's final report. An executive summary of the final report is included as Attachment A, and an outline of Dr. Bailer's summary review for the Academic/Student Affairs Committee is included as Attachment B.

## **Student Affairs Divisional Review and Reorganization**

Vice President Jones reported that this spring the Division of Student Affairs completed a review of the operations of the Division. As part of this review a self-study was completed including sections on: vision, mission and goals; key functions; primary stakeholders; organizational structure; staff demographics; significant staffing changes; financial overview; major facilities, equipment, and technologies; collaborative relationships; contributions to institutional goals; challenges; overview of assessment initiatives; and an update on recommendations from the last division review in 2002.

Dr. Jones stated that Dr. Cynthia Cherrey, Vice President for Student Affairs and clinical professor in the AB Freeman School of Business at Tulane University and President and Chair of the Board of the International Leadership Association, served as the outside consultant for the review. The purpose of her review was to supplement the self-study with a focus on organizational structure and processes. The review involved content analysis of published and web material, the self-study report, and group and individual interviews with students, administrators, and student affairs staff. Dr. Cherrey's site visit report is included as Attachment C.

Vice President Jones reviewed the Divisional strengths identified by Dr. Cherrey, including Miami's strong reputation as a university with a focus on an engaged undergraduate learning experience; the pockets of true innovation practiced in the Division; the excellent relationship with the Academic Affairs Division; the wealth of assessment data already available; and the Division's fund-raising and development efforts. Dr. Jones also reviewed areas for improvement in organizational processes, organizational structure, and areas to leverage in the future.

For organizational processes, Dr. Cherrey's analysis identified the following areas for improvement:

- Conduct a review of service delivery using benchmarking and other standards to capitalize on opportunities to look at new and different ways to deliver programs and services.
- Break down silos within the Division.
- Create effective relationships within the Division and across the University.
- Collect evidence-based data from every department including student learning outcomes, assessment strategies, benchmark data, and goals for improvement.
- Review resource use and allocation in conjunction with assessment data.
- Review programs and activities on regular cycle to either eliminate or improve.
- Find ways to reward experimentation and innovation.
- Consistently communicate with academic deans on the educational services delivered to the community and the resulting successes or lack thereof on retention efforts.
- Establish a clear vision for the division.

For organizational structure issues, the following are areas for improvement identified in the site analysis:

- Consolidate services and programs and revise some titles.
- Create collaborations for greater institutional synergy or greater structural alignment. Possible areas for increased collaboration include: leadership

programs; leadership and civic engagement; the consolidation of some offices; and a clarification of the definition of diversity and articulate how to build the campus culture around diversity.

- Utilize resources in the School of Education, Health and Society to increase assessment efforts through doctoral and masters level research
- Support development efforts in every area of the Division.

Dr. Jones concluded her report by identifying areas to leverage for the future (living learning communities, the transitions program, Career Services, and leadership programs) and assessing the actions taken by the Student Affairs Division since release of the site analysis report. The Divisional leadership team has begun a review of the mission and vision for Student Affairs, and a division-wide template for assessment and evaluation is under development. Members of the Division are continuing their work of aligning divisional goals with institutional goals, a project begun last year. Dr. Jones also distributed copies of a new organizational chart for Student Affairs (included as Attachment D), resulting from the self-study and external review processes.

### **Electronic Delivery of Textbooks and Course Materials**

Dean Judith Sessions reported on efforts to decrease costs of textbooks and other course material for students by new electronic delivery methods. Dean Sessions explained the concept of e-textbooks, stating that it is not simply a copy of a textbook converted into a PDF format. E-textbook features support the ability of instructors to customize or edit textbooks, use a key word to search the textbook contents, allow highlighting and making notes digitally, and inserting animation and videos. Three major services producing e-textbooks are CourseSmart, Open Educational Resources, and McMillan. Currently e-textbooks account for about one percent of the textbook market, but interest is growing. Several states are exploring options for providing e-textbooks to college students, including New York, California, Tennessee, Arizona, and Missouri.

Dean Sessions reviewed the benefits of e-textbooks, including the lower cost to the consumer (typically 30 to 50 percent lower than traditional textbooks); the ability to customize and keep material current; students' familiarity with working in a digital environment; the easy portability of the material; and the multiple modes of presentation available. The challenges to using e-textbooks include the inability to re-sell the material; the cost of printing material; the increased demands on the technology infrastructure/network connection; the current limitations of e-book readers; and the need to support faculty members in implementing the use of e-textbooks.

Dean Sessions offered several observations about the future of e-textbooks. She stated that discussions about digital course materials must preserve choices for students who may want print material versus digital material, and the preservation of choices for faculty members to choose the text they find most effective in meeting their learning objectives. Publishers and institutions must provide faculty development and support to those who wish to learn new pedagogies. Faculty must participate in developing custom textbooks to serve their specific needs. Objective data must be collected regarding learning outcomes when using digital course materials. She concluded her observations

by stating that accessibility must be improved for both digital and print data, especially if state requirements mandate that more digital material be available to students.

### **Academic Reorganization**

Dean Karen Schilling presented a report on activities and initiatives in the College of Arts and Science to address approaches to change necessary in the context of higher education nationally, in the State of Ohio, and at Miami University. Dr. Schilling commented that academic organization by department dates to the eighteenth century, and the challenge in thinking about academic reorganization in light of current realities in higher education is the question of how a medieval academic model impedes interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning. Dean Schilling outlined three approaches to dealing with change utilized by the College. The first approach is to use opportunities to shape and respond to student demand. The second approach is to create special opportunities with modest strategic investments. And the third approach is to implement initiatives to seek efficiencies and economies.

As part of the change management process, Dr. Schilling asked a committee of Department Chairs to review organizational and curricular structures at peer and aspirational universities. The committee did not assess the university as a whole, but the equivalent division to Miami's College of Arts and Science. From that review process, Dean Schilling made the following observations:

- Miami has more departments than peer/aspirational universities.
- The "footprint" for graduate education is smaller at Miami.
- Miami's website presence has changed much less in the last thirty years than other universities.
- Miami has more language departments than peer/aspirational universities.
- Miami's three biological science departments is an anomaly. Most universities have fewer.
- Miami's nationally-known professional programs, such as pre-law and pre-medicine, have little visibility on the website and in publications.
- Miami should have a more proactive curriculum committee, rather than solely screening departmental and faculty requests.

Dean Schilling reported on activities in change management to date in the College of Arts and Science, using the template of the three approaches to change:

#### Category 1 – Meeting student demands

- The addition of Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, and Korean language instruction.
- Increased investments in interdisciplinary programs and joint departmental appointments for faculty members.
- The increase in the use of Lecturers and Clinical Faculty, who have heavier teaching loads than tenured and tenure-track faculty.

#### Category 2 – Creating special opportunities

- Reorganization of the Institute for the Environment and Sustainability (Attachment E).

- Creation of two new interdisciplinary Ph.D programs – Cell Molecular and Structural Biology; and Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology.
- Creation of the Humanities Center.
- Approval of courses for the Comparative Media Studies Program (over 60 faculty members involved).

Category 3 – Efficiencies and economies

- Implementation of a review process to merge and/or realign departments to achieve bureaucratic savings without sacrificing curricular opportunities for students.
- Implementation of a review process for outreach programs to determine if reorganization and/or elimination should be considered warranted.
- Construction of open laboratories with shared equipment for faculty and student usage.

With no other business coming before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen D. Snyder', written in a cursive style.

Stephen D. Snyder  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Changing Pathways at Miami University:  
Adapting to Emerging Developments in Higher Education

05 March 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. What is the national and state context?

National movements in higher education are ensuring broader portability of credits that enable faster time to graduation. Portability of credits, Advanced Placement (AP), passing grades (redefined from the traditional “C” or better) – all enable students to receive credit outside of studying in residence at a campus. Students are completing degree requirements in a variety of ways– coursework taken at their “home” institution vs. elsewhere – including study abroad, transfer credit from other institutions, credit by examination, on-line courses, and in some cases, experiential learning. In addition, the University System of Ohio (USO) is defining a new-educational paradigm for all institutions in Ohio, and is linking resource support to USO initiatives. Implicit in the USO initiatives is that each institution has a role to fill and no institution can fill all roles.

Miami needs need to respond to these trends and developments as an opportunity.

An Association of American Colleges and Universities 2010 report (AACU "Raising the Bar") tells us that "employers want their employees to use a broader set of skills and have higher levels of learning and knowledge than in the past to meet the increasingly complex demands that they will face in the workplace" and that "employers believe that colleges can best prepare graduates for long-term career success through a blend of liberal and applied learning."

2. What changes have we observed at Miami?

An empirical evaluation of changes and impact at Miami has begun and should continue. The number of courses for which AP credit has been earned has increased recently due to a recent Ohio Board of Regents mandate. A preliminary investigation of student performance in calculus and in English composition suggests that AP 3 credit does not necessarily result in differential performance in subsequent classes where AP credit was earned for a prerequisite class. One concern that remains is that four of the top five classes where AP credit is earned are in the humanities. The question of whether students receiving humanities AP credit take additional humanities courses at Miami remains. Additionally, it is too early to evaluate the impact of transfer credit on later coursework taken at Miami.

3. How should Miami University re-define itself?

The nature of college education and the pathways that students choose to secure a college degree are changing rapidly: The model upon which Miami University is based — a

student receiving an undergraduate degree after four years of in-residence study — is being challenged as the standard. What we are seeing instead is that Miami students choose various pathways to a degree and build their own distinctive programs. Student “pathways” to graduation will be varied, and students should be supported and advised on how to get the most out of their Miami education. The “Miami experience” for students needs to be clearly articulated. A blending of knowledge acquisition and application/liberal education and practice may be a key to defining this, and we expect that this will be the focus of discussion on campus and in the LEC. Flexibility in undergraduate study should be promoted by reducing barriers for students doing “two things,” such as dual degrees, co-majors, combined bachelors-masters degrees.

We want the educational experience at Miami to enrich our students in multiple ways. This variety will represent what they bring to us prior to their Miami admission, as well as those non-Miami experiences during their time with us including study abroad, and courses taken during their summers at home. We believe that value can be added to a student's educational experience in different ways. We need to provide a broad spectrum of interesting and exciting opportunities for our students. We believe that experiences at Miami can provide greater value and a richer educational experience with faculty at Miami University, rather than taking coursework and pursuing educational opportunities elsewhere. We believe that our challenge here is one both of substance and perception. First and foremost, a Miami education does need to provide greater educational quality and value than can be obtained elsewhere. But the quality and value also need to be evident to others: the quality and value must be identified and promoted; it needs to be clear to students (and parents and employers, etc.) that there is greater quality/value here. Miami needs to be proactive and promote these opportunities.

#### 4. What opportunities should Miami University pursue? What are the next steps?

Miami University needs to work to retain its reputation for a strong liberal arts education and enhance this reputation by becoming known as a university that encourages students to pursue a distinctive and rich program of study by developing each student’s interests. Miami should aspire to be recognized within the state and the nation as a top public university for undergraduate study and selected graduate study.

The PATHWAYS committee emphasizes opportunities and proactive responses to the changing context of higher education. Common themes underlying committee recommendations include the promotion of flexibility in undergraduate student studies. Implicit in the advocacy of flexibility is removing institutional barriers rather than creating mandates for divisions and departments.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Miami should continue to monitor and assess student performance in courses following receipt of credit in prerequisite courses received from a variety of different sources (e.g., AP, transfer).

- RECOMMENDATION: Miami students on all campuses should be encouraged, and provided sufficient advising, to explore a variety of opportunities during their time on campus. These include:
- \* studying abroad
  - \* participating in service-learning opportunities
  - \* enrolling in dual programs
  - \* getting dual majors
  - \* getting second / double majors or second degrees or co-majors
  - \* pursuing internship experiences
  - \* working on, or even finishing, combined undergraduate-graduate programs
- RECOMMENDATION: Miami should expand and promote co-majors in addition to reviewing current dual majors and dual degree opportunities. These represent a way to coordinate studies of topics across departments and divisions.
- RECOMMENDATION: Miami should expand the number of graduate degree programs offered, especially Master's degrees.
- RECOMMENDATION: Miami should provide coordinated advising of students with varying degrees of non-residential credit is critical for addressing the different sets of student admission "packages" to Miami and for facilitating flexibility in student undergraduate study. The advising community might consider creating a dual advising assignment for AP Scholars, e.g., first year adviser and a divisional or faculty adviser. These students, although technically not freshmen, still will benefit from the developmental perspective of the first year advising model, but also will need the academic guidance with the depth of the division, department, or program.
- RECOMMENDATION: Recognizing that divisions may differ in their perspectives regarding core knowledge in different domains, Miami should actively promote all of the feasible opportunities beyond obtaining a single baccalaureate degree within the traditional residency of four years, including dual degrees, dual majors, minors, and more.
- RECOMMENDATION: Liberal education needs to be re-examined as a consequence of students filling requirements with non-Miami coursework. In addition, divisions, departments, and programs are encouraged to revisit their divisional requirements.



RECOMMENDATION: Miami will pursue ways to recognize and support students who enter with large numbers of AP credits- for example, institute a special designation of “AP Scholars” for students who enroll in Miami with numerous AP credits; provide scholarship support; develop an AP Scholar learning community or an AP Scholars first year seminar. It may also be useful to make special advising arrangements for these students. First-year residence hall advising may not be the best way for them to discover the range of academic opportunities available to them.

RECOMMENDATION: Miami University needs to develop and promote alternative institutional structures for delivering education, including (but not limited to) expanding study abroad opportunities, offering more summer courses, developing online courses in areas where that is feasible and appropriate, offering more service-learning, internships, professional certificates, and experiential learning opportunities, and expanding our offerings regionally, even nationally.

The last four recommendations relate to specific changes to address as part of the process in obtaining a Miami degree.

RECOMMENDATION: Initiate a review of the minimum number of hours required for graduation with a consideration of changing from 128 hours to 120 (recognizing that accreditation and degree requirements may lead to more than 120 hours for some majors).

RECOMMENDATION: Increase residency requirement from 32 baccalaureate hours earned from Miami to 45 hours (with a corresponding percentage for associate degrees). We also should review the “terminal residency” requirement of 12 of the last 20 credit hours being earned at Miami.

RECOMMENDATION: Allow for 15 hours of graduate coursework to count for combined bachelors-masters degree study.

RECOMMENDATION: Remove the two-year on-campus living/ “Sophomore Residency Requirement” requirement. An alternative would be to reduce this requirement to one year.

# Briefing on Recommendations from the Pathways committee report (07 April 2010)

## **WHAT FRAMED OUR THINKING?**

### **Excerpts from committee charge ...**

- ... credits brought to MU from variety of sources – AP, PSEO, transfer, online ...
- ... charged to consider implications of these changes ...
- ... not merely react to changes but develop a *pro-active posture* ...

Recognition that student experience in higher education is changing ...

## **WHAT WERE WE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?**

- Maintain, and possibly enhance, quality of a MU education
- Promote flexibility
- Identify barriers and consider strategies for reducing/removing barriers

**Miami University:** *where you go to receive a flexible, transformative, liberating education.* [our own "branding" exercise]

- \* strong liberal arts background for preparing students to function as educated adults.
- \* “transformative, liberating education” should reflect a mix of analytical (conceptual) and creative learning, a mix of studying context and constructing new understanding, and a mix of liberal and applied learning.
- \* updated liberal arts education tied into work-life preparation.

## Working assumptions:

- MU educational experience should enrich our students in a variety of ways. Represent what they bring to us prior to their Miami admission, as well as those non-Miami experiences during their time with us.
- Value added to a student's educational experience in a variety of ways.
- Provide a broad spectrum of interesting and exciting opportunities for our students.
- Experiences at Miami can provide greater value and a richer educational experience with us, with faculty at Miami University, rather than taking coursework and pursuing educational opportunities elsewhere.
- Challenge both of substance and perception: That is, first and foremost our product does need to provide greater educational quality and value than can be obtained elsewhere. But the quality and value also need to be evident to others: the quality and value must be identified and promoted.
- Miami needs to EMBRACE these opportunities - be PROACTIVE and PROMOTE them.

The PATHWAYS committee **emphasizes opportunities** and responding to the changing context of higher education.

**Common themes** underlying committee recommendations include the **promotion of flexibility** in undergraduate student studies.

Implicit in the advocacy of flexibility is the **removal of institutional barriers** rather than the creation of mandates for divisions, departments, and programs.

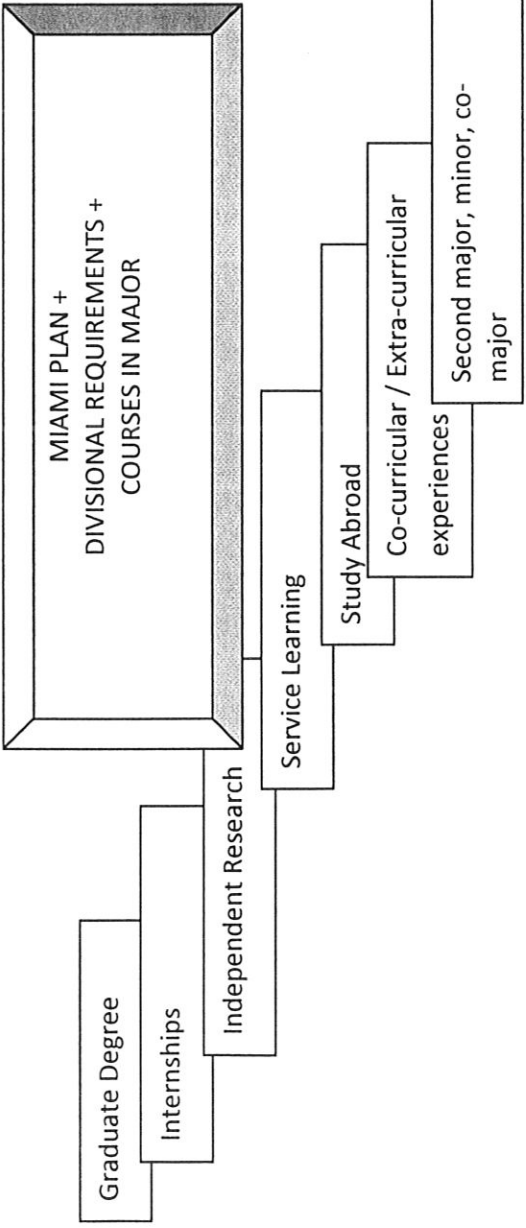
PATHWAYS committee Recommendations / Importance? / Most difficult to implement? Commentary.

### **Monitoring Impact**

<p>Continue to <u>monitor</u> and <u>assess</u> student performance in courses following receipt of credit in prerequisite courses received from a variety of different sources (e.g., AP, transfer). [R1]</p>	<p>Critical.</p>	<p>Registrar and institutional research are well positioned to address this although they require time for personnel to stay on top of this. This should be done in consultation with faculty from various divisions. Note that relevant longitudinal data may be years in the making.</p>
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## Importance of Coordinated Advising

<p>Miami students on all campuses should be <u>encouraged</u>, and provided sufficient <u>advising</u>, to explore a <u>variety of opportunities</u> during their time on campus. These include: studying abroad; participating in service-learning opportunities; enrolling in dual programs; getting dual majors; getting second / double majors or second degrees or co-majors; pursuing internship experiences; working on, or even finishing, combined undergraduate-graduate programs. [R2]</p>	<p>Critical.</p>	<p>Many options easy to implement; however, others (internships) may require a ramping up of effort. Second degrees across divisions may be burdened by needing to meet requirements of both divisions. Graduate programs should reflect on what could be done to facilitate transition to graduate study for Miami undergraduates. Partners: Advising, CPPA, Academic Deans, Registrar.</p>
<p><u>Provide coordinated advising</u> of students with varying degrees of non-residential credit is critical for addressing the different sets of student admission “packages” to Miami and for facilitating flexibility in student undergraduate study. The advising community might consider creating a dual advising assignment for AP Scholars, e.g., first year adviser and a divisional or faculty adviser. These students, although technically not freshmen, still will benefit from the developmental perspective of the first year advising model, but also will need the academic guidance with the depth of the division, department, or program. [R5]</p>	<p>Critical.</p>	<p>Without advising, students may not be aware of the richness of opportunities. What is the point of entry of students to Miami? When students arrive, what do they have? What are they missing?</p>
<p><u>Recognize and support students who enter with large numbers of AP credits</u>- e.g., institute a special designation of “AP Scholars” for students who enroll in Miami with numerous AP credits; provide scholarship support; develop an AP Scholar learning community or an AP Scholars first year seminar. It may also be useful to make special advising arrangements for these students. First-year residence hall advising may not be the best way for them to discover the range of academic opportunities available to them. [R8]</p>	<p>Important.</p>	<p>These students usually come from academically strong high schools (need to have the ability to provide AP classes) and these students are motivated to take these classes. Future of AP in high schools?</p>





## Making the University more Flexible

<p><b><u>Actively promote</u></b> all of the feasible <b><u>opportunities beyond obtaining a single baccalaureate degree</u></b> within the traditional residency of four years, including dual degrees, dual majors, minors, and more. [R6]</p> <p><b><u>Develop and promote alternative institutional structures for delivering education</u></b>, including (but not limited to) expanding study abroad opportunities, offering more summer courses, developing online courses in areas where that is feasible and appropriate, offering more service-learning, internships, professional certificates, and experiential learning opportunities, and expanding our offerings regionally, even nationally. [R9]</p>	<p>Critical.</p>	<p>Easy to promote options but will require coordination among different offices including admissions, advising (at all levels), and the registrar. Caveat: divisions may differ in their perspectives regarding core knowledge in different domains.</p>
<p>Initiate a <b><u>review of the minimum number of hours required for graduation</u></b> with a consideration of changing from 128 hours to 120 (recognizing that accreditation and degree requirements may lead to more than 120 hours for some majors). [R10]</p>	<p>Critical.</p>	<p>If we don't provide such alternatives, then our students will find them someplace else.</p> <p>We need to be aware of what other universities are requiring. The implication of such a change on majors with lots of requirements must be carefully evaluated. The 120 could be the "advertised minimum" although some (i.e., the SFA accreditation issue) require more. So when we explore the 120 of other places we should explore IF 120 is "all" or most/some/etc.</p>
<p><b><u>Expand and promote co-majors</u></b> in addition to reviewing current dual majors and dual degree opportunities. These represent a way to coordinate studies of topics across departments and divisions. [R3]</p>	<p>Important.</p>	<p>Relatively easy to implement since co-major model exists. Incentives to develop? Review the ideal co-major structure – may be different than the current implementation.</p> <p>Barriers to introducing new graduate programs, even PSMs, at OBOR? Could existing degrees be modified to accommodate such expansion? Examples already exist – 5 yr. BA/MA Accounting.</p>
<p><b><u>Expand the number of graduate degree programs</u></b> offered, especially Master's degrees. [R4]</p>	<p>Important.</p>	<p>Coursework taken at the 500 or 600 level will have more stringent requirements than 400 level counterparts. We believe this is a relatively easy change to make.</p>
<p>Allow for <b><u>15 hours of graduate coursework to count for combined bachelors-masters degree</u></b> study. [R13]</p>	<p>Important.</p>	

## **Curricular and Residency Modifications**

<p><b><u>Liberal education</u></b> needs to be <b><u>re-examined</u></b> as a consequence of students filling requirements with non-Miami coursework. In addition, divisions, departments, and programs are encouraged to revisit their divisional requirements. [R7]</p>	<p>Critical.</p>	<p>Liberal education requirements and divisional requirements will continue to evolve. The changing context of higher ed is pushing some of these changes. What does a 70% match in a course taken elsewhere really mean for a student taking other courses at Miami?</p>
<p><b><u>Increase residency requirement</u></b> from 32 baccalaureate hours earned from Miami to 45 hours (with a corresponding percentage for associate degrees). We also should review the “terminal residency” requirement of 12 of the last 20 credit hours being earned at Miami. [R11]</p>	<p>Critical.</p>	<p>A Miami degree should reflect a significant experience earning course credit from Miami. The current requirement is too low. This should be relatively easy to implement. Need to decide when this would apply and other issues such as which class would be impacted by this?</p>
<p><b><u>Remove the two-year on-campus living/ “Sophomore Residency Requirement” requirement.</u></b> An alternative would be to reduce this requirement to one year. [R14]</p>	<p>Important.</p>	<p>Could this requirement discourage students with lots of AP credit from attending MU? Work with Student Affairs to analyze the effect of sophomore / second year experiences.</p>

**Miami University**

Division of Student Affairs Site Visit

February 11 &amp; 12, 2010

Submitted by Cynthia Cherrey

**Introduction**

This report contains observations and recommendations gleaned from information gathered during the February visit to Miami University. The purpose of this review was to supplement the Division of Student Affairs self study with a focus on organizational structure and processes. The review involved content analysis of published and web material, the self study report, and the group and individual interviews with students, administrators and student affairs staff during the visit to the campus. It consists of general observations, recommendations on organizational processes and structure and concluding remarks.

**General Observations**

## Role of Student Affairs as a Campus Leader

Miami University has a strong reputation as a university with a focus on an engaged undergraduate learning experience. Student Affairs is part of this core identity of the university. It is clearly outlined in the mission and goals of the university and is supported by the president. A highly visible vice president for student affairs must be able to invest the time to influence decision making on an institutional level and on the Divisional level align the Division's work with the university's mission for student engagement and success. Dr. Barbara Jones is such a person who comes to Miami with a national reputation for student affairs work. Her ability to do this work relies heavily on the coordinate and effective performance of strong divisional leadership among the directors and the associate/assistant vice presidents.

## Breakthrough Thinking

Einstein once said, "Everything in the world has changed since we split the atom except one thing, how we think." As is often the case, when an institution is successful with a proud history of tradition and success it can be challenging to think outside the norm and take action accordingly. But these economic times are not the norm, and different ways of thinking and doing are necessary to meet the challenge. It can be overwhelming to work harder with fewer resources. However, *the intent should not be to do more with less, but rather to do differently.* This takes breakthrough thinking in how you organize yourselves, sunset principles to eliminate programs and services that are no longer working and to focus delivery of programs and services that are central to student success at Miami. The attention to innovative thinking and new organizational patterns will be necessary to respond to the present and

future economic implications. I heard about some wonderful pockets of innovation throughout the Division. But to leverage the innovation, staff cannot operate from a mindset of marginality. Your work is central to the mission of the university. Believe it and Act on It.

#### Resource Use and Allocation

There is no question that these are turbulent times in higher education. However, the crisis of the economy also lends itself to capitalize on opportunities to look at new and different ways to deliver programs and services. While it is clear that the Division is thinly staffed in some areas with many staff filling multiple roles, it is important that an honest review of service delivery be conducted out of the Vice President's office. Benchmarking, standards from accrediting bodies and professional associations for units within Student Affairs could be used as resources in this effort. The results will provide a clear base for future decisions that have credibility with university leaders.

#### A Seamless Student Experience

Promote the vision of a fully integrated student experience. Students see the university's organizational chart as flat. They do not see or care about the hierarchical structure within a university. Student Affairs practitioners often are the "bridgers" on a college campus. Overcoming our own silos within Student Affairs begins to remove obstacles to the out of classroom experience. Breaking down artificial barriers between the academic and non-academic dimensions of the student experience will increase retention and enrich the student experience. This includes collaborating effectively with academic affairs in providing existing services and programs and planning for the future so that students experience seamless support.

#### Create the Most Effective Relationships

If relationships are our legacy then they must be constructed with integrity. The Division of Student Affairs ought to shape itself with relationships at the center of their work. The quality of relationships with others has a powerful impact on the ability to progress and get the things done that must get done. However, because of the focus on task accomplishment and reactions to the economic crisis, we often do not give complete consideration to showing care for relationships. Relationships between certain programs and services will create a synergy that is most effective in student success. Relationships between certain people have also proven to create positive outcomes. These relationships should not only be maintained but an even greater intentional focus on deepening and broadening positive relationships between staff in the Division and with colleagues outside the Division.

The heart of building a successful relationship rests in your ability to practice effective communication over time. I have found Larry Roper's guiding principles helpful to use in our work.

Listen generously;

Be on each other's side;

Speak the truth;

Take care of the other person;

Stay focused in the conversation;

Treat the conversation and each person as important;

Be clear about the value that you are producing; and

\*Manage each other's reputation. (The Art and Practical Wisdom of Student Affairs Leadership, 2002).

\* This last one is critical when developing collaborative relationships in order for the Division of Student Affairs to speak with one voice.

Following are the themes on organizational processes and structure that surfaced during the site visit.

### **Organizational Processes**

#### 1. Culture of assessment.

Student Affairs has begun to talk about creating a culture of assessment across the Division. The staff already has a wealth of data through NSSE, CIRP, CSS, and other national surveys to make decisions regarding student success. Student Affairs should be known as the depository, keeper and transmitter of student data for the university stakeholders. In addition, this effort needs to be broadened to include evidenced based data from every department that includes student learning outcomes, assessment strategies, benchmark data and goals for improvement. How do you know if you are successful? Every program and service should eventually be able to answer the question of whether or not they are having an impact on student learning and student retention. A focus on meaningful learning outcomes that link programs and services to the institutional mission will hold each professional accountable in positive ways that empower. Purposeful data in every department should be meaning added—what do they add to the Miami experience.

#### 2. Institutionalize the discipline of resource use and allocation review in conjunction with assessment.

At a time of renewal and organizational transformation, budgeting is more than appropriating funds and managing costs. Seize the opportunity to display the courage to channel resources into key areas that make the most impact on helping students have the engaged Miami experience. While the annual review should be more than a cost benefit analysis, it would be wise to integrate such data with assessment results. The objective is to ascertain where people, money, time and space are being put to use in the most effective ways on behalf of the mission to educate students. While all programs and services are deemed important to the Student Affairs mission, clearly some will rise to the top of a list of priorities. The review results

combined with assessment data will help you to stop things as well as to do those things that are most important.

3. Create a sunset law for programs.

At times the programs we create and implement can contribute to organizational inflexibility. And, at times we develop such ownership and identity with a program that we believe we need to keep it going at all costs! This is no longer sustainable in today's environment. Institutionalize a process for sun setting programs. A sunset law would give each program a three to five year cycle before it is eliminated or an improved program takes its place.

4. Reward experimentation and innovation, not perfection.

Perfection requires the status quo. We think perfection is synonymous with competence. However, in a changing environment the standards of competence do not remain the same. Encourage experimentation. Through your staff development activities and functions, find ways to reward the experimentation and pockets of innovation. When we increase informed experimentation we expand innovation in our organization.

5. Use "the retention word" in your daily work with one another.

The continued creation of the engaged learning university at Miami involves appropriate levels of challenge and support. It also requires constant attention to the retention of students. Does the evidence support that counseling efforts are retaining students? What is the evidence that the Rinella Learning Center retains students? The information most likely exists, the key is communicating on a consistent basis with the academic deans on the educational services delivered to the community and the resulting successes (or lack thereof) on retention efforts.

6. Establish a clear vision and set of priorities.

Generating the vision for the engaged learning model requires Student Affairs to align their vision even closer to the learning imperative adopted by Miami University. A clear vision for the Division of Student Affairs with a focus on two or three areas that are at the intersecting points between student and academic affairs will serve as the much needed compass to chart the future direction of the Division of Student Affairs.

7. Divisional Leadership.

Leadership in the Division needs to be broad enough and yet small enough to make decisions. The steps of reducing the Director's Group now gives the Vice President the working group needed to assist with decision making. This group has the breadth and depth of experience needed to actualize Divisional priorities and act upon those priorities. In addition the freshness of ideas that can emerge from younger staff at the mid and entry levels of the organization needs to be cultivated. One suggestion is to have an emergent student affairs leadership group that meets with the vice president on an ongoing basis, perhaps once or twice a semester.

## Organizational Structure

### 1. Create An Organizational Chart and A Relational Chart

Most of the time we chart an organization by its structure and function which is important within the university hierarchy. However, organizations are comprised of interdependent, web-like relationships, and therefore need to be understood as relational entities. People accomplish organizational functions. Success in student affairs at Miami is dependent, in part, on finding and building relationships with the rich sources of information across the campus. Some supervisors have learned through trial and error that one effective way of training new staff is by giving them a list of people to meet. This strategy recognizes that work gets done through other people. What would happen if in addition to the organizational structure maps that have been outlined for the Division that you also mapped out a relational chart?

### 2. Departments of One

It is difficult for any office that is composed of one or two staff members to adequately serve a specific constituency or the population as a whole. Coupled with departments comprised of one or two staff, there seems to be multiple directors with few program coordinator positions and administrative support in some areas of the Division. This results in breadth with little depth. These departments need to be rethought within the larger scheme of the priorities of the Division in terms of consolidation of services and programs and in some revision of titles. How can areas within Student Affairs be redesigned to give both depth and breadth to areas? Which areas would gain synergy if they were combined?

### 3. Collaborations that could increase effectiveness and enhance student success. The following areas surfaced throughout the interviews where staff and students believe collaborative efforts for greater synergy or being redesigned to gain breadth and depth would result in greater structural alignment.

- Leadership programs within Student Affairs and across campus. This could be a signature program for the university with the Wilkes Institute as the flagship. I understand that there was an attempt through a prior task force to determine what leadership programs should look like at Miami. There may be another way to focus this work. First, rethink how the Division can find ways to collaborate within Student Affairs. Model the way. Second, find ways to collaborate across the university. To do this in a strategic way, first and foremost, with other interested faculty and staff, determine what the philosophical approach is to leadership research, development and education at Miami. Does this mean that it is closely aligned with the Learning Partnerships Model, servant leadership, global leadership, and/or ethical leadership? All are noble and worthy, but most importantly the philosophy and practices need to be closely aligned with the mission and values that are taught at Miami.
- Leadership and civic engagement. Contingent on the decision regarding the philosophical underpinnings of the leadership program, civic engagement could fall

within the area of leadership programs. The Division of Student Affairs could serve as the portal for all community service and support the classroom experience for service learning courses by coordinating the service learning component for the faculty. This endeavor would take a university wide effort to coordinate programs and services across the university. However, since almost 80% of the students at Miami engage in some form of community service it would serve the campus well to have a coordinated, university wide approach. It would give the university a leading edge on service learning and also lessen the confusion that now exists with your partners in the surrounding community who get contacted by multiple departments at the university. If the university believes civic engagement is a priority, it should take the initiative to centralize the coordination efforts. If not, Student Affairs should not invest resources in a fragmented model.

- Student Activities, Cliff Alexander Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and Off Campus Affairs. A coordinated effort for student involvement and engagement; responsible community behavior is important for students who live on and off campus; in organized student groups and in informal activities. Consideration should be given to consolidating these offices.
  - Gender programs. Women's Centers have been integral to university life for many years and still remain so. However, their missions have evolved. In today's environment where women are more than 50% of the student population, the mission of these offices has changed to incorporate areas such as gender violence education and intervention, sexual assault support and advocacy. At Miami, is there a way to incorporate sexual assault services and women's programs with the Counseling Centers program for Women and Men Issues? Or does the Women's Center become the Center for Women and Men that support education and advocacy for women and men as well as sexual assault prevention and response.
  - Diversity is such an integral and important aspect of preparing students to work and live in a global society. At Miami, there is not clarity around what is meant by diversity. An initial step would be for student affairs, with the support of the president, to bring people together across the campus (admissions, academics, institutional equity, international student/study abroad and student affairs) to define diversity at Miami, to articulate how to build the campus culture to ensure that all students recognize and benefit from diversity at Miami and to analyze attrition patterns. The students I met with, (unfortunately all white students) noted that the Office of Diversity is starting to make progress and they commented on it being a welcoming place for students. What a great opportunity to build upon.
4. Advancement and Assessment. Two critical and central services that should report to the vice president for student affairs. Advancement already does. Assessment needs to do so as well. As an umbrella service for the Division as Student Affairs it requires vice president oversight. One organizing structure would be to have an assessment council comprised of mid level staff



throughout the Division who works with Dr. Beckett and Vice President Jones. In addition, through the relationship that already exists with School of Education for graduate internships and positions, a doctoral student could be used by the Division to supplement the present staff in its assessment efforts. This, in turn, is a wonderful opportunity for a doctoral student in higher education interested in higher education assessment. One additional note on advancement. It is impressive what has been raised for student affairs initiatives at Miami University. I have never seen a student affairs division that has so much access to potential donors. This is one extraordinary way to support innovative programs and services. As a director in the division of student affairs, if Mr. Kumler or VP Jones asks you to call a potential donor or meet with alum, do it. The benefits to the students of Miami can come back ten- fold.

5. What Should Student Affairs leverage now for future student success that could strengthen the Division of Student Affairs and the university? Programs that have the greatest potential for success are those that are at the intersecting points of academic and student affairs.
  - Living learning communities have been the hallmark of the Division. They need to be looked at again in light of the changing Miami experience. There is so much opportunity in this area to leverage the present success of the program and make it even better. How can they be more aligned with the university's goal of enhancing academic excellence? How can they be strengthened to engage the students at a deeper level and involve faculty in meaningful ways?
  - Transitions: both the freshman advising experience and the sophomore year experience have greater potential. The Freshman Advising with a greater focus on individual advising is seeing success and is looked toward as a critical function that is housed in the residence program. Keep it and build from there. Likewise, the sophomore experience is one year old. It needs an honest evaluation to determine what worked. In addition focus the sophomore year program more on career development, internships, faculty involvement and perhaps leadership development.
  - Career services –another great intersecting point with academic affairs. Under new leadership this office has the opportunity to focus its work more closely with the academic enterprise by working closer with the deans of all the Schools in career development, internships and career placement.
  - Leadership programs. As noted above, this can be a signature program that crosses over areas within the Division (residence life, the freshmen year and sophomore year experience, Greek life, etc.) It can also be a signature program for the university.

## Conclusion

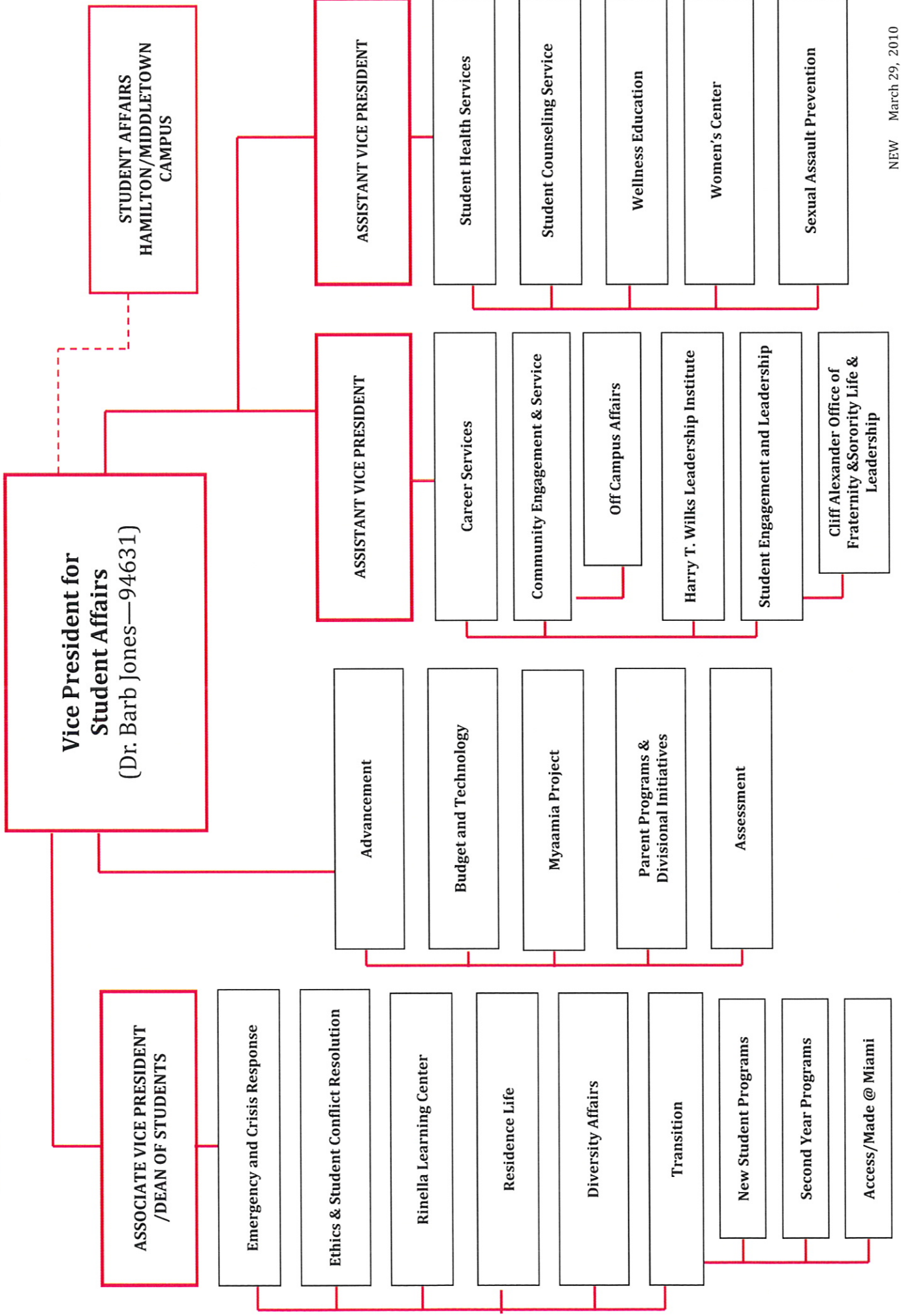
Higher education can and must make a difference in our society. Our students will impact the world in greater proportion than their numbers. Students learn in part by watching what we do as individuals and institutions. If we are to prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century we must work to transform our institutions and ourselves. The time for student affairs to take a significant role in institutional leadership is now.

Student Affairs practitioners have many of the capacities to help organizations to transform themselves. Relating is a key strength of the profession because we have so many opportunities to practice bringing people together in effective collaborations. We also have experience helping students integrate their learning experiences especially in relation to developing the whole person. While these are good starting places, student affairs staff will also have to let go of the constraining beliefs they have about their capacity to influence institutional change. As practitioners in the world of academe, we often see ourselves as being on the margin, as being powerless. Instead we need to recognize that we can either choose to remain passive or to influence the needed change in our institutions. Given the required changes at Miami in the upcoming years student affairs is critical toward this effort. It requires that you bring your talents to the table, make necessary changes in practice, challenge traditional ways of working and develop the new relationships needed to influence institutional change.

It was evident that the Student Affairs Division at Miami University has a good sense of its strengths and a firm grasp on the areas where improvements are needed. The previously described implications and resulting recommendations are not all encompassing but rather provide an initial entrée for future discussion. The most important outcome from this report is that it serves as a catalyst for continual discussion which results in appropriate actions taken to ensure student success and the ongoing strengthening of the Division of Student Affairs at Miami. Student Affairs is a well performing group of professionals who can take it to the next level. In other words, trust your own assessments with the information provided, make the brave decisions needed and act on them.



# MIAMI UNIVERSITY DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE 2010-2011



## Reorganization of the Institute of Environmental Sciences as the Institute for the Environment and Sustainability

The Institute of Environmental Sciences was created in 1969, in response to “the urgent need for a new program which is truly interdisciplinary in structure... and which contains a curriculum geared to train a modern environmental scientist equipped with the tools and philosophy to cope with new problems as they arise”. IES has been meeting this need for more than 40 years, and has graduated more than 640 students with M.En. degrees.

In the four decades since the founding of IES, many aspects of environmental education have changed at Miami. There has been a large increase in numbers of faculty teaching and conducting research in environmental topics, and we have created co-majors in Environmental Science and Environmental Principles and Practice as well as a PhD program in Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology (EEEEB). We are now in a position to more fully integrate the existing M.En. program with these related programs to create a stronger Institute with closer ties to academic departments involved in environmental work and a firm resource base that will carry us forward for years to come. To that end we are bringing the undergraduate co-majors, the M.En. program, and the EEEB PhD together in a reorganized Institute.

We are also taking this opportunity to change our name, to the **Institute for the Environment and Sustainability**. This change recognizes that: 1) our work extends well beyond the sciences, to include business, engineering, the fine arts, and education; and 2) our broad-based interdisciplinary program is ideally positioned to address key issues of environmental protection and human development that are commonly considered as “Sustainability”.

The M.En. program remains at the core of the Institute, and the curriculum of the program will not be affected by this reorganization. We will continue to, in the words of the 1970 proposal to create the program, “provide the student with an integrated scientific, political, and humanistic training that will allow him/her to make reasoned judgments on problems concerning...the environment”.

Within the next year an external search for a new IES Director will be conducted and 4-5 joint faculty appointments will be created, linking IES with at least four academic divisions. Initially, joint appointments will come from existing faculty who will have instructional roles in the undergraduate co-majors, the M.En. program and the EEEB program. In addition, a larger number of faculty members (currently over 30) will continue to have Affiliate status in the Institute.

I hope you will join me in celebrating our rich history of accomplishment, and in inaugurating the next phase in the life of the Institute, at a reception to be held in the Club Room of Marcum Center, from 4 to 6 pm on Earth Day, April 22, 2010.

