

Envisioning a Post-Departmental Structure for the University

Transcending Departmental Boundaries, Part II

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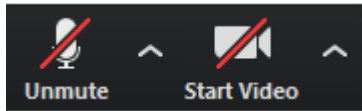
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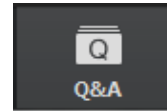
Mic and Video Controls

Click the mic and camera pictures until they have a red line indicating they are both off.



Asking a Question

To ask the presenters a question, type it into the Chat panel and press send.





Part I: Aligning Disciplinary Activities with Institutional Priorities

Wednesday, April 24, 2019

12:00 PM ET - 1:00 PM ET

Part II: Envisioning a Post-Departmental Structure for the University

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

1:00 PM ET - 2:00 PM ET

The Four Reasons That Universities Must Adapt

Changing Demands from Students, Funders, and Society



Rapidly Shifting Program Demand

- Declines in many traditional disciplines
- Rapid growth in pre-professional programs
- Strong interest in cross-disciplinary programs
- Growth in programs for working adults



Changing Student Needs and Priorities

- More first gen, low-income, and under-represented students
- Students balancing work and family obligations with study
- Incoming students bringing more transfer credits
- Increasing emphasis on career outcomes and relevance



Growing Focus on High Impact Research

- Increasing competition for traditional disciplinary grants
- Growth in large-scale multidisciplinary awards
- Desire to contribute to innovation and entrepreneurship
- Demands from funders to demonstrate impact of research



Increasing Pressure on Financial Subsidies

- Flat or declining enrollments in most regions
- Public funding failing to keep up with rising costs
- Growing institutional investment in research
- Wide variations in faculty workloads and output

The Archimedean Point

Departments Are the Fulcrum for Every Major Change Initiative

Key Decisions Effectively Controlled by Departments:

- Hiring
- Tenure and Promotion
- Workload and releases

- Majors
- New program launches

- Course redesign
- Online courses

Faculty

Curriculum

Program Offerings

Student Success

Pedagogy

Space

- Major requirements
- Course offerings
- Gen ed component

- Major advising
- Credit transfer into major

- Course scheduling
- Faculty offices

Provosts and Deans

"I can't do anything if the faculty won't go along with it."

Department Chairs

"I don't get to make any decisions."

Academic Departments

Download the Multidisciplinary Reorg Toolkit



The screenshot shows the EAB website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Careers, Contact Us, EAB Daily Briefing, and a welcome message to David. Below this is a search bar and a secondary navigation bar with links for What We Do, Blogs, Events, Why EAB, and Your EAB. The main content area features a blue header with the text 'EAB / Research / Academic Affairs Forum / The Multidisciplinary Reorganization Toolkit'. The article title is 'The Multidisciplinary Reorganization Toolkit' by Alexa Silverman, dated March 29, 2019. The article text discusses the challenges of transitioning from siloed departments to a collaborative academic governance model, introducing a division model that organizes responsibility for effective multidisciplinary governance. It mentions that in traditional models, department chairs oversee administrative needs and represent disciplines, while the division model splits these roles between a professionalized administrative leader (the division head) and a group of elected disciplinary representatives (faculty leads).

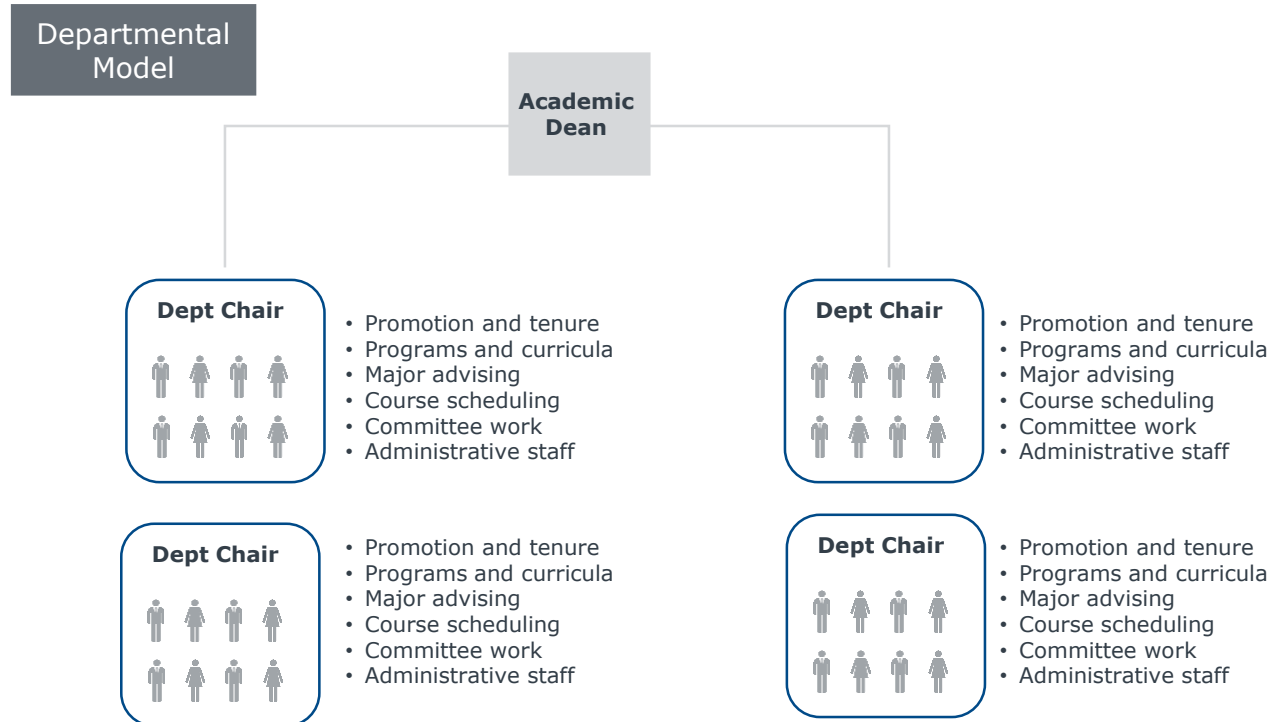
Contents

1. Sample Timeline for Academic Reorganization
2. Divisional Reorganization Talking Points
3. 8 Task Forces to Guide Academic Reorganization
4. Divisional Leadership Position Descriptions: Division Heads and Faculty Leads
5. Divisional Faculty Evaluation Checklist
6. 50 Indicators of Successful Academic Reorganization

<https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/academic-affairs-forum/toolkits/multidisciplinary-reorganization-toolkit>

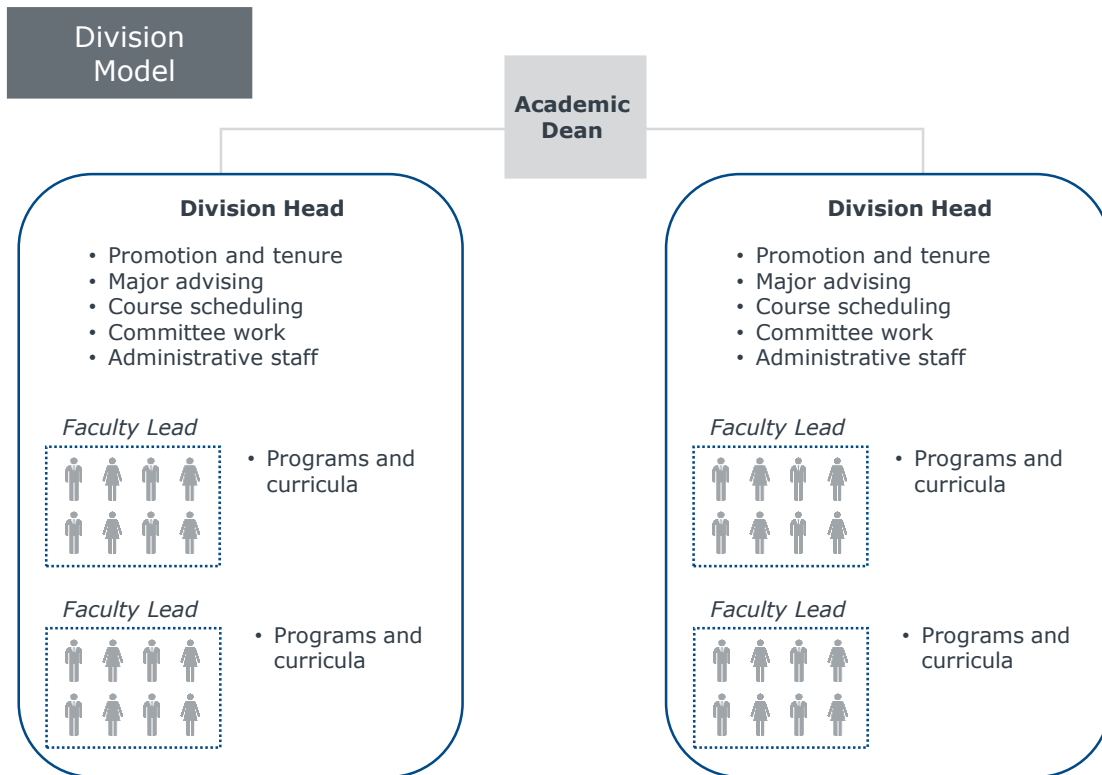
The Traditional Departmental Structure

Organizational Silos Aligned with Academic Disciplines



An Alternative Approach to the Structure Problem

Cross-Disciplinary 'Division' Model Supersedes Traditional Departments



But What About...?

Common Faculty Objections to the Divisional Model



Won't divisions eviscerate **faculty governance**?



All faculty governance structures **remain the same.**



Will divisions concentrate more decision-making power in the **provost and deans**?



Division heads (tenured faculty) actually take over some dean decisions.



Will divisions destroy **disciplinary excellence**?



Faculty are **still organized into disciplines** with their own faculty coordinators.



Will divisions mean getting rid of academic **programs**?



Separating admin costs from programs makes it **easier to preserve small programs.**



Will divisions mean the end of **tenure**?



Tenure decisions are simply made at the **divisional level.**



Will I be judged by **another discipline's standards**?



Divisions supplement disciplinary excellence with **other mission priorities.**

Not Such a New Idea

New Institutions Decide Departments a Barrier to Undergraduate Education



First class 1971 (WA)

- No majors
- **No departments**



First class 1972 (ME)

- Bachelor's in Human Ecology
- **No departments**



First class 1970 (MA)

- Students design their own concentration
- **No departments**



First class 2002 (MA)

- Electrical, Mechanical, Computer Engineering
- **No departments**



First class 2007 (BC)

- Bachelor of Arts & Sciences with interdisciplinary concentrations
- **No departments**



MINERVA[®]
SCHOOLS AT KGI

First class 2014 (CA)

- Five Bachelor's: Social Sciences, Arts, Natural Sciences, Computer Science, Business
- **No departments**

Reorganizing to Adapt to 21st-Century Needs

Berea's Divisions Recognize Cost Concerns, Interdisciplinary Opportunities



Maintaining a Unique Access Mission

- 2008: Stock market crash limits Berea's ability to serve its primarily low-income student body
- Berea restructures from **30 departments** into **six divisions**, partially for cost savings but primarily to:
 - Increase interdisciplinarity
 - Create opportunities for faculty collaboration

Many New Opportunities for Faculty

- ▲ Increase in **cross-disciplinary faculty hiring**
- ▲ New interdisciplinary **courses**
- ▲ New interdisciplinary **minors**
- ▲ Increase in **grants** for interdisciplinary work
- ▲ Increased adoption of novel, **active-learning** pedagogies

Berea's Divisional Structure

Organizational Changes Largely Invisible to Students

Division I: Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Nursing, Physics

Division II: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Computer Science, Economics and Business, Sustainability & Environmental Studies, Technology and Applied Design

Division III: Child and Family Studies, Health & Human Performance, Psychology, Sociology

Division IV: Communication, English, Foreign Languages, Music, Theatre

Division V: Art and Art History, Asian Studies, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Religion

Division VI: African and African American Studies, Appalachian Studies, Education Studies, Peace and Social Justice Studies, Women's and Gender Studies



Reorganizing for Multidisciplinary Growth

Arizona State's Divisions Allow Innovative PhD Programs to Expand



A Budget Crisis Becomes a Divisional Opportunity

- 2008: post-recession, state of AZ announces severe budget cuts to universities
- Divisional reorganization saves ~ **\$9M/year** through position reductions:
 - 2 dean positions
 - 4 administrator positions
 - 18 chair positions
 - 86 contract staff positions

Examples of New Academic Units

- School of Life Sciences
- School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies
- School of Sustainability
- College of Health Solutions
- School for the Future of Innovation in Society
- Institute for Design and the Arts
- School of Politics and Global Studies

Aligning Structure with a Distinctive Mission

Plymouth State's Ongoing Reorganization Already Increases Collaboration



Supporting Distinct Regional Needs

- 2016: Plymouth State, under severe state budget cuts, announces it will restructure from **24 departments in three colleges** into **seven "cluster" divisions** (reorganization is ongoing)
- President Donald Birx adapts cluster model from research universities onto teaching and learning, living-learning spaces, student research labs

Proposed Divisions

- Arts and Technologies
- Health & Human Enrichment
- Education, Democracy, and Social Change
- Exploration & Discovery
- Innovation & Entrepreneurship
- Justice & Security
- Tourism, Environment & Sustainable Development

"It's too difficult to identify places to excel when everyone looks the same. **Where are your actual strengths?** If you need a good physics department, I can find 50 that are better than we are right down the street. But by putting disciplines together the way we are to solve tomorrow's challenges—there, we can be one of the best."

*Donald Birx
President, Plymouth State University*

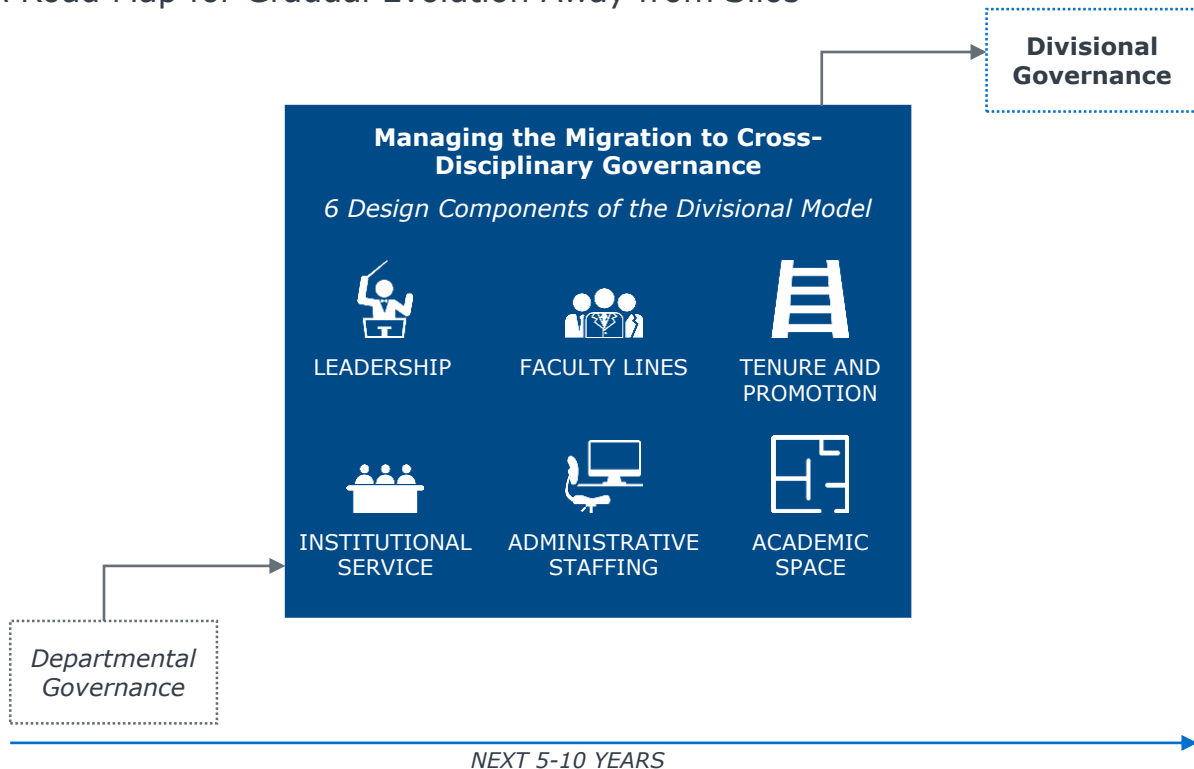
Growing Interest in Academic Restructuring

Similar Goals, Different Stages, Distinctive Approaches



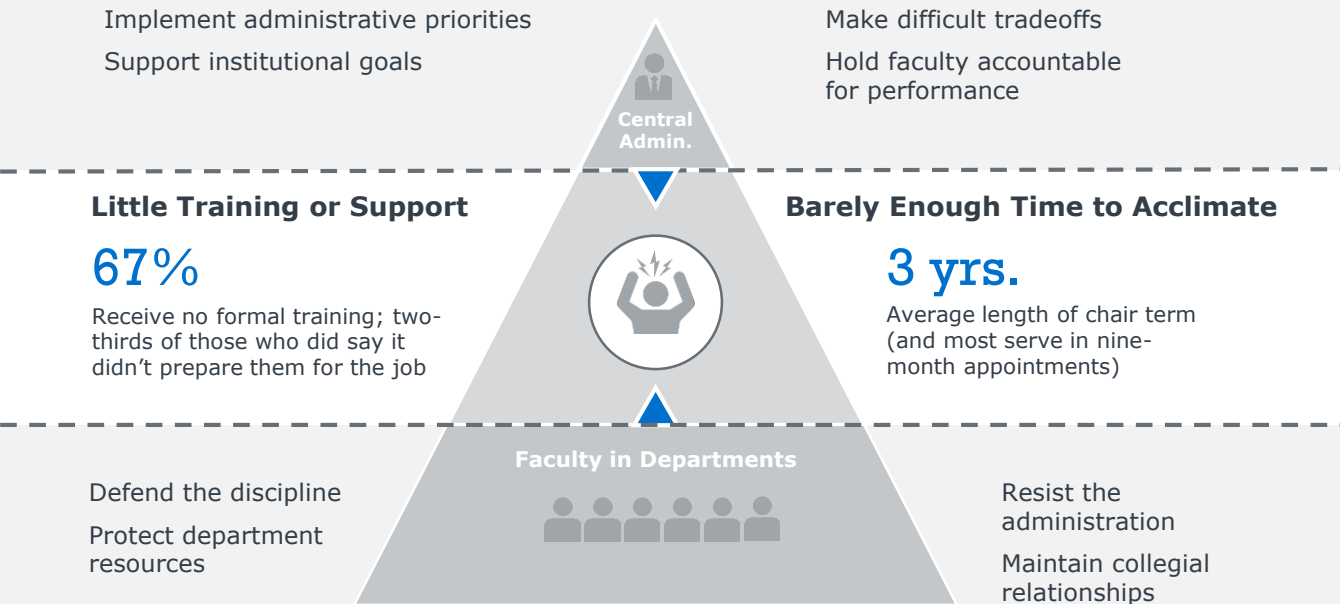
The Path to Divisional Governance

A Road Map for Gradual Evolution Away from Silos



Faculty Rep or Academic Manager?

The Irresolvable Tension in the Department Chair Role



A New Leader for a New Structure

Division Heads Are a Hybrid of Traditional Chair and Dean Roles

High-Level Resource Strategy

- Budget and administration
- Financial and enrollment planning
- Metrics and goal-setting
- Cross-program resource allocation



Devolved from central leadership

 **Division Heads** lead multidisciplinary academic units

Evolved from department chairs

Faculty Leadership

- Staffing and personnel management
- Schedule and teaching assignments
- Faculty hiring and evaluation
- Assessment and accreditation needs



1 A Faculty Leader for Faculty

Tenure-line faculty are selected via competitive application process to serve as division head

2 Rightsizing Compensation

At most institutions, division heads should receive a stipend and a lower teaching load

3 Scaling with Institution Size

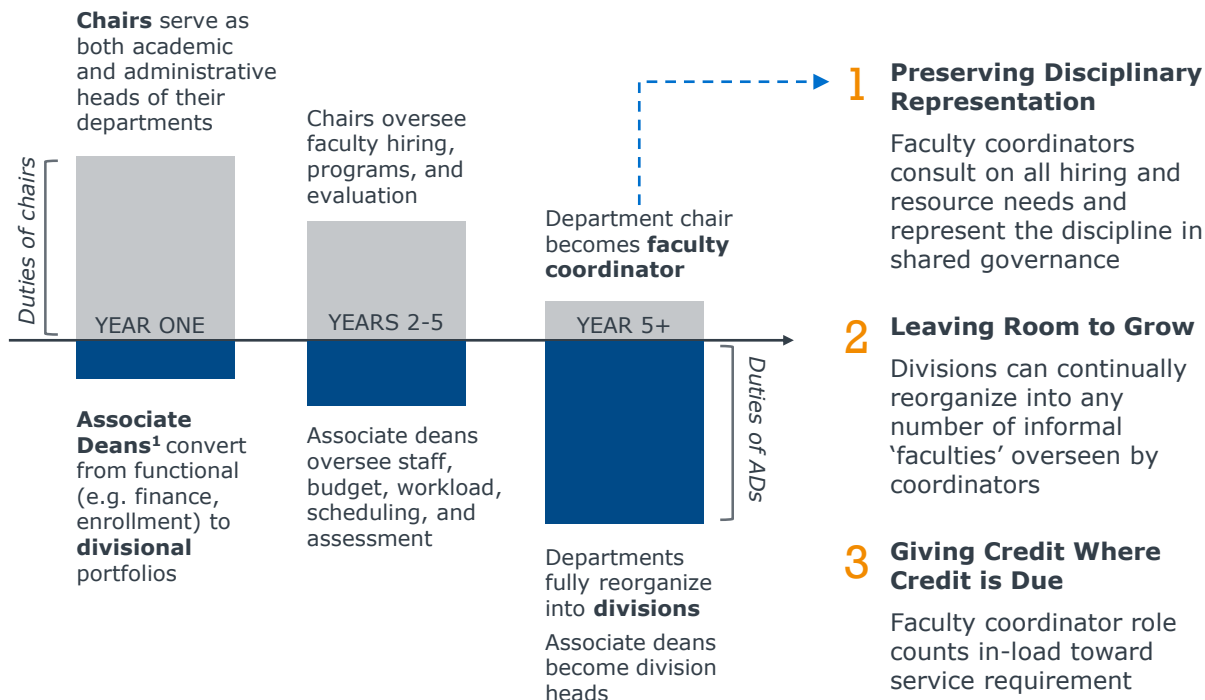
Division heads report to deans at larger institutions and to provosts at smaller institutions

A dean or provost should oversee approximately **3-7** reporting units

Some **small colleges** may convert into divisions, reducing the number of deans

Shifting the Balance of Academic Leadership

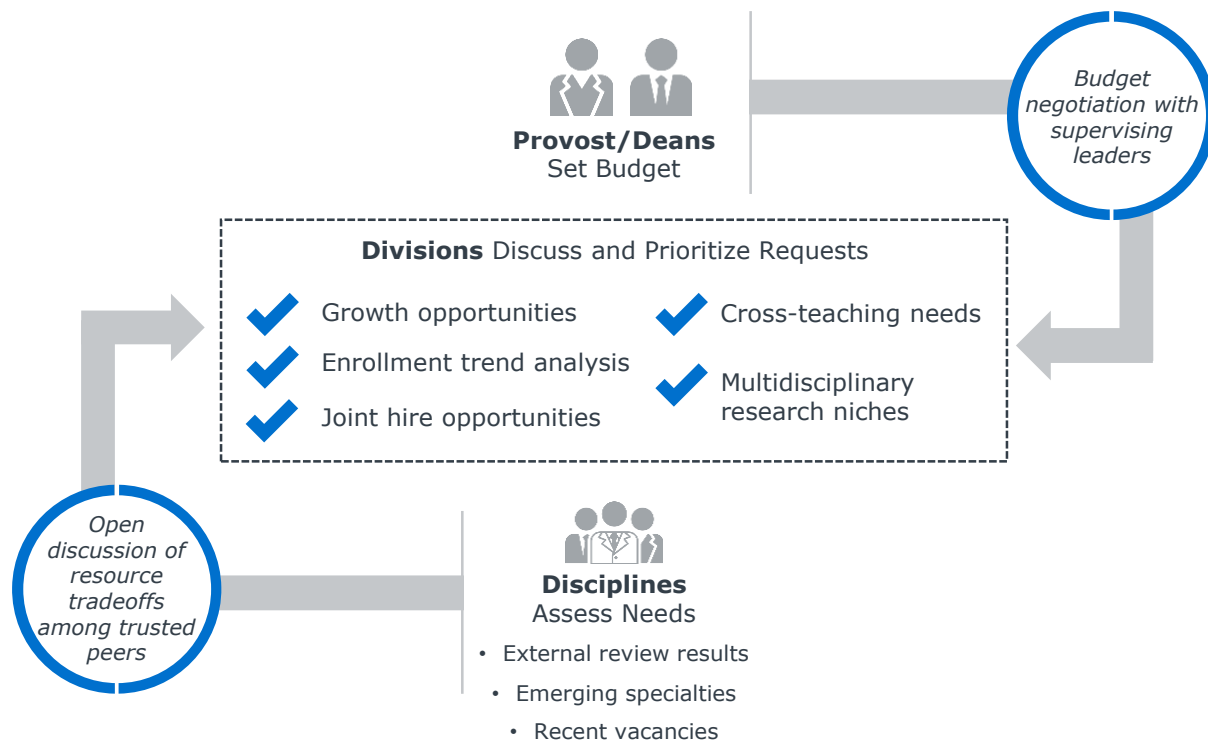
A Typical Migration Path from Distributed to Divisional Governance



1) Or associate provosts at smaller institutions.

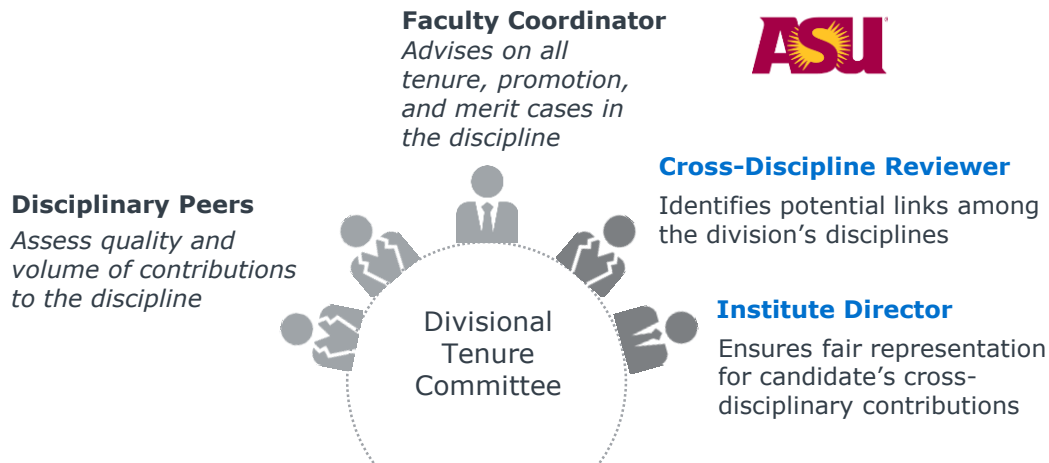
A Two-Way Street

Divisional Faculty Line Strategy Is Flexible, Efficient, and Fair



Broadening the Review Committee

Division-Level Tenure Allows for Holistic and Strategic Evaluation



Some Considerations Still Depend on Institutional Policy, Mission, and Size

- **What size** is each committee?
- How many reviewers are **cross-disciplinary**? How many are **cross-divisional**?
- What **criteria** are used for evaluation?

One Avoidable Reason Faculty Are Overworked

Siloed Committees Consume Faculty Time Without Meaningful Output

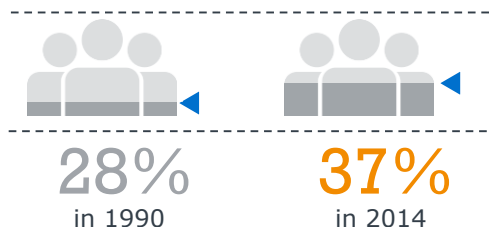
One Department...How Many Committees?

Faculty Committees, One English Department, State Flagship University

- Mentoring Committee
- Merit Advisory Committee
- Committee on New Appointments
- Interdepartmental Liaison
- Committee on Assessment
- Committee for Undergraduate Writing
- Graduate Executive Committee
- Scholarship Committee
- Job Market Committee
- Conferences Committee
- Committee for Adjunct Affairs
- Inter-Campus Committee
- Web & Digital Committee
- Undergraduate Enrichment Committee
- Committee on Promotion to Professor
- Promotion and Tenure Committee
- Committee on New Appointments
- Creative Writing Committee
- MA Writing Project Committee
- Undergraduate Committee
- Committee on Committees

No Time Left for Meaningful Work

Percentage of Faculty Who Report Spending More Than Four Hours per Week on Committee Work



A Case of Misplaced Incentives

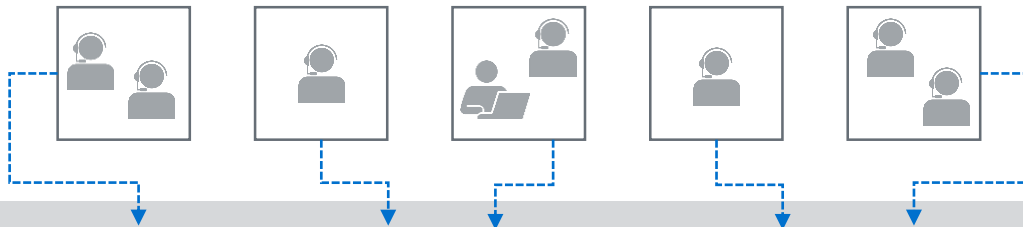
“As long as faculty are required to do service to the department, you end up creating committees just to fulfill the requirement. We have one committee to dig a ditch and another to fill it in.”

Provost, Public Research University in the Northwest U.S.

Staying Close But Reaching Far

The Benefits of Division-Level Shared Service “Hubs”

1-2 administrative generalists per academic department



Receptionist

Faculty maintain access to collocated administrative support



Web Coordinator

Staff in divisions can specialize, providing a career ladder



Registrar Liaison

Consolidation of offices allows for process streamlining



Others, as Needed

Staffing should reflect unique divisional needs



The **University of Alaska-Anchorage** reorganized administration in one college into four divisional hubs, allowing them to hire three new specialized staff for student success and reinvest **\$300K** toward university priorities

Rethinking Space to Maximize Collaboration

Plymouth State Aligns Entire Campus Along Divisional Themes

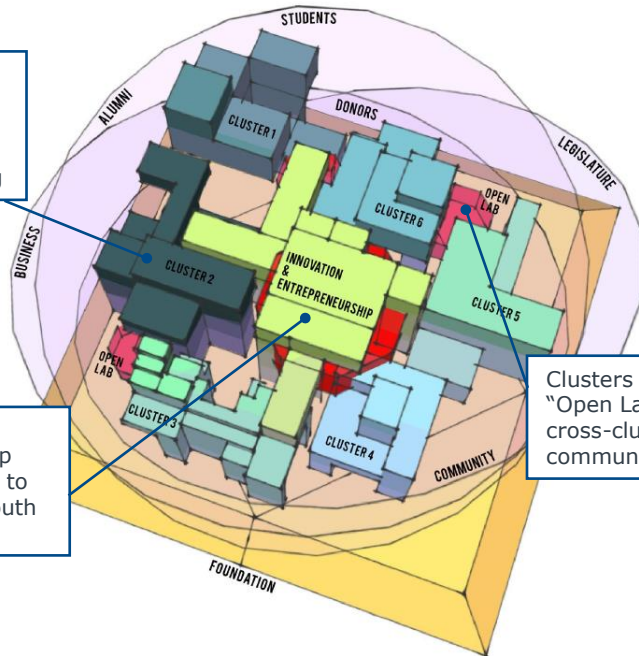
Plymouth State University, "Our Future Structure"



Each division ("cluster") will have its own space for teaching, research, and student housing

Innovation & Entrepreneurship cluster centered to represent Plymouth State's mission

Clusters **share** access to "Open Labs" which fund cross-cluster research and community projects



How Divisions Support Institutional Goals (1 of 3)



Institutional Goal	Benefits of Divisions in Supporting Strategy
<p>Reduce the cost of academic administration and streamline bureaucratic organizational structures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Division heads take on the responsibilities of multiple department chairs, deans, and academic affairs staff• Merged academic units enable the creation of smaller, more professionalized administrative offices
<p>Establish a financially sustainable structure for the university</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overhead costs are shared across a larger number of academic programs and faculty in each division than in a department model• Faculty lines are allocated by division, enabling division heads to carry out a more sustainable strategy of joint hires without impacting the sustainability of individual programs
<p>Align instructional costs with student demand without drastic program cuts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each division supports a wide variety of programs. New programs can be launched without creating new academic units• Division heads coordinate curricular streamlining across multiple programs, allowing programs to sustain themselves without requiring a large number of dedicated faculty

How Divisions Support Institutional Goals (2 of 3)



Institutional Goal	Benefits of Divisions in Supporting Strategy
Refocus faculty time toward core responsibilities and reduce reliance on part-time instructors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only a small number of division heads have administrative leadership requirements above and beyond the in-load service requirement• Faculty participate in a smaller number of division-level committees• Faculty have more opportunities to teach across the curriculum, allowing faculty in low-enrollment programs to teach in high-enrollment programs rather than relying on part-time instructors to meet student need
Facilitate faculty collaboration across disciplines in curriculum, pedagogy, and program development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Faculty are housed together in the same academic unit across multiple, related divisions and programs• Faculty have the freedom to identify with a divisional tenure home and multiple informal faculty cohorts ('faculties') regardless of which programs they teach in• Faculty share office and classroom space with peers across multiple disciplines
Reward innovative interdisciplinary work through faculty hiring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Faculty are tenured in a division based on their work's contribution to the division's needs as a whole• Division heads are incentivized to support interdisciplinary growth in divisions• Divisional organization facilitates scholarship and teaching around higher-order themes and trans-disciplinary 'wicked problems'

How Divisions Support Institutional Goals (3 of 3)



Institutional Goal	Benefits of Divisions in Supporting Strategy
Align program offerings, academic structures, and incentives with areas of institutional distinctiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divisional themes are designed to highlight areas of institutional strength• Divisional strategic planning conversations, program evaluation, and faculty evaluation encourage faculty to embed areas of distinctiveness in curriculum and scholarly work
Help students succeed in critical courses and navigate curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divisional planning encourages faculty to design courses and curricula for applicability across programs within their division• Faculty evaluation in division promotes course redesign for student success
Recognize and develop emerging faculty leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Division heads have elevated managerial responsibilities and more intensive training compared to traditional department chairs given their longer term of service, and are well-equipped to transition into dean or provost roles

Three Stages of Redesign

Potential Timeline for Divisional Transformation

PHASE 1: EDUCATE



Announce Divisional Transition and Inform the Campus Community

- **Purpose:** provide space for understanding the theory and goals of redesign, separate from implementation specifics
- **Milestones:**
 - Announce redesign
 - Create committees

PHASE 2: DESIGN



Determine New Organizational Model in Faculty-Led Committees

- **Purpose:** ensure faculty have input into how their communities will be organized, and design systems and processes
- **Milestones:**
 - Finalize org model
 - Select leadership

PHASE 3: IMPLEMENT



Transition the Campus from Departments into Multidisciplinary Units

- **Purpose:** pilot, then fully implement, the consolidation and reorganization of departments and spaces
- **Milestones:**
 - Pilot division model
 - Redesign spaces

Critical Questions in Assessing the Model

How to Decide If a Division Model Is Worth Pursuing

- Will it generate the cost savings necessary to significantly reduce a budget deficit?
- Where will those cost savings come from?
- How will it impact the quality of our academic programs?
- How will it impact student success?
- Will it help us to attract more students?
- Will it allow us to better engage stakeholders outside of the university?
- Can we effectively implement a change of this scale?
- What are our alternative options?



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