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Sample Timeline for Academic Reorganization

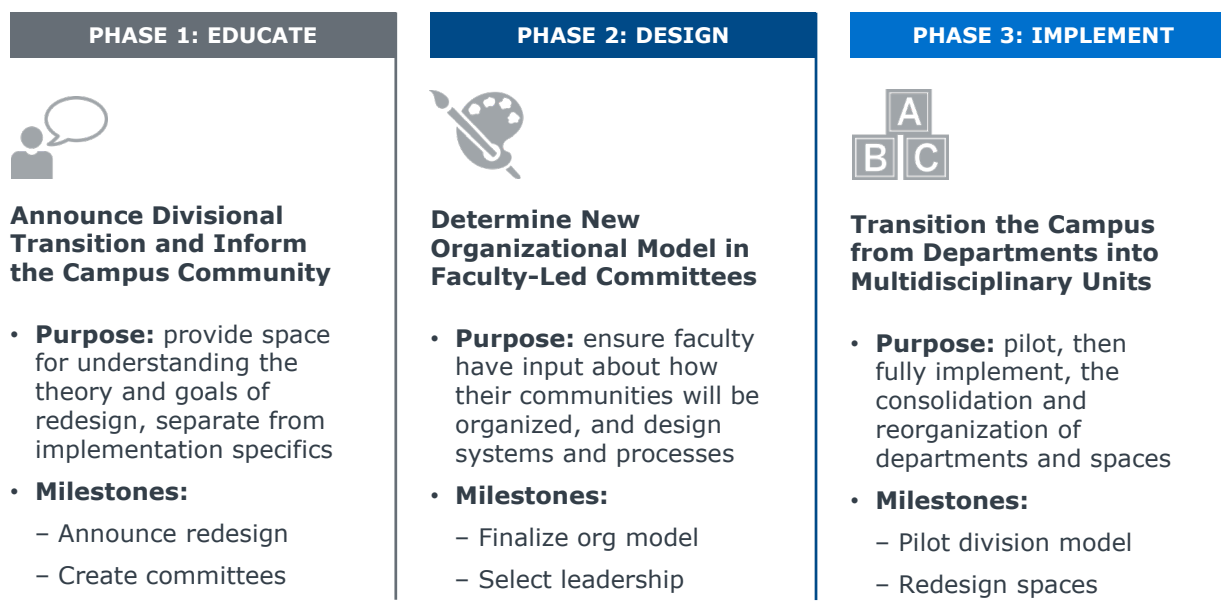## A Five-Year Vision for Transitioning to Divisional Governance

Three Ways to Use This Timeline

- Understand the steps involved in transitioning from single-discipline academic departments to multidisciplinary governance
- Plan five-year staffing and budget needs for a reorganization process
- Communicate with students, faculty, staff, and community partners about the timeline and actions needed for academic reorganization

Academic Affairs Forum

The Three Phases of Academic Reorganization

Structuring the Timeline for Campus-Wide Involvement in Organizational Design

Institutions that have reorganized from departmental to divisional governance typically accomplish the transition in three phases. In the first phase, leaders announce the upcoming reorganization and solicit campus feedback. In the second, faculty-led task forces determine the details of the new structure and related processes. In the third phase, administration and space are reorganized into divisions, including a pilot phase. Based on conversations with academic leaders and review of institutional documents, we estimate that this transition typically takes place over about five years.

PHASE 1: EDUCATE	PHASE 2: DESIGN	PHASE 3: IMPLEMENT
Announce Divisional Transition and Inform the Campus Community	**Determine New Organizational Model in Faculty-Led Committees**	**Transition the Campus from Departments into Multidisciplinary Units**
• **Purpose:** provide space for understanding the theory and goals of redesign, separate from implementation specifics	• **Purpose:** ensure faculty have input about how their communities will be organized, and design systems and processes	• **Purpose:** pilot, then fully implement, the consolidation and reorganization of departments and spaces
• **Milestones:**	• **Milestones:**	• **Milestones:**
– Announce redesign	– Finalize org model	– Pilot division model
– Create committees	– Select leadership	– Redesign spaces

Some institutional leaders may choose to skip or significantly shorten one or more of the three phases, especially if some of the institution's reorganization goals are urgent. When institutions are very small or very centralized, it is possible to make decisions without an extended period for faculty, student, and staff input. However, leaders have struggled to reorganize in a speedy and top-down process—or without piloting the divisional model in a smaller subset of units. Faculty, staff, and students often misunderstand the reasons for reorganization without enough time for discussion and reflection and resist the transition into a divisional model. Instead, committees should meet and solicit feedback more frequently if the transition needs to be accomplished in fewer than five years.

Academic Reorganization Timeline

Educate the Campus Community and Begin Designing the New Model

This document provides a sample timeline for a divisional reorganization taking place across five academic years. Presidents, provosts, and their team members involved in reorganization should reference this timeline before beginning the transition to academic divisions. Use the timeline to identify milestones for communicating with campus audiences, launching committees and task forces, conducting hiring and onboarding, and evaluating the success of reorganization efforts. Items within each academic term are not listed in a specific order.

Before announcing the transition to divisional governance:

❑ Determine institutional goals and success indicators, working across the president's cabinet, provost's cabinet, and institutional planning functions

❑ Meet with the board of trustees to discuss plans for the upcoming reorganization process

❑ Work with internal IT and marketing staff to build websites addressing divisional model for students, faculty, staff, and broader community

Year One

Fall Term

❑ Hold first open town hall meeting to announce divisional reorganization

❑ Provide student and faculty talking points/FAQ

❑ Send out call for participants for Reorganization Steering Committee

Spring Term

❑ Finalize Reorganization Steering Committee membership and hold monthly meetings

❑ Steering committee creates online forms, surveys, and other forums for campus feedback

Year Two

Fall Term

❑ Steering committee continues to hold monthly meetings

❑ Steering committee continues to collect campus feedback

❑ Hold second open town hall to share interim committee findings and discuss questions and concerns

EDUCATE

DESIGN

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Academic Reorganization Timeline (cont.)

Finalize Organizational Design and Pilot the Divisional Model

Year Two (cont.)

Spring Term

- ❑ Finalize divisional structure based on campus input, steering committee report, and agreement of the board of trustees. Faculty senate signs off on final decision.
- ❑ Hold third open town hall to discuss final divisional structure
- ❑ Send out call for participants for reorganization committees and task forces (other than the steering committee)
- ❑ Send out position description for division heads and invite applications

Summer Term

- ❑ Select division heads and begin onboarding and training
- ❑ Determine administrative staffing changes needed for transition to divisional model and conduct any necessary staff searches
- ❑ Adjust budget, cost centers, and financial systems to reflect divisional structure
- ❑ Identify division(s) to pilot interdisciplinary model of governance

These divisions will self-select to pilot the division head-faculty coordinator model starting in the following year, while other divisions will gradually transition away from the department chair model.

DESIGN

Year Three

Fall Term

- ❑ Finalize membership of reorganization committees and task forces; monthly meetings begin
- ❑ Faculty can elect to move into a different division more aligned with their teaching and research interests, with the agreement of their chair and/or division head
- ❑ Working within pilot division(s), finalized faculty cohorts ("faculties") determine how faculty coordinators will be selected and identify faculty coordinators for each of the division's programs/disciplines
- ❑ In non-pilot divisions, division heads take on responsibility for budget, administrative staff, and scheduling but do not oversee hiring, promotion, and tenure
- ❑ Administrative staff structure moves to the divisional "hub" model, with a small number of staff in each division

IMPLEMENT

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Academic Reorganization Timeline (cont.)

Transition from Pilot to Full Implementation of Divisions

Year Three (cont.)

Spring Term

- ❑ Task forces and committees continue to hold monthly meetings
- ❑ Hold fourth open town hall to discuss results of divisions so far and share feedback
- ❑ Pilot divisions select faculty coordinators to oversee programmatic needs
- ❑ Cross-division programs and disciplines begin to select coordinators to manage programmatic needs among multiple units
- ❑ Interim report due from academic space committee

Summer Term

- ❑ Build-outs begin in academic spaces as recommended by committee report
- ❑ Faculty begin to move offices to align with divisional structure
- ❑ Training continues for division heads

Year Four

Fall Term

- ❑ Final reports due from all task forces and committees
- ❑ Division heads in non-pilot divisions begin to oversee faculty hiring and workload
- ❑ Survey students in pilot divisions about experiences with the divisional model
- ❑ Non-pilot divisions identify selection method for faculty coordinators

Spring Term

- ❑ Transition to new committee structures in divisions and institution-wide, sending out calls for participants and/or appointing members as needed
- * By this point there should no longer be any committees other than promotion and tenure committees within standalone academic departments
- ❑ Faculty coordinators start researching opportunities for curricular streamlining and new programs to launch
- ❑ Annual evaluation and goal-setting takes place at the division level

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Academic Reorganization Timeline (cont.)

Fully Transition Space into Divisions and Regularly Assess Implementation

Year Four (cont.)

Summer Term
❑ Academic space build-outs continue
❑ Division heads in non-pilot divisions receive additional onboarding around faculty affairs

Year Five

Fall Term
❑ All academic units are fully integrated into the division model; faculty are tenured in the division
❑ Technology systems and processes are streamlined within and across divisions
❑ Any remaining faculty move into new offices, classrooms, and lab spaces
❑ New institutional committee structure is fully in place
❑ First curricular changes to existing programs and general education requirements go into effect

Spring Term
❑ Divisions begin making interdisciplinary faculty hires with memoranda of understanding
❑ Revisit success metrics chosen in Year One to evaluate additional needs for reorganization process
❑ New interdisciplinary program launches begin within and across divisions

After the fifth year
❑ Conduct assessment of division model every 5-7 years
❑ Faculties are launched and sunsetted as needed, within and across divisions
❑ Division heads oversee all academic unit administration
❑ Regularly assess space renovation needs

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