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TO: CAS Task Force Writing Group

FROM: CAS Task Force External working group (Monica Guy, Craig Parsons, Janelle Stevenson, Joe Sventek)

RE: External Working Group Report

Our Working Group on External Relations began by identifying seven areas where a potential CAS reorganization could affect UO's relations with outside groups:

- Recruiting of domestic undergraduate students
- Recruiting of international undergraduate students
- Recruiting of students for professional MA programs
- Development
- Industry partnerships
- State and federal government
- Press/communications

In each area a Working Group member interviewed UO personnel with related responsibilities.
In four areas—recruiting of domestic and international undergraduates, relations with state and federal government, and communications—our interviewees felt that UO's external relations were unlikely to be significantly advantaged or disadvantaged by a CAS reorganization.

- Domestic undergraduates know little about college-organization, being interested either in specific programs or very broad areas. UO branding for domestic audiences has emphasized a liberal-arts framework and supportive resources for exploring students, which has affinities with a broad CAS structure, but recruitment could work with a reorganized framework as well.
- International students typically have very focused interest in specific programs and little concern for how they are organized in colleges or schools.

- People in state and federal legislatures or funding agencies are also not very interested in college/school organization. A reorganization could boost UO's appeal with these audiences if it produced a college that could be highly ranked in external measures. That might be conceivable in some areas, like a college of computing, but not in others.
- Communications personnel felt that effective "brand journalism" to promote UO's research and other achievements depends above all on sufficient resources for these activities. Given sufficient resources, communication could be effective within various structures.

In three (or two and a half) areas, our interviewees saw some potential advantages from some division of CAS: development, industry partnerships, and professional MA programs.

- Of these, CAS reorganization seems least significant for recruitment into professional MAs. Most issues that promote or impede these programs are questions of resources or policy that presumably can vary independently from college structure. However, many such programs involve industry partnerships for internships and other student opportunities, so that category can have a knock-on effect for these MA programs.
- We heard the strongest endorsement of a reorganization from people who have worked on industry partnerships. Industrial partners want highly specific collaborations that are focused in areas of their interest. To date CAS has seemed too broad to develop such connections well. CAS processes have tended to pull proposed partnerships in more diffuse directions that partners see as unappealing. Smaller and more focused colleges would presumably be better able to develop such partnerships.
- In development relations to donors, too, we heard some arguments for the advantages of potential CAS splits. Development personnel stressed that their focuses tend to follow fairly strongly from college/school structures. The broad CAS structure has thus encouraged some emphasis on fundraising for broad goals that benefit many units, like the Tykeson advising center. If we expect that the strongest CAS units have the greatest development potential, a split might better focus development efforts on the most promising areas.

A concluding thought became salient in the full-task-force meeting where we presented these points. To the extent that our interviewees and working-group members saw advantages in a CAS reorganization, it was not a simple division along current divisional lines. A college of computing stood out as a plausible platform for development, industry platforms, professional MAs, and strong external rankings. The group did not immediately see another comparable example, but we brainstormed other areas (international studies, environmental studies) that might make more sense as schools within CAS.

Issue	Advantages of CAS structure	Disadvantages of CAS structure	Advantages if split	Disadvantages if split	Conclusion
Undergrad recruiting (domestic)	UO admissions officials suggested that students are not interested in college structures. Students are attracted either by particular programs/majors or overall branding of the university.		Potentially stronger messaging to specific pools of students (though recruiters were skeptical that this mattered much).	Broader pool of students is attracted more by overall messaging about many programs and support to explore options and develop interests. Splitting CAS might detract from this messaging (though recruiters were skeptical that this mattered much).	A top admissions official: "At best, reorganization of CAS won't mean a darn thing to the students we're working with."
	That said, messaging to undergrads has recently trended toward a stronger liberal arts focus, stressing UO support for students to come in, explore, develop interests into specific strengths. Tykeson strengthens this message. This is distinctive relative to some universities, especially in Big Ten, that have moved toward admitting students directly into major programs. (That practice is exceptional at UO, and increasingly so).	UO admissions officials saw no disadvantages. Their recent work on advertising majors/programs to undergrads (making the "explore majors" page the most-visited one on the UO site) is not strongly shaped around college structures. It would not be much different if they changed.			
Undergrad recruiting (internat'l)	UO international recruiting officials suggested that international students care even less about college structures than domestic students, though often for opposite reasons. A large number of domestic students want to come in and explore options. Most international students (especially from Asia) have strongly fixed	See left.			CAS organization not likely to matter for international student recruiting.

	ideas about their programs/majors. College organization of those majors doesn't matter to them.				
Master's program recruiting	There is no evident advantage to the CAS structure with respect to professional masters programs For Computer Science, applications for our 2-year MS program are driven by knowledge of the unit, not of the CAS structure.	When MSI first started offering their professional MS, the tuition retention by CAS led them to find innovative ways to operate – done initially through extension. Needed tuition so that the programs were self funding (paying for instructors using tuition received). These programs are now in the Knight Campus, where they have such support.	Professional masters programs have found their home in Knight Campus – q.e.d.	No evident disadvantages for professional masters programs. Neutral with respect to academic MS programs, although the new emphasis upon using GE terms for PhD students instead of MS students may affect those programs in some units.	CAS structure has gotten in the way of professional masters programs. Note that professional masters programs also require strong industry partnerships for the internships included in such programs. These programs have to staff this industry interaction themselves. Academic MS programs are essentially structure neutral.
Industry partnerships	According to several people working on industry partnerships in science and engineering, current CAS structure has no evident advantages. UO has had difficulty keeping industry people on the CAS advisory board due to lack of any focus on industry.	Industrial partners want highly specific collaborations, focused in areas of their interest. To date CAS has seemed too broad to develop such connections well. CAS processes have tended to pull proposed partnerships in more diffuse directions that partners see as unappealing.	Smaller units could be more focused and nimble in developing partnerships; partners would not worry about being pulled in other directions.	In the abstract, it is conceivable that smaller units would have fewer resources overall than a CAS-style college could have, in principle—though in reality CAS has not directed substantial resources in this direction so far.	Split seems advantageous for those units that could benefit from stronger industry partnerships.
Development	According to development officials, development priorities tend to follow the structure of the organization. Thus the CAS structure favors a focus on broad initiatives, like Tykeson, and tends toward a "raise all boats" philosophy.	Broad CAS structure does not focus attention and effort well on pursuing focused opportunities that connect to faculty strength.	Strong units in more focused colleges could better leverage development efforts to build on their strengths	Less well positioned units might get less development attention overall.	If we expect that strongest units have greatest development potential, split could better focus development efforts on the most promising areas.

State/federal government	According to government-affairs officials, state and federal policy-makers or funding sources are only likely to be interested in college structures if they connect to external rankings of some sort.		If new college(s) could be highly ranked, this could help make pitches to government.	It may be hard for a reorg to produce a highly-ranked unit, with some exceptions (a Computer Science-based college, for example). Innovative organization may not fit into existing ranking categories. A split might also expose as many weaknesses as strengths.	CAS reorganization does not matter much for external representation to government. Change is unlikely to bring significant benefits.
Press/ communications	If we think of the key role of communications as elevating recognition of academics/ research, especially to donors—as Communications personnel at CAS and UO levels described to us—it is not clear that the CAS structure has advantages. CAS Communication helps communicate about CAS's liberal-arts teaching mission, but struggles to have sufficient resources to feature faculty research as much as other units.	Seizing opportunities for "brand journalism" around faculty research is presumably more difficult the broader the unit.	Communication work could be more focused—but this advantage only follows if a split means more communication resources overall	If the point of a split with respect to communications is to create more focused offices that promote faculty research more, that requires more resources.	Challenges of communication are more about having sufficient personnel resources than they are about college organization, though a split might facilitate messaging somewhat.