



Dear Beth,

I apologize for my delayed response to your email of January 20<sup>th</sup>. Much has transpired in the past week, all of which has brought our future into clearer view.

For example, watching the EMPL faculty work these past few weeks makes it clear that empowering them to lead these decisions, and not empaneling a new ad hoc committee to make recommendations, was the correct one. Our department heads are also doing a great job of helping EMPL faculty negotiate their future personnel and academic program locations, while simultaneously representing their faculty's interests and wishes. They are, for example, systematically consulting with every, or virtually every faculty member in their units. I, and all involved, appreciate this thoroughness.

The cessation of EMPL unit operations has also clarified the need to improve our shared governance documents, an initiative that was unfortunately stalled by the pandemic. Our college and departmental bylaws were created in haste as we acted to comply with requirements of the first collective bargaining agreement. We now have a different faculty, over half of the career-track and tenure-track faculty are new, a largely new staff, and new models for unit bylaws that are clear and precise. We have begun the process of reconvening our bylaws committee. The outcome will be better. We will all have a better understanding of shared governance – one that is not limited to faculty or decanal governance – but shared governance that includes the wisdom of everyone, including our highly educated staff members.

Furthermore, the cessation of EMPL unit operations is not a template for closing academic units, academic programs, or research or outreach units. All units and programs closed in the past eight years were closed due to exigency. Closure decisions were neither sought nor welcomed. The units and programs came to my attention because their challenges had accumulated to the point where due diligence and some action had to be taken to protect the fiscal viability, academic reputation, or other imminent challenge to our college. We should engage in prevention going forward, which I recommend we consider as we revise our various bylaws and guidelines. Ongoing monitoring of the performance of our units and programs will reduce exigencies or eliminate them altogether.

I am confident that our remaining three academic departments will be strengthened by the infusion of new EMPL staff, faculty, and student talent. I predict a renaissance for EDST, CPHS, and SPECS. The inclusion of new colleagues will lead to expedited improvement of existing programs and the creation of new ones. Student demand and interest will increase and concerns about student credit hour generation will be in our past. New faculty collaborations will facilitate faculty programs of research and scholarship, new and larger federal grants will be obtained, and our college's impact on society will be scaled up. We will confirm our status as one of the most important institutions of its kind.

Thanks for your part in this work.

Regards,

Randy Kamphaus  
Dean and Professor

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