Message from the Interim Dean

Colleagues,

The “Envisioning Our Academic Future” process that launched in August is now well under way, with task forces meeting regularly. This process asks us how we can best align our academic units while growing and strengthening programs. Ultimately, that may lead to change — but I remain confident that the process will result in new opportunities for you and our programs.

Below are summaries of recent activity from both task forces, as well as an update to a question asked during our recent Q&A reception with Provost Whittaker. We are all committed to this being a transparent process, and I will be providing frequent updates on both task forces’ activities.

Additional updates, open fora schedules, and other opportunities for you to provide input — as well as a list of task forces’ committee members — will remain available online.
Both the Academic Health Sciences Center (AHSC) Task Force and Urban Innovation and New Media (UINM) Task Force have been charged with exploring alignment and elevation of academic programs. But their starting points differ. While the AHSC Task Force was created to help develop a new health sciences center, the UINM Task Force is building upon the work done over the past two years by the prior UCF Downtown Academic Programs Committee, which led to the initial selection of programs at the new downtown campus.

**AHSC Task Force Update**

- The task force wants its members to collect information from and share information with faculty and staff members through conversations. Its members are meeting on Mondays up to Dec. 18.
- Task force members held open forum meetings last week for the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (Oct. 4), Athletic Training Program (Oct. 6), and Health Sciences Program (Oct. 6).
- Open forum meetings are planned for the Physical Therapy Program (Oct. 18), Department of Health Management and Informatics (Oct. 19), and School of Social Work (Nov. 8), as well as other UCF organizations. Department, school, and program members may attend their unit’s meeting. [View the complete schedule](#).
- The task force is scheduled to submit its recommendations by late December.

**UINM Task Force Update**

- The task force meets bi-weekly, with this month’s meetings planned for Oct. 11 and 24. Previous meetings have focused on trends and
synergies between academic departments, schools, centers, and programs.

- Task force members defined the advantages of the urban campus at a retreat on Sept. 30.
- The task force recently distributed two worksheets to obtain feedback from unit leaders. The **Program Feedback Worksheet** solicits information on how each individual academic program can be enhanced by the urban environment. The **Collaboration Mapping Worksheet** solicits information on opportunities for program collaboration. The completed worksheets will be reviewed by task force members.
- The task force is scheduled to submit its recommendation by late December, and will confirm by mid-October the first phase of programs relocating downtown when the campus opens in 2019.

**Q&A Follow Up**

During the Q&A forum on Sept. 29, Provost Dale Whittaker used the term “unit” in his response to a question from those attending. “Unit” is commonly used by the college and university to refer to a department, school, center, or program — and that is what the term referred to in his response. There are two other terms used at UCF, “in-unit” and “out-of-unit,” to refer to the classification given to an employee position. The provost did not use either of these terms in his response.

Again, I look forward to providing you with further updates. I also encourage you to reach out to committee members on both task forces, should you have further questions.

Sincerely,