Message from the Interim Dean

Colleagues,

Members of the Academic Health Sciences Center (AHSC) Task Force and the Urban Innovation and New Media (UINM) Task Force have continued to meet over the past few weeks, and I am pleased to provide a summary of their latest activities below. I also write to reassure you that any recommendations made by the task forces will NOT include layoffs of personnel.

AHSC Task Force Update

- The task force held an open forum for members of the Department of Health Management and Informatics on Oct. 19 and town hall meetings for all faculty and staff on Oct. 20 and 23.
• Task force members met on Oct. 23 and 30 and Nov. 14. They heard updates from the UINM Task Force and discussed themes that emerged from discussions at all open forum and town hall meetings. They also discussed a draft organizational chart and began discussions of a possible reporting structure.
• The task force’s Population Health Subgroup, which includes task force members and unit representatives, completed its review of current population health activities across UCF. The subgroup recommends creating a Population Health Collaborative that serves as a university-wide “hub” for population health across colleges, departments and units.
• The task force plans to hold additional open forum and town hall meetings to explain their findings and answer questions.
• The task force is on target to complete a written report of recommendations by mid-December.

UINM Task Force Update

• The task force’s executive committee held smaller, more-focused discussions on Oct. 19, 24 and 31. They reviewed information the task force had heard and received about academic programs being considered for UCF Downtown over a 10-year period. They found that programs aligned into two broad groups: “Community Innovation and Social Impact” and “Communication and Media.”
• The task force met on Nov. 2 to review program synergies and alignments, and its members were asked to provide feedback for use in developing approaches to organizational structure. The task force co-chairs, Dr. Thad Seymour Jr. and Dr. Elizabeth Dooley, subsequently
met with the leaders of criminal justice, public administration and social work.

- The executive committee met on Nov. 8 to discuss the feedback from the Nov. 2 meeting.
- The task force met on Nov. 14 to review three possible approaches to organizing academic programs downtown: 1) a two-college approach that includes several COHPA programs in one college and communication and digital media programs in another, 2) an integrated approach with select COHPA, select education, communication and digital media programs in a single college, and 3) a “big idea” approach that organizes a new college around urban innovation, public service and community impact, bringing together aligned programs currently in different colleges. The task force is still considering each of these models.
- The task force co-chairs held a Skype meeting with program leaders today to provide an update on progress made and next steps.
- The task force is on target to complete a written report of recommendations by mid-December.

I encourage you to attend a second Q&A with Provost Whittaker on Nov. 28, from 2 - 3 p.m., at the Teaching Academy, Room 117. Refreshments will be served (your RSVP to Barbara.Conner@ucf.edu would be appreciated).

In addition, please continue to visit Envisioning Our Academic Future for information about the task force meetings and activities.

Sincerely,