

MEMO

TO: Robert Griffin, Dean of College of Engineering

FROM: Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Merger of Departments of Engineering Science and Mechanics  
and Aerospace Engineering

CC: Dr. James Taaffe, Council of Deans  
Dr. Ronald Rogers, Graduate Council

The Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Affairs has reviewed your memo of 12 April 1996 regarding the proposed merger of the Dept. of Engineering Science and Mechanics and the Dept. of Aerospace Engineering. We have several concerns which are detailed below:

Section II.3 of the "Principles and Procedures for Merger or Discontinuance of Academic Units" document states that such a memo should be accompanied by "a summary of all responses received" in the course of the assessment/negotiation phase described in sections II.1 and II.2. The Faculty Senate did not receive such a summary of faculty responses. Therefore, it is difficult to evaluate the impact of the proposed arrangements on the affected faculty.

We are also concerned about the arrangements for the probationary faculty affected by the proposed merger. Your notification memo does not identify the probationary faculty, who are particularly vulnerable in departmental mergers and closures. In the absence of the "summary of responses" described above, we wonder whether the tenure prospects of the probationary faculty are adversely affected by the proposed merger. For example, will the tenure requirements for any of the probationary faculty change as a result of the merger? Are any of the probationary faculty going up for tenure this fall? If so, will their new colleagues be familiar enough with their work to assess them fairly? Have they expressed concern about their future support?

These are the major concerns elicited by our review of your memo documenting the proposed departmental merger. In light of our concerns, we look forward to receiving a "summary of responses" of the affected faculty.

Raymond White & Peggy Jessee (co-chairs)  
Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Affairs