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**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA**  
**OFFICE FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

April 14, 1997

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Affairs  
**FROM:** Nancy S. Barrett  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
**ENDORSED:** James D. Yarbrough  
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
**RE:** Proposed Merger of New College with the College of Arts and Sciences

This is in reply to the committee's [memorandum](#) that I received on April 11. I am happy to address the nine issues for which you are requesting additional information.

*1. Would future students experience any new constraints on the formation of their "depth studies?"*

Since curricular requirements are the purview of the faculty, and since in the normal course of events curricular requirements, are constantly being reviewed and modified, it is not possible to predict how the New College curriculum--including the formation of depth studies-might evolve over time. However, I will reiterate that both Dean Yarbrough and I are committed to retaining the ability, of students to develop customized degree programs-without the necessity of adhering to the traditional "major" field of study,. In this regard, I do not anticipate any new constraints on the ability of students to pursue a customized program of study or in the formation of their depth studies.

*2. How many hours would students be able to take outside of Arts and Sciences?*

Although this matter is subject to faculty review, it is Dean Yarbrough's and my expectation that students in the New College program will be exempt from the current Arts and Sciences limitation on credit hours taken outside of Arts and Sciences.

In view of the recent formal agreement on a dual major program between the language departments in the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Commerce and Business, I anticipate that the College of Arts and Sciences will be reviewing and modifying its policy of limiting outside hours, at least for interdisciplinary programs. Clearly, students in the dual major program as well as students in the New College program will require an exemption from the policy limiting outside hours.

*3. How many students would be able to enroll in the program in the future?*

As far as the residential New College program is concerned, the current enrollment policy has been established by the New College faculty and is driven both by resources and student demand. Neither Dean Yarbrough nor I have any

plans to change the current size of the New College residential program. Should the New College faculty request a change in the number of students enrolled in the future, that request would be evaluated in the same manner as a similar request from any other academic unit.

I do not anticipate a change in the size of the Computer-Based Honors Program unless those involved ask for it.

Although no immediate changes are envisioned for admissions into the External Degree Program, there does currently exist a backlog of qualified applicants. I anticipate that the move of the External Degree Program to Continuing Studies will result in administrative efficiencies, accomplished by sharing the current infrastructure of Continuing Studies. This could free administrative resources, enabling the admission of more of these qualified students into the External Degree Program without an increase in administrative staff.

*4. What would be the constraints, if any, on course development?*

Course development in the College of Arts and Sciences is initiated and planned at the departmental level, and is then subject to review by a college-level committee and the Dean. As the New College program will be moving intact--as a department--into the College, there will be considerable autonomy for the New College faculty in the development of new courses. The college-level review will be a new element--and will be both an opportunity for the input of new ideas, as well as a possible constraint. Dean Yarbrough and I are both strongly committed to the development of interdisciplinary courses, and we expect that the faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences will similarly be looking to develop more interdisciplinary offerings.

*5. What would be the criteria for faculty promotion, tenure, and raises?*

The criteria for faculty promotion and tenure are spelled out in the Faculty Handbook, and apply to all units in the University. Within the parameters specified by the Handbook, individual departments within the College of Arts and Sciences do establish their own criteria for promotion and tenure--provided that these do not conflict with the Faculty Handbook. For example, a unit like New College, which is entirely an undergraduate program, will have different standards for research (and more emphasis on undergraduate teaching and advising) than a graduate-intensive unit.

Criteria for faculty raises will depend upon the guidelines established by the central administration in any particular year (e.g., across-the-board, merit, equity, etc.). In the case of merit raises, guidelines are generally established by departments in conjunction with guidelines that may be established by the College. As is the case with promotion and tenure, merit guidelines for any particular unit in the College will reflect differences in mission of the unit in question (e.g., undergraduate vs. graduate-intensive).

*6. Would the program's admissions standards continue to be self-determined?*

Dean Yarbrough and I do not envision a change in the New College admissions standards as a result of the merger. In the future, the New College program faculty may wish to propose changes in admissions standards, and such recommendations would be evaluated relative to University admissions guidelines and the other considerations. This would be the case for any unit--be it an independent college or a department within a college.

*7. What would happen to the endowment of new College?*

The endowment of New College would move with it into the College of Arts and Sciences, to be expended under the supervision of and with the authorization of the department head of the New College program. These monies would not be used for programs outside the New College unit.

Endowment monies expressly designated for the Computer-Based Honors Program or the External Degree Program would stay with those units rather than moving with the New College program into the College of Arts and Sciences.

8. *Would there continue to be a curricular relationship with the External Degree Program?*

Dean Yarbrough and I do not see any change in the current curricular relationship between the New College and the External Degree Program as a result of the merger.

9. *What would be the financial impact on the College of Arts and Sciences?*

There will not be a financial impact on the College of Arts and Sciences. Permanent funding for faculty, staff, and operational support for the New College unit will be transferred into the College of Arts and Sciences at the time of the merger.

I fully support the Faculty Senate in its recommendation that the principal parties meet to engage in more concrete discussions of the mechanics and consequences of the proposed merger. These meetings should occur immediately, and I am very glad to have the weight of Faculty Senate opinion behind my repeated attempts to bring the parties to the table. I hope that as many items as possible will be resolved to mutual satisfaction before the merger goes into effect July 1.

I have asked Dean Yarbrough to countersign this memorandum, so as to clear up any possible misunderstanding of his commitment to this vision for the merger.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Academic Affairs Committee for its work in identifying points of concern and in helping bring the parties together in constructive conversation. I will do everything I can to support the strong recommendation from the Senate that the New College and the College of Arts and Sciences meet immediately to resolve outstanding issues.

NSB/JY/dm

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Posted for information by the Faculty Senate, April 26, 1997.

Return to the Faculty Senate [home page](#).