

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Office of the Provost recommending with regard to the proposal to restructure the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice?**

The white paper issued by the Provost's Office recommends that the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) be divided into three smaller colleges: the College of Science, the College of Arts, Media and Design, and the College of Social Sciences and Humanities. In addition, the Provost's Office recommends that the College of Criminal Justice (CCJ) be restructured as a school within the College of Social Sciences and Humanities.

### **What is the reasoning behind the recommendation to restructure the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice?**

Universities periodically look at organizational structures to see if there are better ways to approach teaching and research. In this case, Northeastern has had the current structures in CAS and CCJ for several decades, during a period of deep institutional transformation. The University has become more selective in admissions and enrollments, more global and interdisciplinary in its research aspirations and achievements, and more international in its programs. In addition, the move to a hybrid management and budgeting system will place new demands on the colleges, requiring them to be more nimble and entrepreneurial. These changes have opened up new challenges and opportunities for Northeastern. Restructuring will better position us to surmount the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities.

### **How will restructuring the two colleges place Northeastern in a better position to pursue new opportunities and overcome current challenges?**

One good example of this relates to faculty research. As Northeastern elevates its overall research profile, the University has both a challenge and an opportunity to establish stronger external identities for research programs in the current Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice structures. Bringing into closer alignment programs that have natural affinities in the research arena—from infrastructure needs to the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration—will heighten the visibility of these programs and their colleges to key research audiences, including graduate applicants, potential faculty hires, and research funding agencies.

### **Does the recommendation to restructure the College of Criminal Justice (CCJ) into a school within a new College of Social Sciences and Humanities constitute a downgrading of CCJ and a diminishment of its programs?**

In all of the substantive ways, it does not.

First, consider recent Northeastern history: In 1997, the College of Nursing was integrated as a school into the Bouvé College of Health Sciences. Twelve years later, our nursing programs are vibrant and thriving, with new majors and excellent experiential learning opportunities. One year ago, the School of Technological Entrepreneurship was integrated into the College of Business Administration, a change that, so far, has yielded gains for both units.

Likewise, the recommendation for CCJ is based on the conviction that restructuring will maximize the college's existing strengths. Research and instructional connections between CCJ and the social sciences are already strong, as shown by the number of undergraduates pursuing cross-college double majors, and by CAS/CCJ research partnerships such as the Institute on Race and Justice.

By integrating Criminal Justice into a new College of Social Sciences and Humanities, these connections will be extended and strengthened, promoting the kind of

interdisciplinary collaborations that Northeastern is encouraging across the University.

Increased integration with the social sciences also will add momentum to the CCJ faculty's drive to highlight criminology and policy studies in addition to criminal justice. This new emphasis will make the new School of Criminal Justice integral to our goal of raising Northeastern's profile in urban and public policy studies.

### **How will students be affected by the proposal to restructure the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice?**

Students will be the ultimate beneficiaries of the restructuring. In addition to enhancing the long-term financial stability of their school, students in Criminal Justice will benefit from being part of a college that is larger and more diverse, but comprised of academic disciplines that share a primary intellectual goal.

The new organizational structure should provide additional opportunities for Criminal Justice students to take courses in other social science departments, as well as for students from other departments in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities—at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels—to take a wider range of criminology and criminal justice courses.

The cohesiveness of the three new, smaller colleges will foster greater collaboration and interaction among students majoring in different but related disciplines. And the positive impact on research and external visibility will strengthen faculty and admissions recruiting, giving every student a stronger, more vibrant academic environment.

In addition, we expect the colleges to be more entrepreneurial in developing programs. That should lead to more interdisciplinary programs that will open up exciting new learning opportunities for many students.

### **How is the reorganization proposal expected to affect enrollment in Criminal Justice programs?**

We expect the new structure, over time, to strengthen enrollment in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. As the school becomes better known for its criminology and public policy expertise, the decrease we've seen over the past five years in undergraduate applications should be reversed, and already-strong interest in the graduate programs will grow.

### **What will appear on the diplomas of Criminal Justice students?**

For those graduating this May, the diploma will still include "College of Criminal Justice." The provost and the Registrar's Office have been working on modifying the diplomas for those earning degrees after May 2010. Nothing definite has been settled, but it is likely that "Criminal Justice" will continue to appear on the diploma, at least as indicating the degree the student received (i.e., "BS in Criminal Justice").

### **How will Criminal Justice students' co-op opportunities and advising system be affected by restructuring?**

It will have no impact on their co-op opportunities. The way co-op is set up, students across the University compete for the same co-op positions and have been doing so for quite some time. Of more significance to CCJ students is the fact that the co-op program in Criminal Justice is quite robust right now: We achieved 100 percent placement in the most recent co-op cycle. Assuming the restructuring creates new interdisciplinary degree programs, as we expect, we should see co-op opportunities grow for all students. Regarding advising, our expectation is that the present academic advisors in CCJ will continue to have primary responsibility for Criminal Justice students.

### **What impact will restructuring have on degree programs within the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice?**

The current degree programs in Criminal Justice will not be affected. Northeastern will continue to offer the BS in Criminal Justice after the college has been integrated as a school into a new College of Social Sciences and Humanities. The curriculum will remain unchanged, except as faculty continue to expand or revise course offerings in response to regular curriculum reviews.

In Arts and Sciences, each of the degree programs will move to one of the new colleges, and a variety of administrative and logistical details remain to be worked out around this movement, but existing degree programs themselves will not change as a result of restructuring.

### **How will the restructuring realign the College of Arts and Sciences programs among the three new colleges?**

The realignment of the degree programs will look like this:

- In the College of Science: the departments of Biology, Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Earth and Environmental Science, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology; and interdisciplinary programs in Behavioral Neuroscience, Biochemistry, and Environmental Studies.
- In the College of Arts, Media and Design: the School of Architecture and the School of Journalism; the departments of Art + Design, Music, and Theatre; and interdisciplinary programs in Interactive Media and Cinema Studies.
- In the College of Social Science and Humanities: the departments of African American Studies, American Sign Language, Economics, English, History, Languages, Literatures and Cultures, Philosophy and Religion, Political Science, and Sociology and Anthropology; the School of Criminal Justice and the School of Public Policy And Urban Affairs; and interdisciplinary programs in Human Services, International Affairs, Law, Policy and Society, and Linguistics.

Still to be decided are the locations of Communication Studies, the School of Education, the School of General Studies, and undeclared majors.

### **Won't the division of the College of Arts and Science into three smaller colleges hurt its interdisciplinary programs?**

The University sets a high priority on fostering interdisciplinary programs across colleges as well as between units of the same college. There are already a number of interdisciplinary programs housed in CAS that cross college lines—for example, the Law, Policy, and Society graduate and undergraduate programs, which combine course work in the social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, and arts areas of CAS with offerings in the College of Criminal Justice, the College of Business Administration, and the School of Law. Some CAS interdisciplinary programs will become cross-college programs if CAS became two or three colleges, while the course requirements of other interdisciplinary programs could continue to reside within the boundaries of a single college.

We saw a positive development in this regard as the Provost's Office was gathering input on restructuring proposals during the summer: Small group discussions between the Provost and Arts and Sciences department heads generated a wide variety of ideas for new interdisciplinary programs and activities.

**Will the ideal and the practice of liberal education be diminished for Northeastern undergraduates by the break-up of Arts and Sciences into more focused, more quasi-professional colleges? Will it be diminished under the double impact of new college structures and the new budget model?**

Northeastern's University-wide college core will remain intact under the new college structures, until and unless we decide as an academic community to change it. Additional liberal education requirements, if any, will as before be a college-level decision. The hybrid budget model provides incentives to all colleges, not just Arts and Sciences, to attract students to well conceived, efficiently offered core courses. Maintaining our commitment to liberal education will remain the general responsibility of our academic community, not the responsibility of one college alone.

**What impact will restructuring have on current faculty members of the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice?**

Faculty are tenured in their units—whether departments, schools, or colleges—and retain their tenure if a unit is moved. This principle was applied when the College of Nursing was merged with Bouvé College of Health Sciences and in other past mergers or relocations.

**Restructuring an independent college to make it a school within another college leaves open the possibility of downsizing. Is the Provost's Office going to downsize the faculty in Criminal Justice?**

There are no immediate plans to reduce the number of faculty in the school. Our Criminal Justice program is about the same size as other criminology and criminal justice programs in the United States that offer doctoral and undergraduate degrees, and we expect to maintain a similar-sized faculty for the foreseeable future. It's also worth noting that the University this fall hired three new Criminal Justice faculty members.

**There has been talk about the restructuring proposal for the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice having been rushed through, without sufficient input from the broad community. What was the process?**

The University established a strong process to ensure that all members of the community had an opportunity to be heard, and that all relevant information was considered.

In December 2008, the provost appointed the Ad Hoc Committee on the Organizational Structure of the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Criminal Justice. The committee was asked to evaluate several options: whether to retain the College of Arts and Sciences as a single unit or reorganize it into two or three independent colleges; and whether to integrate the College of Criminal Justice as a school in the College of Arts and Sciences or one of its successor colleges. The committee held a variety of meetings, including open forums and invitation-only sessions, to gather the ideas of faculty, students, alumni, and staff from the two colleges affected, as well as from deans and senior university leaders. The committee also compiled internal and external data on enrollment and admissions trends, advancement and external funding, faculty numbers, and comparative information on college structures at our peer and aspirant universities.

Following the issuance of the committee's report in late May, the provost convened a daylong University retreat for the different constituents to review and discuss the report.

Following the retreat, the Provost's Office developed financial models for the options, met with academic leaders in the two colleges, and conducted further research on issues raised at the retreat and in the committee report.

This process led to the Provost's Office recommendations that were released on September 7—the recommendations that were debated, voted on, and passed by the Faculty Senate on October 7.

**Why weren't applicants, their parents, and alumni of the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice informed of possible changes to the colleges in admissions and fundraising materials?**

Applicants, parents, and alumni have been informed of possible changes to the colleges of Arts and Sciences and Criminal Justice through a variety of means, including information on University and college web sites and direct email as well as in presentations and Q & A with live audiences. The academic leadership of both colleges, as well as the Provost's Office and Admissions, took care to communicate accurately the range of possibilities under consideration and the fact that no decision to restructure has been made.

**What are the next steps in the college restructuring process?**

The Provost's Office will form task forces to resolve a variety of academic, administrative, and logistical details. These include:

- placement of the departments of Communication Studies and Education within the new college structure
- placement and organization of the School of General Studies and undeclared majors within the University
- space, staffing, and operational needs of the new college structures
- alignment of the new colleges and their curricula with University data systems
- integration of the new colleges into student recruiting and admissions and advancement and alumni relations systems and outreach

In addition, search committees for deans of the three new colleges and for the permanent dean of the new School of Criminal Justice will be formed as quickly as practicable.

Assuming all of this happens on time, the restructuring will take effect on July 1, 2010.