

**Proposal:** To replace MDRCs, IIPs, and Graduate Centers with a single kind of educational unit, the Multidisciplinary Unit (MU), whose mission is to provide a venue for educational activities (primarily research or teaching, and perhaps a significant service component) in academic areas that cross college boundaries.

### Why?

- The natural progression of an academic area of inquiry is from research area, to courses, to certificates, to degrees, though not every area will necessarily progress this way.
- There is a recognized need to facilitate cross-college interactions in both research and instruction; some faculty believe that placing instructional units in a college can inhibit those interactions (e.g., Global Studies Program).
- Current rigid distinction between instructional units and MDRCs causes:
  - artificial and counterproductive distinctions between different aspects of the educational mission (e.g., research and graduate/undergraduate education, research and service).
  - administrative duplication (e.g., Appalachian Research Center and Appalachian Studies Program).
  - confusion about what specific units are and are not allowed to do (did the Board of Trustees approve them as educational units (MDRCs) or as administrative units?).
- Faculty should be evaluated by their colleagues in the educational unit where they spend most of their time; some faculty (esp. some research-title faculty) spend most of their time in a unit outside of a college, yet current evaluation methods require that they be evaluated by colleagues within departments who may not be familiar with their work.

### Proposed organization:

- Formation
  - The MU must have a legitimate educational mission (research, teaching, or service) that crosses college boundaries.
    - The cross-college component must be significant, not just window-dressing (judgment of proposal reviewers, or use guidelines?).
    - A unit should not be designed primarily to generate income from fees to users.
  - The Senate and administration must both approve formation of the unit.
    - Increased Senate involvement in this decision is warranted because faculty may be housed in the unit and the unit may offer courses in the future.
    - Senate involvement also helps ensure that the unit serves a legitimate educational purpose.
- Administrative reporting
  - The director must be a tenured faculty member, unless  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the research, graduate, and undergraduate faculty appointed to the unit vote otherwise.
  - Reporting of the director reflects the relative weight of the three educational components in the unit.
    - Directors of units with research programs report to VP for Research; if those programs use graduate students or postdocs in their research, the directors also report (secondarily) to the Dean of the Graduate School.
    - Directors of units with graduate courses, certificates, or programs report to the Dean of the Graduate School.

- Directors of units with undergraduate courses, certificates, or programs report to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.
  - The VP for Research, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies all report in turn to the Provost, the administrator responsible for the overall educational mission.
  - All units have an advisory council made up of deans whose faculty participate.
  - Research-title faculty have 0–100% of their salary line in the multidisciplinary unit, the remainder in a department.
  - Tenured and tenure-eligible faculty have 0–49% of their salary line in the multidisciplinary unit, the remainder in a department.
- Research and informal instruction
  - The director of the unit appoints tenure-eligible faculty and hires research-title faculty with approval of current research-active faculty.
  - Research-title faculty supervising graduate students must have appointments in the Graduate School.
  - Tenure-eligible faculty appointments must be renewed every three years, contingent upon continued participation in the unit’s research activities.
- Formal instruction
  - The Senate must approve all courses, certificates, and degree programs.
  - Responsible faculty
    - The Dean of the Graduate School appoints unit faculty responsible for the graduate curriculum upon nomination of the program director (may or may not be the same as the director of the MU) with the approval of the current faculty.
    - The director of the MU appoints faculty responsible for the undergraduate curriculum with the approval of the current faculty.
  - For a unit to offer a degree program, at least  $n$  tenured or tenure-eligible faculty eligible to teach in that program must have 30% of their salary come from the unit.
    - A faculty member may have a joint appointment between the MU and a regular school or department, with the salary line divided between the two.
    - An MU may buy out part of a faculty member’s salary in any given year, transferring that money to the regular school or department.
  - If the number of faculty drops below  $n$ , the Dean of the Graduate School or the Dean of Undergraduate Studies is responsible for either rebuilding the faculty or for suspending or abolishing the degree program (subject to Senate oversight).
- Abolishment
  - The procedure for abolishing a MU is the same as the procedure for abolishing any other academic unit. Faculty who have appointments in the MU to be abolished should be given the opportunity to find another unit home.

### Implementation:

- All current units that are not departments, schools, or colleges will assess whether their primary purpose is educational and whether they meet the cross-college criterion to be an MDRC.
  - Directors of units that offer graduate courses, certificates, or degree programs, but that do not already have a graduate faculty consisting of faculty appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, must develop a list of “founding” graduate faculty and submit it to the Dean of the Graduate School.

- Directors of units that offer undergraduate courses, certificates or degree programs, but that do not already have a defined faculty membership, must develop a list of “founding” undergraduate faculty.
- MDRCs and academic units that have significant overlap in educational mission should merge.
- Units that have a primary educational mission but do not meet the cross-college criterion should be moved into their respective colleges.
  - Those that already offer graduate or undergraduate courses, certificates, or programs must still define the faculty responsible for those instructional activities, if they have not done so already.
  - Colleges can define the operation of such units in their own rules, but from the Senate point of view, the responsible faculty is the college faculty, and from the administrative point of view, the responsible educational unit is the college.
- Units that do not have a primary educational mission should be assessed for their appropriate placement.