

AACR 2

Office of the President
June 24, 2003

Members, Board of Trustees:

CREATION OF A SCHOOL OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES IN THE
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE; ELIMINATION OF COLLEGE OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCES

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve the creation of the School of Human Environmental Sciences in the College of Agriculture. The School would include three existing units and all of their associated academic programs: Department of Family Studies, Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, Department of Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles. With the transfer of these three units, the College of Human Environmental Sciences would be dissolved, effective July 1, 2003.

The Committee recommends that an immediate study begin, to determine the optimal placement of the Early Childhood Program within the University structure. The Committee further recommends that quarterly reports, on the findings of this study, be reported to the Academic Affairs Committee.

Background:

In March 2002, the Task Force on University of Kentucky Futures: Faculty for the 21st Century proposed several specific options for academic restructuring and reorganization that would promote interdisciplinary innovations, strengthen research and degree program's achievements and increase administrative efficiency. Among these suggestions, the Task Force recommended the elimination of the College of Human Environmental Sciences (HES) and a resulting reorganization of its academic units and programs.

The Board of Trustees approved the creation of a College of Design in October 2002 consisting of the School of Interior Design (which had existed previously as a department in the College of Human Environmental Sciences), School of Architecture, and Department of Historical Preservation. The creation of the College of Design consolidated three professional design disciplines into one academic unit and implemented one of the recommendations of the Futures Task Force pertaining to the College of Human Environmental Sciences.

Throughout the past academic year, Dr. Scott Smith, Dean of Agriculture, has served as the Acting Dean of HES. The faculty, staff, and many other constituents of the three units remaining in HES have developed and debated a number of proposals for the future academic organization of these units. Their efforts were devoted to developing a plan that would advance family and consumer sciences in Kentucky. Two proposals were formally considered by the faculty and staff in HES, but no clear consensus about these two alternatives emerged at the College level. Both proposals were submitted to the Provost on March 10, 2003 for final consideration. Proposal 1 would have the Department of Family Studies join the College of Education, and the Departments of Nutrition and Food Sciences and

Merchandising, Apparel, and Textile join the College of Agriculture as a School of Human Environmental Sciences. Proposal 2 would have all remaining HES units join the College of Agriculture as a School of Human Environmental Sciences. The Provost met with the faculty and staff to discuss his reaction to the proposals. At that time he indicated a preference for Proposal 2, which would merge all three HES units into the College of Agriculture.

On April 29, the Provost forwarded the proposals to the University Senate for review and advice concerning the reorganization. The Senate Council reviewed the proposals on behalf of the University Senate with advice from the Senate Committee on Academic Organization and Structure and forwarded its recommendation to the Provost on May 21, 2003. The Senate Council found both proposals to be acceptable and acknowledged that both proposals evolved from careful deliberation with full input from all affected parties. The Council recommended the proposal that would transfer the Department of Family Studies to the College of Education, and the Departments of Nutrition and Food Sciences and Merchandising, Apparel, and Textile to the College of Agriculture. In addition, the Senate Council recommended that whichever proposal was implemented, a review of the reorganized units take place in two years in order to assess the impact of the reorganization and make changes that are warranted based on that review. A copy of the May 21 letter from Senate Council to President Todd is attached to this action.

After careful consideration of the process, deliberations, and recommendations that have occurred over more than one year, the President and the Provost recommend the creation of the School of Human Environmental Sciences in the College of Agriculture that would include the Department of Family Studies, Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, and Department of Merchandising, Apparel, and Textiles. This recommendation is made on the basis of very strong support from alumni, supporters, and other external constituents of HES; the ability of the University to better address within one college the staffing needs of the academic programs and units affected; the opportunity to integrate educational and research programs into an academic environment that has an excellent tradition of education, research, and service, and the superior prospects of maintaining the various curricula offered individually and collaboratively by these three units. The President and the Provost will commence an immediate review of the Early Childhood Education component of the Department of Family Studies in order to determine its optimal position in the University structure to fulfill its mission. In addition, the Provost commits, in response to the recommendation from the Senate Council, to conduct a thorough review of the School of Human Environmental Sciences within two years in order to assess the impact of this entire reorganization and make necessary changes in response to that review.

The Board is deeply appreciative of the efforts of the faculty to chart their future, and the administration will work to ensure their continued success.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____