

Exploratory and Planning Task Force “School”

<https://msu.edu/~cal/language/>

Faculty Town Hall Meeting

August 30, 2016

Task Force Members

- Co-chairs

Susan Gass (L & L/SLS) and Rocío Quispe-Agnoli (RCS)

- Safoi Babana-Hampton (RCS)

Jason Merrill (L & L)

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- Sonja Fritzsche (L & L)

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Administrative support: Amy Klapko (CAL)

Goals for today's meeting

- Update faculty on explorations, discussions, and findings of TF during the summer.
- Provide an opportunity for discussion, clarification, and additional input to the TF.
- Visit:
<https://msu.edu/~cal/language/> (password protected)

Format of meeting

1. Introductory remarks by Chris Long, Dean
2. TF explorations and findings
3. Discussion with faculty
 - Part 1: General discussion with TF members
 - Part 2: Discussion of collaborative opportunities
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4. Questions and answers
5. Follow-up survey, to be returned by September 9

1. Dean's remarks

Explore

Enhance

Enrich

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2. TF Explorations and findings: Overview of activities (May-August, 2016)

1. Visits/interviews with other schools
2. Organization of information.
3. Discussion of findings
4. Comparison of findings with current activities in MSU units

-----current and next steps-----

- Faculty consultation (town hall meeting, survey)
- Organization of data
- Final recommendation to the dean

2. Overview of TF activities

- Visited five universities, all of which had something referred to as a School/Division.
 - University of Iowa (Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, 2010)
 - University of Illinois (School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics, 2007)
 - University of Kansas (School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, 2014-2016)
 - University of Maryland (School of Languages and Cultures, 2001)
 - Purdue University (School of Languages and Cultures, 2012)

Why did other universities move in the direction of a “School”?

1. Protect smaller language programs (Less Commonly Taught Languages)
2. Visibility
 - Create a strong voice for languages on campus
3. Stronger advocate for:
 - Recruitment
 - Fund raising
 - Community engagement
 - External partnerships
4. Efficiency
 - Merge resources (e.g., move to pod-type structure)
 - Financial efficiency
5. Increase collaborations
 - Enrichment by discovering each other's works.
 - Interdisciplinary approaches
 - Team-teaching
 - Teaming for grants

What were common concerns before the formation of a “School”

- Loss of disciplinary and/or professional identity.
- Loss of autonomy (most Schools had established departments prior to the School’s formation).
- Merging of staff.
- Access to resources.
- Uncertainty about change/new structure.

Common features in 'mission statements' of these "Schools"

- Global emphasis
- Emphasis on professionalization/career of students
- Emphasis on collaboration and innovation
- Emphasis on service to the academic and non-academic community, community engagement.

Points of distinction/innovation identified by these “Schools”

- Research Labs (UIUC)
- Publicity, Events, Marketing and PR manager (UIUC, Kansas)
- Collaborations: Teaching and Curriculum
 - Team-teaching made effective and efficient
 - Cross-listed courses
 - New interdisciplinary program: MFT Literary Translation (Iowa)
 - Professional language training
- Collaborations: Research clusters, reading groups, interaction among colleagues from different disciplines.
- International partnerships (students and faculty exchange).

TF Discussions of Findings

Taking advantage of a “School” structure

- The “School” allows for the configuration of disciplinary programs, in addition to other platforms like Centers and Thematic Clusters.
 - This will set the foundation for sustainability of collaborative initiatives.
- Discovering the works of our peers.
- Opportunities for collaboration in:
 - Research
 - Teaching and Curriculum
 - Community engagement
- Marketing/PR position to make our initiatives and work visible.

Benefits of a “School” organization

- Visibility (advocacy, recruitment, non-academic community).
- Benefiting ‘small programs’ (particularly LCTLs)
- Increase our presence in community engagement.
- Collaboration (various levels) → enrichment and discovery
- Pragmatic: sharing resources to make operations more efficient.
- MSU would join other Big Ten Academic Alliance universities with Schools and possibly host/organize the first meeting of Big Ten Academic Alliance School Directors.
- A School provides a platform for the strategic investment of resources into the languages.

Challenges of a “School” & how to deal with them

- Losing disciplinary identity
 - The disciplinary and academic identity lies in the program (not in the department) and/or in interdisciplinary units.
 - CAL Dean: preserve MSU profile in analytics and invest in program’s identity. In the future we can forge new disciplines.
 - It is crucial to have both possibilities: those who keep working within disciplines as well as across disciplines.
- Becoming diluted and competing for resources
 - Plans for a budget-neutral “School”
 - A more collaborative model will allow for more revenue if/when it happens. Need to create a ‘culture of collaboration’.
- Creating a structure that adheres to principles mentioned earlier.
- Need to have a structure for faculty consultation/voice

Prerequisites to an organizational structure

Criteria for organization of administrative units:

- Disciplinary integrity/autonomy
- Collaborative and cross-cutting opportunities
- Budget neutral

Criteria for proposing a platform for cross-cutting initiatives:

- Thematic clusters
- Short- and long-term initiatives
- Various levels of collaboration.
- Various kinds of collaboration.

MSU: Current areas of distinction

- Strong unified support of LCTLs.
 - Support unit (CeLTA) with varied programming.
 - Linguistics and SLS Labs (e.g., Eye-tracking, Sociolinguistics, Neurolinguistics, Child Language)
 - Existing strong disciplines
 - Advancing knowledge in
 - Literary, Cultural and Media Studies of the specific “language” programs
 - Nature, use, and acquisition/pedagogy of language.
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- Strong Study Abroad Programs and emphasis on international education and research.
 - Support for interdisciplinary initiatives: GSAH
 - TITLE VI Centers (African, Asian Studies, CASID with Women and International Development, CIBER, CLEAR).

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3. Discussion with faculty

- Round 1: General discussion (20 minutes)
- Round 2: Focus on collaborations (20 minutes)
- Round 3: Focus on disciplines (20 minutes)

Round 1: General Discussion

- What do you find innovative about these ideas?
- What challenges do you see?
- What concerns do you have?
- How do you think your work might or might not be affected?
 - Teaching
 - Program Curriculum
 - Research
 - Service
 - Community Engagement/Outreach

Round 2. Focus on Collaboration

Think of a 'School' where there are disciplines that maintain their autonomy, but where cross-cutting innovative mechanisms for collaboration also exist. For example, consider some possible thematic centers that might be part of such a School (e.g., Migration Studies, Studies of Identity):

- What areas of collaboration do you think you might be able to participate in? What suggestions do you have for collaborative centers?
- How would your research be enhanced? How might disciplines reformulate or redefine themselves?
- Can you think of collaborative teaching that might make new disciplinary inroads?
- Service/outreach?

Round 3: Focus on Disciplines

- How do you think your discipline/language area might benefit?
- What challenge might there be for your discipline/language area?
- What new opportunities might be opened up through a new structure?

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4. Questions (and Answers)



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5. Faculty survey

- Available between:
August 30 and September 9, 2016, 12:00 PM Noon ET
- Anonymous
- 11 questions (mostly open ended question)
- Sent by email to participants: all TS, FT, and Academic Specialists of LGSAAL, RCS, SLS, and CeLTA.
- Troubleshooting, contact: Daniel Trego tregodan@msu.edu