Background

In December 2014, Provost (then Interim) Ronald Mitchelson assembled a work group (“Code Unit Proposal Committee”) to address the UCFS recommendation CR5 to “evaluate consolidation or combination of colleges to reduce the number by at least one.” Six elected faculty members from the College of Health and Human Performance and six elected faculty members from the College of Human Ecology, with at least one representative from each academic unit in both colleges, comprised the work group. The group was charged to address: ascertaining individual unit preferences as to reorganization and ultimate destination, provisional code development, and resource allocation recommendations.

Following ECU’s comprehensive process for making changes to existing code units described below, the work group conducted a thorough study culminating in proposed relocation of each academic unit in the College of Human Ecology to other colleges within the institution (see FIGURE 1). Specifically, faculty of the Department of Child Development and Family Relations, the Department of Interior Design and Merchandising, and the School of Social Work and faculty of the College of Health and Human Performance voted to reorganize as one college, the College of Health and Human Performance. Faculty in the School of Hospitality Leadership voted to reorganize with the College of Business faculty. Faculty in the Department of Nutrition Sciences voted to join the College of Allied Health Sciences in the Division of Health Sciences. The Department of Criminal Justice faculty are completing the final step in the institution’s reorganization process where they will join fifteen academic departments comprising the Harriot College of Arts and Sciences.

FIGURE 1
These recommended structural changes were approved by the ECU BOT in July 2015 and by UNC BOG in September 2015. Once internal approval of the Department of Criminal Justice’s reorganization with the Harriot College of Arts and Sciences is completed in November 2015, final dissolution of the College of Human Ecology will occur.

**Rationale for Proposed Reorganization**

The proposed reorganization addresses the UCFS recommendation to “evaluate consolidation or combination of colleges to reduce the number by at least one.” This proposal originated from earlier work of ECU’s Program Prioritization Committee in 2011-12, in which a comprehensive study including three university forums and an electronic survey resulted in seven reorganization scenarios. One scenario that appeared to provide significant opportunities for collaboration in instructional, research, and service programs, while posing minimum disruption, involved academic disciplines organized as the College of Human Ecology. Following the institution’s review process described below, faculty in these academic programs chose to reorganize with four different colleges. This reorganization will result in more effective instructional, research, and engagement programs and support an important institutional goal to reduce administrative costs.

Specifically, the reorganization of the College of Human Ecology is a reorganization that provides administrative cost savings that in the long-term outweigh the short-term expected levels of disruption. Total cost savings and more effective allocation of resources (estimated at $300,000 recurring) will derive from the reduction of one dean position, reduction of one associate dean position, reallocation of one support position (to the expanding Pirate Tutoring Center), reallocation of one academic advisor (to the rapidly growing BS University Studies program), and $30,000 in operating funds.

**Internal Review Process**

The procedures entailed direct involvement of all affected faculty members, comprehensive analysis of academic and curricular implications, recommendations of relevant unit and university administrators, the institution’s Educational Policies and Planning Committee, the Faculty Senate and approval by the Chancellor.

A detailed description of the ECU process for organizing into academic code units and for making changes to existing code units is described in the *Faculty Manual*, Part IV, sections I and II [see http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/currentfacultymanual/part4.pdf].

The reorganization was thoroughly reviewed in accordance with established institutional policies and approved by all appropriate campus bodies. Numerous university offices
planned the transition of all academic records during summer 2015, with full implementation expected to be completed within one year.

Implementation Plan for Reorganization of Colleges and Associated Academic Programs

Representatives of the Office of the Provost including personnel administration, the office of the registrar, and academic program planning and development assisted with effective implementation of the proposed changes.

With final approval (in September of 2015) of the UNC Board of Governors to dissolve the College of Human Ecology, work has continued to implement the changes in multiple databases including course scheduling software, Degree Finder, Degree Works, and Applications to ECU. The following list identifies affected procedures and the changes that were needed to implement program relocations prior to the start of the Fall semester 2015.

- Registration restrictions on existing course sections for the term (if sections have already been created), for the new college, program, major, concentration codes
- Registration restrictions on courses at the catalog level in Banner.
- Major, degree, college information for all students pursuing degrees within CHE (declared and intended) on each student record.
- Revision of all affected program codes in Banner (Banner tables that feed to all other forms).
- Update of all CHE faculty and advisors college/home department information in Banner.
- Update programming in Degree Works for each program/major, concentration, to look for both the old and new codes.
- Update Degree Explorer information to provide accurate searches and current information
- Revise recruitment materials to reflect reorganization
- Revise undergraduate and graduate admissions applications
- Campus websites that reference the affected units (including ECU Home Page)
- Faculty information in Acalog (custom page, so requires manual updates)
- IPAR reports, and all ecuBIC reports that pull information based upon college or departmental codes (IPAR, Registrar, Admissions, Graduate School, College reports)
- Student Data Mart (GA)
- Human Resources Data Mart (GA)
- Campus Maps

Redistribution of Resources

Resource allocation and reallocation decisions were based upon existing resources, the percentage of faculty members in each respective academic unit, and the strategic
directions of each college. Resources are subject to State of North Carolina, University of North Carolina, and East Carolina University policies and regulations. Until such time as facilities and space for physical relocation of affected academic units become available, all reorganized entities will remain in current assigned facilities.

Conclusion

Academic reorganization is challenging and can be disruptive to the lives of faculty and students. Thus, the goal to achieve program effectiveness and administrative efficiencies must be accomplished with appropriate sensitivity and flexibility. ECU’s inclusive and transparent process for achieving the proposed reorganization of units within the College of Human Ecology has stimulated collaboration and new synergies within instruction, research, and outreach programs, as well as provide important administrative cost savings. Once the organizational transition is completed, East Carolina University will be a significantly stronger institution of higher education.