

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University


Proposal 4-20

**Recommendation: The School of Business and Economics requests to
Transition to a College, “The College of Business”**

Memo

DATE: August 29, 2019

TO: Jacqueline Huntoon, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

FROM: Dean Johnson, Dean of the School of Business and Economics (SBE) 

RE: Transition to a College

The School of Business and Economics, including the faculty, administration, and Dean's Advisory Council, requests to transition to a College. The faculty, administration and SBE Dean's Advisory Council strongly support the transition to a college. In particular, the SBE requests to transition to the College of Business. Transitioning to a College will improve the standing of our programs through the University's recognition of our current value and the opportunities for future growth. For many reasons, now is the appropriate time for this transition.

Rationale

The transition to a College is the logical next step in the history of the School. From its origin as a Department in 1949, offering only a BS in Engineering Administration degree (later renamed the BS in Engineering Management), the unit expanded its role through offering a BS in Business Administration degree and a Master of Science in Business Administration (MSBA) degree. In 1970, the department was reconstructed as a School of Business and Engineering Administration (SBEA). During the 1980s, the School introduced the Master of Science in Mineral Economics (MSME) and the Bachelor of Science in Economics (BSE) degree programs. In the 1995-96 academic year, the School was renamed the School of Business and Economics (SBE) as part of an overall curriculum restructuring. Today the School offers a broad range of degrees including four graduate degrees (Masters in Business Administration, Masters of Science in Accounting, Master of Engineering Management, and a Master in Natural Resources Economics). Current undergraduate majors include Accounting, Economics, Engineering Management, Finance, Management, Marketing, Management Information Systems, and the jointly offered Construction Management major. It is appropriate to be labeled a College given this expanded breadth of degree offerings.

Michigan Tech's vision for the SBE is substantial enrollment growth (10%+ per year) resulting in an enrollment of 1,600+ students and a new facility. Achievement of this enrollment goal requires strong and creative action to support recruitment growth. The transition to a College will support this enrollment growth by elevating the stature of the unit. The President has challenged the campus to be a technological university in the truest sense. That is, a university that offers a set of programs that clearly establish us as an international leader in technology and the impact, applications and interactions of technology. At the same time, the impact of technology on business is a central theme for today's business programs. As such, a business program within a technological university is uniquely positioned to develop educational and research opportunities that address societal needs in the coming decades.

Expectations for Deans have fundamentally changed at Michigan Tech. In particular, it is critical for Deans to actively participate in the external facing role of advancement. The transition to a College will allow the Dean to allocate more effort to advancement and travel requirements, while providing an improved shared faculty governance structure through the role of division coordinators. The division coordinator position will provide faculty with a pathway to administrative positions, which supports advancement and retention of all faculty.

The transition to a College will send a clear signal to alumni, donors and employers that the unit shares the same support and relevancy of the other units on campus. Currently, the School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science is also proposing a transition to a college. Given the long-standing College of Engineering and the College of Science and Arts, and the establishment of the Pavlis Honors College and the newly created College of

Computing, the need to transition to a college at this time is all the more important. A related benefit for the entire campus is that governance, policies and procedures will be simplified if all the units at the University are colleges.

Details and Division Structure

The Dean’s Advisory Council and faculty were polled to create an initial list of potential names. The name “College of Business” was the most frequently suggested name by over 85% of the respondents. Next, faculty cast a single vote from among this list of potential names. Five names, all starting with “College of Business,” received votes. The name “College of Business” received 50% of this faculty vote. Next, a survey was conducted for the first, second and third choice for potential divisions to comprise the college. The following framework was the first choice of 61% of the faculty.

College of Business*			
Divisions	Economics	Accounting, Finance & MIS	Management & Marketing
Majors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics • Masters in Natural Resource Economics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting • Accounting: Concentration in Data Analytics • Finance • MIS • Master Data Analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Management • Engineering Management • Management • Management: Concentration in Entrepreneurship • Management: Concentration in Supply Chain • Marketing

* The Master in Business Administration and the Master of Engineering Management degrees are supported by faculty across the divisions.

As Dean, I support the “College of Business” name and the proposed division structure. The Bachelor’s majors in Accounting, Engineering Management, Finance, Management, Management Information Systems and Marketing all share a common curriculum core and are accredited by AACSB. They share a common set of learning goals, assessment, and curriculum management to comply with AACSB standards. In contrast, Economics does not share a common core; nor is the Economics degree accredited by AACSB. Technology and information analytics has become a larger component of Accounting and Finance as witnessed by our Accounting program introducing a concentration in Data Analytics last year and the increasing importance of FinTech (finance knowledge combined with skills in programming, database, etc.). These current trends support the formation of Accounting, Finance, and MIS division. The SBE has increased the number of management-related degrees, including Engineering Management and Construction Management. As such, these management degrees comprise a large percentage of business students. However, the above structure will produce a fairly even distribution of faculty members across these three divisions.