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## Website Archive - Frequently Asked Questions

University of Southern Maine

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## Frequently asked questions

No tenured faculty will be retrenched during fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2011. What about non-tenured faculty?

Non-tenured faculty will be considered, as always, on a case-by-case basis under guidelines spelled out in the AFUM contract.

There is, of course, a difference between retrenchment and reorganization. Retrenchment is one of the strategies that a university employs when confronted with an urgent need to balance its budget. Our reorganization focuses on achieving a fiscally sustainable organizational structure that flattens the university administratively in order to direct more resources to our core academic enterprise.

### **What is the status of program elimination?**

Program elimination is one of several processes currently under way that are separate and distinct from the Academic Reorganization Proposal. Provost Kate Forhan is continuing academic program review focused on reducing expenses in fiscal year 2011 and beyond. We also continue to review academic programs as part of the Trustees' mandate to examine programs that produce five or fewer graduates and courses with 12 or fewer students. Currently, we also are planning reductions in non-academic areas, including among senior administrative positions, designed to save at least \$1 million in fiscal year 2011.

All of our work will respect university governance procedures and honor contractual obligations.

### **How will tenure guidelines be affected?**

There will be no changes in tenure guidelines during the 2010-2011 academic year. Eventually, we expect the newly defined academic units to develop new promotion and tenure guidelines, consistent with the AFUM contract. Current probationary tenure-track faculty will have the choice of continuing under their existing tenure guidelines or switching to the new guidelines.

### **How will participatory management work during the implementation phase?**

Participatory management is predicated on the involvement of faculty in university decision making. It will take the 2010-2011 academic year for us to work together to implement the departmental restructuring. We will offer facilitation to those faculty who wish assistance in creating new internal structures. These conversations will respect administrative, academic, and contractual principles. The Open Space Technology (OST) process used

in the second convocation could be used to facilitate the conversations and inform decisions. The Design Team model also gives us a method of decision making that is based on a collaborative and mutually respectful relationship among faculty and administrators.

In committing ourselves to the education of our students, we will ensure that their education is not in any way interrupted during the implementation phase. Students will remain at the center of our work.

**Who ultimately decides where academic units will be housed?**

We will have to build some degree of flexibility into the implementation process because there may be units that are not prepared to move. However, under the principles of participatory management, faculty participate in the decision-making process, but final decisions rest with the president and provost.

**Will there still be department chairs in the newly reorganized colleges?**

Current departments will be empowered to reorganize themselves within the new college structure. During this self-design phase, they could reorganize as a faculty group, a department or some other academic unit. In any case, together we will determine the best leadership and management structure using a facilitated process that is consistent with the AFUM contract.

**What will happen to those academic units not included in the newly reorganized colleges?**

The Academic Reorganization Proposal does not, for example, affect Women and Gender Studies. That unit reports to the Provost's Office and, consequently, is not part of a college structure.

**What is the impact of reorganization on staff in the academic units?**

Through academic reorganization we seek to establish a more consistent and equitable distribution of administrative staff support positions. Since we do not yet know the outcomes of eventual departmental restructuring, it is impossible at this time to speculate on the details. We are committed, however, to achieving as many staff reductions as possible through attrition and reallocations.