



Northeastern University

Office of the Provost

To: College of Criminal Justice Parents

From: Stephen W. Director, Provost

Date: April 8, 2009

Re: Possible Restructuring of the College of Criminal Justice and the College of Arts and Sciences

As you may be aware, several months ago I established an ad hoc committee known as the College Structure Committee to assess the advantages and disadvantages of various organizational configurations for the College of Arts and Science and the College of Criminal Justice. One of the possibilities being considered is the merger of the College of Criminal Justice into the College of Arts and Sciences or a successor college, such as a College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Our motivation for undertaking such efforts is to continually seek ways to strengthen our academic programs and university structures in order to provide the best support for the work of our faculty and pursuits of our students.

Northeastern recognizes that the criminal justice field has undergone significant expansion over the past three decades. Today it is a highly interdisciplinary and globalized field. As a consequence, criminal justice practitioners and researchers must apply a wide breadth of knowledge to their work, from areas like international law, cultural studies, language, public health, and computer science, to name just a few.

Northeastern has a responsibility to question, analyze and debate if and how we can strengthen these interdisciplinary connections, at the university level, so our professors and the next generation of criminal justice graduates are in the best position possible to help society gain new understanding about the causes of crime and the relationship between crime and justice policy.

Since the Committee was formed, it has been soliciting views from members of the Northeastern community, including faculty, staff, students and alumni. The Committee has been working hard to ensure that all views and issues can be heard and opinions, both pro and con, taken into consideration as we evaluate a possible reorganization. Thus far, many students, faculty, alumni and staff have provided valuable feedback at committee meetings, open forums and by email. To this juncture, no decision about any organizational changes has been made.

It is important to note that if a decision is made to merge the College of Criminal Justice into the College of Arts and Sciences or a successor college, it will not negatively impact the academic integrity of any degree program or student access to high quality co-op and research opportunities. Further, no matter what college structure may emerge, Criminal Justice will maintain its high level of visibility within the University and the CJ faculty, programs and students will remain an integral part of Northeastern University and a great source of pride.

The Committee is expected to provide its report to me by mid May. This report will be evaluative in nature and will provide a basis for considering possible organizational changes. The report is not expected to contain specific recommendations. The Committee continues to seek input. If you would like to contribute to this discussion, please feel free to email your thoughts to the Committee at collegestructure@neu.edu.