

College of Arts & Sciences

Communiqué

July 17, 2007

Welcome!

As you know, the restructuring of Academic Affairs became official just over two weeks ago. By virtue of that event, you have become a member of the largest academic component on the Truman campus – the College of Arts & Sciences. I am excited to be working with this extraordinary group of faculty and staff! This is a group that is remarkable in its array of expertise, accomplishments in teaching and scholarship, love for the institution, and great appreciation for the students we serve. Because of these characteristics, I believe we are ideally situated to meet the challenges on the horizon and to capably fulfill our institutional mission.

A Commitment to Communication

Academic restructuring affords us an opportunity to enhance and enrich our communication at all levels of the organization. To that end, I am committed to creating numerous channels of communication that enable you to be “in the know,” to have ready access to sources of information, and to engage in dialogues with colleagues all across the College. This communiqué is a first step in that commitment and I plan to share information with you on a regular and timely basis. Furthermore, I solicit your input on additional venues you would consider helpful in creating healthy communication networks. Feel free to send me your ideas via e-mail (douglas@truman.edu).

It is imperative that all members of the College have regular opportunities to meet together. I envision that this will happen at least once a semester and have planned the first “**College Conversation**” for Thursday morning, August 23rd. This is “Majors Day” (formerly Division Day) and provides one of the few days on the fall semester calendar for such a meeting. I will share more details regarding the time and location near the beginning of August. I encourage each of you to mark this time on your calendar and to participate with us.

“What Does it Mean to be a Member of the College of Arts & Sciences?”

As I have had conversations with individuals in recent days, this question has been posed more than once. We all have an understanding of what it meant to be part of a division, but I suspect that many are uncertain how this new structure will affect organizational relationships and identities.

From my vantage point, participation in the College of Arts and Sciences means living as a *community of involved colleagues*. This community is marked by a variety of disciplinary perspectives, methodological approaches, and creative/scholarly endeavors. Moreover, this community is linked together through shared commitments and values, such as student learning, faculty development, and intellectual growth.

At the “micro-level,” the creation of departments will foster even greater depth within our individual spheres of study. Furthermore, I am convinced that our departments will craft diverse disciplinary initiatives intended to support the University mission.

At the college level, we will have increased capacity to share our individual and collective discoveries through new communication pathways. We will also be challenged and informed by the creativity of those colleagues beyond our departments. That interaction will forge new relationships, produce new interdisciplinary initiatives, and enrich the entire campus community.

Most importantly, we have the opportunity to join together to create an even broader organizational culture that marks the College of Arts & Sciences. It would be difficult to predict what that culture may look like, but I believe it can embrace the valuable contributions of our previous divisional cultures, while transcending their borders. I am committed to ensuring that this broader culture is marked by creativity, collegiality, and communication. I ask that you join me in this challenging endeavor!