October 22, 2015

John Wienecek  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
University of Idaho  
Moscow, Idaho 83844-3152

Dear Provost Wienecek:

The purpose of this letter is to request permission to conduct an administrative reorganization of several units in the College of Letters, Arts & Social Sciences at the University of Idaho. We also request that this reorganization take effect summer 2016.

The request affects five units at the University of Idaho in the College of Letters, Arts & Social Sciences: The Martin School, the Department of Political Science, the Department of Philosophy, the Department Modern Languages and Cultures, and the International Studies Program. Presently, the Martin School is composed of three units: Political Science, Philosophy, and International Studies. In order to develop new academic synergies, increase administrative efficiency, and position the university and college’s programs for a new generation of students, we propose the renaming of the school to Martin School of Global Studies. This renamed school will house the programs that focus on international education and languages. The Martin School of Global studies will therefore house the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures and the International Studies Program. The remaining departments (i.e., the Department of Political Science and the Department of Philosophy) will be merged into a single administrative unit: the Department of Politics and Philosophy. Both the Martin School of Global Studies and the Department of Politics and Philosophy will be academic units within the College of Letters, Arts, & Social Sciences. The merger will allow the university to address economy of scale issues by placing two complementary disciplines in the same administrative unit. This administrative reorganization will not require additional resources from the State of Idaho or the University of Idaho.

So, in summary:
1. We are proposing to rename the Martin School to the Martin School of Global Studies;
2. We are moving the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures into the new Martin School of Global Studies;
3. We are taking the Department of Philosophy and the Department of Political Science out of the Martin School;
4. We are leaving International Studies within the Martin School.
5. Outside of the Martin School, we will have a Department of Politics and Philosophy that is merged between those two disciplines.
This reorganization will not affect any degree programs at the University of Idaho. The Department of Politics and Philosophy will continue to offer the BA/BS, MA, and PhD in political science, the Master of Public Administration (MPA), and the BA/BS in philosophy. The Department of Modern Languages and Cultures will continue their BA programs in French, Latin-American Studies, Modern Language Business, and Spanish. The International Studies program will continue its BA program in International Studies. All minors and certificate programs will also remain unaffected by the reorganization. Additionally, all of these units and programs will continue to undergo rigorous internal and external reviews per university regulations to ensure academic quality and organizational effectiveness. Once again, it is our intention that increased administrative efficiencies and better degree marketing and positioning will lead to better service and more students in our programs.

All faculty members in the Department of Political Science, the Department of Philosophy, the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures, and the International Studies program are committed to the delivery of public service and research. In public service, faculty members in these units actively engage citizens, groups, organizations, governments, and businesses in Idaho, nationally, and internationally. These activities range from contract research and the direct provision of services to public workshops and presentations. All members of these faculties are engaged in research, some funded with significant external grants.

The university’s mission includes the development of the state through excellent teaching, research, and outreach. The vision of the University of Idaho is to be among the leaders of land-grant institutions in the 21st century. Within this context, and especially given Representative Morrill’s call for a liberal education for the industrial classes, the study of politics, philosophy, languages, and cultures, all on a local to international scale, provide the foundational knowledge for citizenship, engagement, and community development. Each of the departments and programs affected by this reorganization provides direct support to the University of Idaho’s mission and priorities. The study of politics and philosophy provides the foundation for the humanities and social sciences and the knowledge generated by them is fundamental to almost every field and discipline at the university. Students that study languages and cultures become more competitive in fields such as education, mass media, law, medicine, international business, natural resources, agriculture, and politics. The programs in language and culture serve the University of Idaho’s signature area on human communities and the strategic plan in community and culture. Finally, the International Studies program combines core training in global themes with specific training in particular issue emphases (international relations, global resources and development, global economics and business) and particular regional emphases plus advanced training in a second language. It directly addresses the University of Idaho’s State Board of Education mandate to promote global understanding.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Andrew E. Kersten, Dean