
Toward a New School
of Landscape
Architecture +
Urban & Regional
Planning

New School Task Force
Report 11-25-08

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Introduction and Charge to Task Force

The following review of the proposed school of Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning was conducted from September 10 through November 22, 2008 by an internal task force appointed by Christopher Silver, Dean of the College of Design, Construction and Planning¹. The task force was chaired by Margaret Portillo and included Walter Dukes, Eugene Roy Graham, Maria Christina Gurucharri, William Tilson, and Zhong-Ren Peng. Additionally, three members joined the task force: Robert Macleod representing the College Faculty Council, Catherine Taylor, a doctoral student in Urban & Regional Planning, and Chase Webb, a fifth year Landscape Architecture student. Dean Silver charged the task force with four primary targets:

- Develop recommendations for the implementation of a new school containing Landscape Architecture and Urban & Regional Planning
- Benchmark quality indicators and recommendations from comparable institutions with such merged programs
- Consider quality outcomes arising from such a merger at the University of Florida
- Summarize challenges and opportunities voiced by the involved units' constituency groups

To gather information, the task force interviewed administrators from respected programs nationwide with a variety of combined structures containing both disciplines, held departmental and joint meetings with Landscape Architecture and Urban & Regional Planning faculty members, interviewed the primary support staff from the affected units, involved student representatives in the process as well as solicited opinions from several members from the departmental advisory boards.

Notably, the historic preservation program was initially included in the proposed new school structure; however based on factors outlined by Dean Silver in his charge to the task force, the decision was made to maintain Historic Preservation's current interdisciplinary focus and stand-alone structure. An expanded rationale for the organizational structure of HP supports its current identity and future vision; this was developed in conjunction with a summarization of leading historic preservation programs.² All units housed within the College will have the opportunity to interface equally with the historic preservation program as currently organized.

Overview of Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning

Both units focus on professional education and applied research relating to natural and built environments. Further, they both share a longstanding history of community outreach and service. Throughout the remainder of the report, Landscape Architecture will often be referred to as LA and Urban & Regional Planning as URP. The LA faculty concentrates most heavily on the professional undergraduate program while supporting a developing masters program. URP has grown most rapidly in its doctoral enrollment, especially in the area of information technology for planning and in growth management and transportation.

¹ See the unabridged charge to the task force in the appendix

² The rationale for the organizational structure of the historic preservation program with benchmarking data are found in the appendix

Both departments have a well rounded balance of senior and junior-level faculty who contribute to their programs' high national rankings.

Landscape Architecture Mission and Degree Offerings³

Overall the departmental mission in Landscape Architecture is to advance the ethical, creative, and skillful application of the arts and the sciences in planning, designing, implementing and managing diverse landscapes. Toward that end, the department offers three, fully accredited degrees:

- BLA: Bachelor of Landscape Architecture
- MLA: First Professional Master of Landscape Architecture
- MLA: Post Professional Master of landscape Architecture
- Undergraduate minor in Landscape Architecture

The Bachelor of Landscape Architecture emphasizes professional practice and service while the Master of Landscape Architecture focuses on professional practice and service within the context of creative scholarship. While the department has had some engagement in the college-wide PhD program, there is an opportunity to increase the level of participation in the doctoral program. With the current faculty and space resources in the department, the interim Chair of Landscape Architecture maintains that her faculty is teaching to capacity in the accredited BLA and MLA programs.

Urban & Regional Planning Mission and Degree Offerings

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning defines its mission as being a leader in planning education, research and practice for the citizens of Florida, in the Southeast and within the nation. URP seeks to educate planners who will work with innovative technologies to create livable cities within sustainable environments. To accomplish its mission, the department endeavors to strategically position itself to benefit from the vast resources of the University of Florida and the larger planning profession. The department offers two accredited graduate degrees and a minor as follows:

- MURP: Master of Urban and Regional Planning
- Graduate Minor in Urban and Regional Planning
- Undergraduate Minor in Urban and Regional Planning

URP participates heavily in the DCP doctoral program and this involvement is anticipated to continue, if not grow further, in the new school.

Opportunity for Strategic Growth

Both units will need to address enrollment growth strategically to align with College and university priorities. The URP Chair believes that enrollment for the MURP could increase to about ten students; likewise, he estimates that an additional five to eight students could be added to the doctoral program.

³ Data was not available on the enrollment of LA and URP minors; this data is tracked by UF central administration and not provided to individual departments.

In contrast, the LA Chair recognizes the real challenge of balancing the needs of a first rate, accredited professional undergraduate program with the increasing urgency to grow enrollment at the graduate level. Currently the MLA offers a more generalized course of study; however, the program appears ready to begin developing explicit foci that reflect faculty expertise and disciplinary areas of specialization. Interestingly, both Chairs noted prospective student interest in graduate studies in Urban Design, which neither unit currently offers; for example, those students with an architecture degree seem attracted to this specialization.

Administrators and Faculty, Staff, and Students

The units each have a department chair; LA has an interim chair and URP has a chair who was appointed through an external search. LA has nine full-time positions--six tenured faculty (two full and four associate rank), two untenured faculty (one assistant and one associate), and one lecturer. Urban and Regional Planning has ten full-time positions--seven tenured faculty (four full and three associate rank), two untenured faculty (one assistant and one joint appointment), and one assistant professor to be hired (search in progress)

LA has one experienced office manager providing administrative support and assistance with the MLA program. URP also has veteran, experienced staff--one office manager, one staff member coordinating student services, and one OPS staff person assisting with research grants.

The majority of LA students (73 in upper division) are enrolled in the BLA program with 25 MLA students and 1 doctoral student. The majority of the URP students (95) enroll in the MURP program with 17 in the doctoral program.

Perceived Departmental Identity and Values

For the LA faculty, *design studio and faculty expertise* represent the life blood of their program. They agree that the core foundations of the Landscape Architecture program rests on a quality design curriculum, full accreditation, and program autonomy. The program's connection to the profession, including the Landscape academy and alumni, was perceived by faculty as critical to achieving their mission of professional education and applied research.

For the URP faculty, *research and scholarly work* symbolize their departmental core identity, articulated as "spatial planning with social conscience." Their focus is realized through a diversity of research areas and the departmental research centers. The well established GeoPlan Research Center, for example, has received numerous awards for its sustained research excellence in GIS research. This unit has one of the most active research programs in DCP, with average research awards of about \$3 million annually.

Both departments appreciate a supportive, collegiate, and collaborative work environment and appear to value deeply close-knit professor-student mentoring. Again, community outreach and service are core values uniting the departments as well as a commitment to interdisciplinary and international collaboration. For example, LA faculty offer international programs in Paris (fall semester graduate and undergraduate program) and has once offered a service learning experience in Indonesia. URP has a study aboard program in Brazil. Students also participate in the Network for European and U.S. Regional and Urban Studies (NEURUS) program. Plans are underway for a summer Study Abroad Program in China for summer 2009.

Leadership and Organizational Structure

Critical to the success of the new school is leadership to guide the vision for the future and make concrete progress on shared initiatives. The Task Force recommends a single director to lead the new school while maintaining a collaborative and collegial work environment that both faculties value. Leadership and organizational structure surfaced as the greatest and potentially the most divisive issue voiced by faculty in task force meetings and interviews. In considering organizational options for the new school, many models were proposed, debated, drawn, scrutinized and studied. All had some advantages and potential drawbacks.

Many faculty members participating in the URP + LA meeting with Dean Silver seemed to concur that a model of a single school Director would be best suited to the new school, promoting leadership within a lean administrative structure. The task force recommends an administrative model consisting of a Director and Program Coordinators where a Director works closely with Program Coordinators whose roles and responsibilities will be determined through on-going discussion with new school faculty. The School Director/Coordinator model offers organizational structure and flexibility for the emerging structure. Importantly, the coordinators can allow for disciplinary representation (e.g., LA graduate coordinator) and promote shared identity (e.g., urban design coordinator). A national, open search for this candidate would be most ideal; however, current fiscal constraints in the College and university probably do not support this. Nevertheless, the search and selection of a School Director should be given highest priority. In the meantime, the current Chairs will need to work in collaboration with one another to begin the new school work plan and start implementing faculty-endorsed, priority changes. Therefore, we see a transition in leadership occurring in two phases where the department chairs begin collaborating in earnest, followed by the search and naming of a School Director. Concurrently, coordinator positions will be agreed upon and put into place. After a School Director is named, the role of the Chairs will be evaluated and redefined to reflect the vision of the New School.

The New School Director will need to continue established quality programs, facilitate the transition into the new school, prioritize and facilitate new proposals while troubleshooting the inevitable challenges of people and limited resources. Additionally, the Director not only needs to be skilled as an external advocate but needs finesse as an internal facilitator. He or she must pave the way for a collegial, intellectually exciting and progressive environment that will become a springboard for innovation. This individual must appreciate both disciplines, having the administrative experience and personality characteristics to be an effective agent of change. The new Director also needs to be adept at developing and reinforcing communication between the faculty and the Dean as well as across constituency groups. Faculty members were in agreement that the Director for the new school could hold expertise in either discipline with a doctorate or a terminal master's degree and must have a clear record of research and/or creative scholarship.

Active engagement with faculty across departments about the rationale, steps and status of the new school is critical to successfully launching and building a strong foundation. Faculty need to see its purpose and the potential in order to become engaged stakeholders. If key stakeholders such as faculty, staff, students, alumni, and practitioners affiliated with the respective departments, become disengaged or disenfranchised, then progress will slow and

may even threaten the ultimate success of the merger. Knowing what programs and departmental culture will be honored and remain intact, what will be changed, and how this will be accomplished need to become abundantly clear. The need for clarity and a shared sense of purpose surfaced repeatedly in departmental meetings with the Task Force.

Faculty across units will have more vested interests in contributing to the new and established URP centers to enhance dynamic, interdisciplinary scholarship that will bring into sharp relief the identity of the new school and advance the pool of knowledge. The Task Force strongly recommends that new school retain discipline-specific tenure and promotion criteria to reflect and respect disciplinary uniqueness and distinctions. Further, cross-disciplinary, formalized, and attentive mentoring for untenured faculty should be a priority in the new school. Mentoring processes become even more essential for untenured faculty during periods of organizational restructuring and realignment. Safeguards should be put in place to limit untenured faculty time on committee work and new course preparations during this transition.

The staff most likely will need to adapt their work processes to the new structure and this expanded scope of work needs to be acknowledged with appropriate incentives and rewards. The importance of engagement and maintaining clear channels of communication during the transition period cannot be overemphasized.

Again, engagement and communication was viewed as critical so students understand the integrity of their degree programs is not in any way being impacted by the new school structure while making clear any potential new course offerings or opportunities for new student organizations or initiatives.

Benchmarking of Landscape + Planning Units

Arizona State University

Ken Brooks, Director of School of Planning and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, since 2006

Ken Brooks remarked that, in the past decade nationwide, he has witnessed more landscape architecture and planning programs merge than separate. Unfortunately, “Most have been more like living together than a marriage and very few were shotgun weddings like Michigan State.” For the majority of these mergers the impetus was a resource savings measure but in the end they did not generate appreciable savings. At ASU, the School of Landscape Architecture and Planning merged when the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture was a small emerging program; this joining worked well initially under one particularly effective administrator but deteriorated upon his departure. Subsequently, the Dean moved the LA program out of planning and into architecture but the identity of landscape suffered in this organizational structure. Currently, the situation has improved now that the School has an Urban Design focus and the last three faculty hires have dual degrees in landscape architecture and architecture.

From his perspective, Brooks believes that to be most successful, mergers need to create a new hybrid with interdependent activities. Without such merged programs, there is not a strong justification for connecting landscape and planning programs.

It is critical to intertwine the disciplines through avenues such as urban design, environmental studies, housing and community design, etc. that connect design and policy. Further Brooks maintains recognition and rewards for such interdisciplinary activities need to be in place. He also recommends that faculty identify common values and develop a shared vision and mission for joint programs and initiatives. However, identifying commonalities is not enough; it is also important that they recognize their differences. Brook asserts that tenure and promotion criteria should not describe performance per se but instead describe outputs that have contributed to the body of knowledge in the respective disciplines.

Brooks recommends that the LA+URP merger at the University of Florida should capitalize on the fact that the state is in the top five in the nation regarding environmental policies and is a state with more rigorous licensure for the practice of landscape architecture. Within this context, he sees a unique opportunity to design a program that integrates design with policy and that can specifically address ways to make a difference in the state of Florida. This type of program could further “put UF on the map” and would result in productivity that University administrators would be more amenable to supporting.

Clemson University - Department of Regional Planning and Landscape Architecture

Dan Nadenicek, Past Department Head

The merger of the Department of Regional Planning and Landscape Architecture at Clemson University may have been easier than others documented in this benchmarking exercise because the original units were programs, not departments.

The Chair of the Department of Regional Planning and Landscape Architecture is responsible for the budget oversight and physical planning, while Program Directors are in charge of teaching assignments and curricular issues. From the perspective of former department head, Nadenicek, the merger has increased opportunities for collaborative research and scholarship between regional planning and landscape architecture. The joint T & P process has worked between the units since the tenure and promotion guidelines focus on nationally significant and peer reviewed work, regardless of content area.

Overall Nadenicek considered the merger to be successful; yet this was attributed in large part to the personality types and attitudes of the involved administration and faculty members. From a curricular standpoint, commonalities between units offer possibilities for joint courses and that this is where efficiencies are found, not by reducing FTEs. Like Ken Brooks, he maintained a new program like Urban Design could offer an important common thread.

Iowa State University- Department of Landscape Architecture; Department of Community and Regional Planning

Douglas Johnston, Chair since 2007

Both departments of Landscape Architecture and Community and Regional Planning are comparable in size and administrative structure. One Chair oversees the two departments and landscape architecture has an associate chair, program coordinator, administrative assistant, academic advisor, director of graduate education and 17 faculty members.

Community and Regional Planning has an administrative assistant, academic advisor, director of graduate education and 15 faculty members.

When discussing the challenges of the merger, Johnston indicated that the faculties still appear somewhat anxious about the merger. From his perspective, one of the problems was that the merger process did not have sufficient faculty input and participation from both departments; however, he see potential for the merger to provide opportunities to work together on planning-oriented projects such as public facilitation needs, small-area planning studies and other opportunities to integrate teaching with such outreach projects.

Kansas State University - Department of Landscape Architecture, Regional and Community Planning

Dan Donelin, Department Head since 1995

The merger of Landscape Architecture and Regional and Community Planning at Kansas State has been fraught with difficulties and one of the biggest challenges of the merger revolved around tenure & promotion criteria. The Provost insisted on joint T & P criteria for the merged unit; developing these criteria resulted in a contentious process. Since the department has 21.5 faculty, 16 in LA and 5.5 in planning, the T & P votes are done at a 3:1 ratio. Other challenges and conflicts have arisen in faculty searches where the educational qualifications of candidates have become a point of contention. This has led to debate over what defines a terminal degree (Ph.D. versus masters) and the larger argument of a common definition of what defines research and scholarship.

Donelin did not feel that a merger between a landscape and urban and regional planning necessarily offered any curricular advantages. For example, if LA students take one additional planning course and planning students take three LA courses, then what is the true benefit? In his context, Donelin also felt that the merger did not increase collaborative faculty research nor strengthen the department's national standing. While the program is ranked in the top ten in the country, the department head attributes this to the strength in their construction curricula.

Texas A & M- Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning

Forster Ndubisi, Department Head, since 2003

Currently, the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning has over 400 students, with 12 faculty members in the Landscape Architecture program and 22 faculty members in the Urban Planning program. The departments of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M University were merged in 1992 in order for it to have a bigger voice at the College of Architecture. In 2002, the faculty at the department voted to stay together as one department rather split into two; in 2003, the current department head Forster Ndubisi was hired.

Similar to the University of Texas – Austin model, the department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M University is organized by degree program. For example, the Texas A&M real estate program is called Master of Science in Land Development. The department head is in charge of budgeting, resource allocation, faculty hiring, etc. Faculty lines belong to the department, not to the individual programs. Tenure and promotion consideration

is conducted at the department level. Initially there were different tenure and promotion standards for Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning faculty, now it's the same criteria across the board. From Ndubisi's viewpoint, the current organizational structure with degree programs works well by fostering cross-curriculum teaching, interdisciplinary research collaboration and increased faculty productivity in research and scholarly work.

University of Texas at Austin

Fritz Steiner, Dean of the School of Architecture and Henry M. Rockwell Chair in Architecture, since 2001

The current Landscape Architecture program has four faculty members and more than 40 Master students. The near term target is to have six faculty members and 60 master students. The Community & Regional Planning program has 13 faculty members and more than 90 students. The School of Architecture at the University of Texas –Austin has no departments, just programs arranged by degrees. Graduate programs exist in Landscape Architecture, Community & Regional Planning, Urban Design, Sustainable Design, and in Interdisciplinary Studies. The Dean is in charge of budget and resource allocation, faculty hiring, and oversight of the unit. Faculty lines belong to the school, not to programs; faculty hiring is school-wide. Further, tenure and promotion consideration occurs at the school level. Much of the operations of the school occur by committee; for example, the committee on graduate studies is responsible for graduate-level curriculum development while the scholarship committee oversees school-wide scholarship.

According to Steiner, the program structure affords the school more flexibility to consider professional changes, reduces insular thinking, fosters interdisciplinary research and collaboration, and creates the foundation for interdisciplinary programs. The synergy of Landscape Architecture and Community & Regional Planning stems from the growing areas of urban design as well as ecologic design and planning. The School is also organizing an interdisciplinary team to develop a LEED-ND (LEED for Neighborhood Development) program.

Quality Indicators of Benchmarks

The most important quality indicator at several universities with LA + URP programs was the ability to create a credible hybrid program whether in Urban Design at ASU or a Masters in Real Estate at Texas A & M. Effective mergers realized a gain in collaborative research and scholarship noted by administrators at Clemson University, University of Texas-Austin, and Texas A & M. Several recommendations were made to prioritize the support of interdisciplinary research ventures by the College. Another quality indicator surfaced as the marked increase in doctoral students at Texas A & M. Collaborative studios jointly taught with LA + URP faculty represented yet another mark of quality as did the strategic hiring of faculty with joint experience and education across fields. While four of the targeted program cited advantages of such a merger, two programs did not appear to accrue benefits. Namely, Kansas State and Iowa State University did not perceive added value from a merger; in these settings the LA and URP programs appeared, for the most part, to operate in relative isolation from one another. Grassroots support for a merged structure by faculty seemed to be lacking in both cases, resulting in a somewhat acrimonious environment.

Quality Indicators for the New School at UF

The following recommendations reflect comments voiced by LA and URP faculty in departmental and combined faculty sessions on the new school as well as ideas that were developed by the Task Force who saw quality indicators as reflecting (1) degree programs, curricula, and student experience, (2) research and scholarship, (3) leadership and resources, (4) collegiality and a shared sense of purpose.

Quality of Degree Programs, Curricula and Student Experience

Degree Program

- Create a new Master of Urban Design Degree as a new hybrid program that will capitalize on the opportunity to engage policy and spatial planning with physical design
- Create a new specialization for Ecological and Regional Planning and Design that maximizes opportunities for cross-fertilization and fusion between programs
- Promote joint studios (this is especially advantageous to URP students) and encourage joint field experiences beneficial to LA + URP students occurring locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally
- Expand the Ph.D. program with hybrid LA + URP concentrations

Challenges

- *How can more degree programs, specializations, and course offerings be managed with leaner support and the current faculty base while maintaining the expected quality in current degree programs?*
- *What are creative ways to reduce teaching loads, particularly the required contact hours in LA curriculum that do not compromise excellence, while growing the research enterprise in the new school?*
- *How can the number of DRF faculty in the new school be increased, particularly in LA?*
- *How can physical spaces be identified for students and faculty that support joint studio offerings and faculty interaction?*

Quality of Scholarship and Creative Work

- Maintain discipline-specific tenure and promotion guidelines
- Continue, expand and reward collaboration between LA and URP on research projects
- Encourage more faculty involvement in URP research centers and college-wide centers
- Promote interdisciplinary research topics for graduate students, especially PhD students
- Develop marketing strategies to promote new programs recruiting doctoral students
- Implement more research opportunities at the undergraduate level

Challenges

- *In recognition that the development and implementation of shared, innovative research activities take time, how can time be allocated for such strategic planning?*
- *Where can untapped sources of funding be found to support new joint programs and initiatives?*
- *How can these shared scholarly initiatives be successfully launched without overextending the faculty?*
- *How do junior faculty best maintain focus and productivity during the organizational transition and be well mentored by senior faculty in the new school?*

Quality of Leadership and Resources

- Respect disciplinary uniqueness
- Create a culture of innovation and focus
- Promote new partnerships with the School of Architecture and the Historic Preservation Program for the Urban Design curriculum
- Promote new partnerships with units across campus like Geography and Ecology for the Ecological and Regional Planning and Design curriculum
- Encourage cluster hires through joint appointments with other units or recruit faculty with degrees in both fields, when appropriate
- Maximize efficiencies (e.g., teaching- co-listing courses and college-level committee work)

- Enhance mentoring of junior faculty
- Invite visiting scholars who offer a progressive model for bridging both disciplines
- Employ practicing professionals with hybrid practice experience for adjunct/visiting/affiliate professors

Challenges

- *How can the Director develop vision, trust, participation, and excitement to launch and cultivate a sense of identity and purpose for new school?*
- *How should the new school leadership balance growth with quality? For example, what is the optimal number of doctoral, masters and undergraduate students, given faculty and physical space resources?*
- *If the new school increases its reliance on part-time faculty and doctoral students to support expanded programs, how can Balkanizing be avoided?*

Quality of Collegiality and a Shared Sense of Purpose

- Director must keep a pulse on stakeholders in the new school and place a premium on clear and open communication as well as dialogue and convergence of ideas
- Prioritize focused joint initiatives in teaching and scholarship
- Bring in lecturers and visiting scholars with hybrid expertise in LA + URP to inspire those participating in the new school
- Seek input from other units across campus that have merged, such as in the College of Education and other benchmarked programs
- Consider using a facilitator to help establish unifying strategies at a critical meeting, if necessary, (like UF's John Dain) with expertise in facilitation and conflict management
- Staff involvement is critical in maintaining the workflow in the new school. Involve staff in defining their new roles and job descriptions. Consider rewards commensurate with responsibilities, and increased productivity
- Seek input from staff on their work spaces, consider a central staff location, to improve efficiency
- Mark the merger with social gatherings with faculty, staff and students. Capitalize on the restructuring and new launch. Develop new ways to commemorate the milestone. For example, host a new school event and invite similar programs from other leading universities to participate.

Develop a “white paper” that spells out the ideal conditions for such a school, establish UF as a model program, document processes and results, and seek national publicity.

Challenges

- *Inter-unit department cultures, traditions, and philosophical differences are not trivial. What can be done to cultivate collegiality across LA and URP faculty, staff and students?*
- *How does the new school avoid common pitfalls that have plagued other units with similar organizational structures to explicitly avoid a merger in name only or one that threatens disciplinary identity?*

Summary, Recommendations, and Next Steps

Create a new organizational model

- Create an organizational structure with a phased change to a School Director model
- The new organizational model will maintain T & P guidelines at the disciplinary level
- Phase 1:
 - Find resources to support an open search for the New School Director
 - Maintain Department Chair structure until New School Director is appointed
 - Study programs (existing and new) housed in the new school that need coordinators. Define and assign coordinators agreed upon by Chairs and faculty.
- Phase 2: New School Director in Place
 - Evaluate and redefine Chair roles to reflect the vision of the new school
 - Operationalize new administrative structure. The Director in conjunction with program coordinators contribute to the administration of programs and major endeavors within the new school.

Create a new Masters of Urban Design Degree (longer range but critical goal)

- Seize the opportunity to integrate policy and spatial planning with physical design
- Strategically position this degree program as a centerpiece of the school’s identity
- Partner with other programs, with a vested interest in Urban Design, such as Architecture, Historic Preservation, and Interior Design
- Benchmark other programs in Urban Design to fine tune goals and objectives
- Develop curriculum and program, co-listing existing LA and URP courses with an urban design focus

Create a new specialization for Environmental Planning and Design (GIS)

- Again, capitalize on the opportunity to integrate policy and spatial planning with physical design
- Continue to conduct joint GIS studios
- Co-list existing courses with an environmental planning and design focus
- Explore new supporting courses across disciplines in allied disciplines such as Geography and Ecology
- Explore the possibility of integrating issues of sustainability, especially Low Impact Development, into the specialization

Promote faculty initiatives

- Continue, expand and recognize URP/LA collaborations on research projects
- Encourage more faculty involvement in research centers, especially those housed in URP
- Prioritize mentoring of junior faculty, particularly during the transition times
- Consider cluster hires, when appropriate, with expertise across URP and LA
- Explore joint appointments with other programs/units
- Invite lecturers, visiting scholars, practitioners etc. who model the successful bridging of both disciplines

Promote student initiatives

- Communicate clearly and frequently about the logic and process of the restructuring
- Involve students in the transition. For example, they could contribute to the new shared mission statement, new school name, new logo, new academic and professional identity, etc.
- Encourage 100 % student participation in an international experience in the new school (i.e., Paris, Brazil, China, etc.)
- Promote the expanded interdisciplinary research topics for masters and PhD students
- Introduce interdisciplinary LA + URP research and scholarship at the undergraduate level

Promote staff initiatives

- Involve staff in defining their roles and responsibilities in the new school and consider rewards for increased workload and productivity
- Seek input from staff on ways to facilitate the transition and facilitate the workflow
- Consider physical office proximities among new school staff, director, and program directors; it would be ideal to locate the staff in fairly close proximity to one another as well as to key administrators and coordinators

Celebrate new school milestones

- Mark the merger with celebrations with faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders
- Enlist Julie Frey and her team to get the word out in multiple venues
- Host an event on the merger and invite programs in other universities which have been through similar reorganization to participate. Write a white paper that discusses the ideal conditions for such a merger, present the UF model and outcomes, and seek national publicity

Timeline Ideas for Planning and Implementation

November – December 2008

- New School Task Force completes their report
- Share report with both departments and DCP Faculty Council for discussion and planning
- Plan a retreat in early 2009 to begin a work plan on the transition, new school name, short-term and longer range goals

Spring Semester 2009

- Appoint a transition team representing both departments to keep focus and momentum
- Host a faculty retreat and begin the work plan with goals continuing over the semester

Spring semester – August 2009

- Leadership, transition team, and faculty will spearhead work plan and draft a vision, mission and strategic indicators for the new school with stakeholder participation
- Present, redraft, finalize, and approve work plan with faculty majority (see constitution)

- Develop and refine ideas generated by faculty teams in the Fall 2008 semester:
(1) New Programs, (2) Curriculum, and (3) Centers/Collaborative Research
- Develop communications plan from mission to logo.
- Engage staff in planning logistics and beginning the transition
- Communicate the logic and benefits of the new structure with students and alumni
- Update communications network- retool websites and communication materials

June - September 2009

- ***Celebration of New School***
- Develop press releases on campus and in national professional networks to share news
- Host a series of celebration events with faculty, students, and friends of the new school