INTRODUCTION:
With the previous $3M reduction, and the $5M budget shortfall, significant cuts are having to be made across the university, including the College of BILSA. In order for us to move forward strategically we need to prioritize where resources will be allocated within the college leading to some difficult adjustments.

One proposal to help address the significant budget reductions is to move the Department of Media Studies under the School of Business. To put this in context, the budget reduction task force identified the possibility of eliminating the Department of Media Studies (please refer to line 42 of the ‘Budget Reduction Options for Review’ list (in red)). As Dean of the College of BILSA, I was against this option in that with 111 majors to serve, and four continuing tenure line faculty positions after the proposed cut, eliminating the program did not make sense. In addition, to put things in perspective, Media Studies has a higher enrollment (in terms of majors) than twenty-three other programs at UW-Platteville (Chart 1). I then proposed the alternative plan of moving the department under the School of Business (line 39 of the ‘Budget Reduction Options for Review’ list (in green)). This option has several advantages as indicated below.

Chart 1- Enrollment numbers for on-campus majors based on UW-Platteville Fall 2014 10th day numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microsystems &amp; Nanotech BS</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Studies</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ornamental Horticulture</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Energy</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Physics</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag Business</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that the plan of moving the Department of Media Studies under the School of Business, as one of the options on the list, still needs final approval after feedback from the campus and various governance groups is considered. Further, the academic restructuring proposal will need to go through the relevant governance groups, including APC. It is also important to note that some of the positions are being cut, whether the transition occurs or not, as
part of the BILSA portion of the mandatory $3M budget reduction. Finally, it is with regret that we have to make these plans and decisions in that the programs in Media Studies provide incredibly valuable learning experiences for our students interested in media, public relations, communication, and related areas.

RATIONALE FOR TRANSITION
As indicated above, the proposal is to move the Department of Media Studies into the School of Business to facilitate budget reductions.

The following are items associated with the rationale of making cuts in this program verses other programs within the college stimulating the planned transition. Again, this is in recognition of the value of the Media Studies Department.

• Enrollment in Media Studies has dropped 32% since 2004 and 30% since 2011 (Chart 2).
• Tied to the above, student credit hour (SCH) production per instructional FTE (iFTE) dropped below the College of BILSA benchmarks.
• The College of BILSA has experienced significant growth in the other academic areas with Agriculture, Biology, Industrial Studies, and the School of Business growing 102%, 93%, 18%, and 36% respectively (Chart 2). Growth in Industrial Studies is largely limited by capacity in most areas.
• Given the extensive growth, it is important that we allocate resources strategically to support the high need areas.

Chart 2- Enrollment growth in the College of BILSA

- The proposed cuts are as follows.
  • Three tenure track lines with two projected vacancies (retirements) and one current vacancy.
• One classified staff line that will become vacant when the individual in that line chooses to retire. Cutting this line is somewhat dependent on the proposed transition.
• These cuts will result in an immediate savings of over $220,000. However, again, a notable amount of that savings is part of the BILSA portion of the mandatory $3M base cut for the college.

With consideration of the above cuts, there are several advantages of moving Media Studies into the School of Business. Some of these advantages are listed below.
• It allows us to maintain the program allowing us to continue to serve the 111 majors, along with the four remaining tenure line faculty.
• With administrative oversight through the School of Business, the proposed transition will allow for oversight of the department with the upcoming chair vacancy and allow for the cutting of the classified staff position when that becomes vacant.
• There are tangible ties that already exist between the School of Business and Media Studies and the potential for other logical interactions. Public Relations is somewhat of a “no brainer,” but there are also clear opportunities through interactions between media and marketing.
• By moving the Department of Media Studies, as a whole, into the School of Business, it allows us to absorb the proposed cuts and take care of the current students while providing time for thoughtful planning in relation to future integration.

PLAN FOR TRANSITION
The following is the current plan for the transition understanding that much of future integration will need considerable thoughtful discussion between all stakeholders. To be honest, although there is much to be figured out, there are also a lot of potential exciting opportunities.
• In anticipation of “THE LIST” being distributed, several meetings were held in order to inform groups that may be impacted of the budget situation, the planned cuts, and the plan for the possible transition of Media Studies into the School of Business and the associated rationale. These groups included the following.
  • College of BILSA Budget Committee
  • Individual meetings with all college department chairs and directors
  • Department of Media Studies
  • Current Media Studies students- We held two forums for the Media Studies students before the list came out to help stifle some of the wild rumors that may develop. The overall attendance was quite high (thus the ensuing Exponent article). Students also had a significant opportunity to ask questions.
  • The School of Business- So far we have had one initial meeting with the School of Business to get feedback and answer questions related to the transition plan.
  • College of BILSA- We had two College of BILSA in-services that provided a venue for faculty and staff to provide input and ask questions.
• We will meet with the School of Business again on 2/11/2015 to further discuss the potential transition.
• Dr. Ranney, Chair of Media Studies, and Dr. Susan Hansen, Director of the School of Business, are already meeting consistently to work through implications of the potential
transition.

- If the transition as an option on “THE LIST” is approved, we will work with the appropriate governance groups to get the actual transition approved. This is where we can use APC’s guidance.
- Given the above, the plan would be to have Media Studies transitioned into the School of Business by July 1st, 2015. Initially the move will be mainly administrative.
- As indicated previously, the college, Media Studies, and the School of Business will engage in many future discussions to facilitate the transition. These discussions will include, but are not limited to, the following.
  - Evolution and integration of Media Studies and associated emphases and involvement of faculty
  - Future of the Exponent
  - Future of the radio station
- As Dean, I am meeting with the admissions office on 2/17/2015 to discuss admission and enrollment plans and implications given the possible transition.
- I will be working with UIC, Foundation, and the Alumni Office, along with the School of Business and Media Studies in developing a communication plan with alumni once some of the intricacies of the transition are worked out.

In conclusion, with the current budget crisis, significant actions must be taken and the plan for the potential transition of Media Studies into the School of Business is one example. These types of actions are not at all easy, especially when it impacts fellow colleagues, friends, and students. I hope that this document provides some insight into the plan for the potential transition, the impetus behind the transition, and the rationale knowing that there still needs to be extensive conversations as the transition evolves.

Please let me know of any questions, issues, and concerns. I would also be more than happy to come to APC to discuss this further.

Thank you all for your hard work in these endeavors.