

University of Arizona Committee of Eleven White Paper

May 5, 2017

**The Organization, Administration, Allocation of Resources, and
Faculty Prerogatives at The University of Arizona****Executive Summary**

This white paper addresses the administrative structure of the University of Arizona. We, the Committee of Eleven, suggest consideration of the following governance changes:

- 1) The Provost should be the senior academic officer to whom all other academic vice presidents report. This should include but not be limited to the SVP for Research and the SVP for Health Sciences. There should be no academic units, research centers, or institutes outside the academic purview of the Provost.
- 2) In the past few years, the position of Vice President for Health Sciences has significantly weakened the authority of the academic deans in this area. We view this as a negative outcome. If the position of Vice President is to be maintained and have academic authority, we hope it will be filled by someone with significant scholarly reputation and long-term extramural funding, who shows full respect for the academic independence of the Deans. If the position is eliminated, the responsibilities for excellence and growth should fall collectively to the Health Science college deans, who should report to the Provost as all other deans currently do. As in all other Colleges, their ability to fulfill these responsibilities should be assessed by the Provost.
- 3) The promise of transparency to be provided by the RCM model is fulfilled only if the College-level distribution of funds to departments follows similar openness. Some Colleges follow such procedures, while some do not. The Provost should require such openness in all Colleges.
- 4) RCM should be accompanied by a robust governance mechanism insuring that needed changes are made when appropriate. In addition, the Provost should demand that individual Colleges employ best practices in their administration of this and all other governance structures.
- 5) We are heartened that the University of Arizona continues to show full respect for tenure. We expect this to continue in all units of the University. We urge that tenure be accompanied by serious post-tenure review. The vast majority of tenured UA



faculty are commendable scholars and teachers. This professionalism must be protected.

Introduction

The University of Arizona is currently engaged in a period of management change. By summer there will be a new President, and most recently the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences stepped down, replaced by an interim SVP (the former Department Head of Surgery). In addition, in the past few years, an entirely new approach to the distribution of financial resources to the colleges has been implemented: Responsibility Centered Management or RCM. Finally, the University exists in an academic world in which many of our central rights as faculty have been questioned. Several state legislatures have proposed doing away with tenure for new hires at their public universities¹, and one has even proposed retroactive revocation of tenure from current faculty².

In 2015 the Committee of Eleven released a White Paper highlighting the UA's current strengths and major challenges as a Research I university. It is our hope that this document contributed to the current re-invigoration of some of our research departments. We here follow this effort with a broader, though necessarily less detailed, analysis of how the University is administered from the President through the Provost to the Deans and considering the rights of individual faculty members. We hope that the incoming President and his administration will consider the questions we raise. The administrative structures of the University are local creations, subject to change should circumstances demand.

¹ A recent bill proposed in Missouri would eliminate tenure for new hires beginning in 2018, and there have been proposals to significantly weaken the protections of tenure in Wisconsin.

² A bill proposed in Iowa would end tenure retroactively.

This White Paper is organized around levels of organization of the UA. We begin with the highest administrative levels, proceed to College/Dean levels, the administration of RCM funds, and, finally and briefly, the rights and concomitant responsibilities of faculty in different parts of the institution. The document should be read as one that raises questions and suggests possible approaches. We hope that the questions we raise will contribute to the evolution of the UA as we navigate this challenging period.

Upper Administration

The UA's organization chart (see Appendix A, Figure A1) shows the President with a connection to the President of our Foundation. As seems to be true elsewhere, Athletics exists in a world of its own and reports only to the President. Of particular interest is the second line of Vice Presidents directly after the administrative positions in support of the President. Three equal Academic Senior Vice Presidents are found: The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost), The Senior Vice President for Health Sciences (currently Interim), and the Senior Vice President for Research. We highlight this arrangement because it seems to have been only partially successful. Insofar as it has been successful, its effectiveness may have been due to the personalities of the people involved rather than the administrative structure. We briefly analyze our situation at the UA, provide a number of examples of structures employed by our peer and aspirational peer universities as foils for our current situation, and offer suggested changes for consideration by the President.

At most universities the Provost is the chief academic officer, responsible for overall academic policy, academic direction, and such critical academic issues as promotion and tenure. At the UA, we currently have a structure in which a major segment of the University – the Health Sciences – has been largely removed from the Provost's purview. We met with Provost Comrie, who indicated that he insisted on maintaining control of promotion and tenure (after review by the appropriate colleges of the Health Sciences Center), but many other functions appear to have been assigned to the SVP for Health Sciences. While we understand that the medical endeavor is complex, given the difficulties related to the hospital and the overall Banner organization, and given that

the UA has two independent colleges of medicine, academic decisions nevertheless should be commensurate with the needs of the University. While it is undeniably true that the former SVP for Health Sciences, Dr. Garcia, made significant progress toward building a first-class biomedical scholarly endeavor, certain decisions, and the manner in which they were taken, caused concern in the Health Sciences Colleges. There was a lack of transparency in financial and decision processes as they related to the individual Colleges, and significant turmoil at the Phoenix COM, as well as a sense of vulnerability among clinical faculty in the Tucson COM. It may be true that the monumental nature of the revivification task with which Dr. Garcia was charged required some (possibly major) disturbance, but this should not eliminate the basic academic need for transparency and shared governance within the Health Sciences Center. As we describe below, many institutions with medical schools give a Vice President for Health Sciences title to their medical college dean. At UA, we have not given that title to the Tucson COM Dean.

The SVP for Research, Dr. Espy, also reports directly to the President. This arrangement, also introduces significant potential for difficulty. The SVPR controls major financial resources. Dr. Espy met with us and indicated that the budget for her office in fiscal year 2016 was roughly \$13M, while of that amount, the component devoted to new-faculty startup funds seems to be about \$4.6M. Significant other components are designated for strategic initiatives and matching funds. These funds have been used to support the recruitment of superb new faculty and to support UA-wide core research facilities. The issues we highlight, however, are how choices are made and where resources are directed. It is clear that conflict can arise in the interaction between the Provost and the SVPR, given that direction for academic expansion overall should, in our view, ultimately rest with the Provost. Provost Comrie informed us that the existing system has worked, with Vice President Espy and Provost Comrie collaborating on decisions that affect the overall directions of the institution. This is certainly to the good, but we are concerned that this outcome depends on the particular personalities involved. It is not hard to imagine a situation in which co-equal academic VPs might disagree about priorities, creating at best an awkward situation for the President, and at worst gridlock. At the UA, Provosts traditionally have not dictated to academic

Departments, but the independent control of critical resources by the SVPR opens the door to such micromanagement when startup costs exceed what a Provost can provide. It is the view of the Committee of Eleven that the Vice President for Research should facilitate research expansion, but not set academic priorities and directions for the University. It is also important to point out that because of the structure of our research endeavor, there are Centers and Institutes that currently report directly to the SVPR. This means that major academic programs are seemingly outside the purview of the Provost, and the SVPR can change the orientation of research and scholarly programs at UA. Even if this approach has proven to be workable in the past, we suggest that the potential for serious conflict in the future of cross-departmental centers and research institutes is real and present. This will be potentially more important in this complex cross-disciplinary age in which we work. While a Provost can be expected to seek the opinion of a Vice President for Research in setting such academic priorities, it is the feeling of the Committee of Eleven that major academic policy decisions should ultimately be the responsibility of the Provost as the senior officer for Academics. While this concentrates great responsibility in a single University officer, it eliminates potential conflicts, and creates a clear path of responsibility for program change. Whoever makes these decisions should be mindful of faculty governance.

We now describe features of the upper administration at a few of our peer universities, beginning with some of our PAC 12 sister institutions. Organizational charts are presented in Appendix A.

CU Boulder. The Provost holds the title of Executive Vice Chancellor. The VPR, who reports to the Provost, has the title of Vice Chancellor for Research. Colorado has a separate campus for its medical school, not under the purview of the Boulder President.

University of Washington. The Provost reports to the President, and there is no Vice President for all of Health Sciences (UW includes Colleges of Dentistry, Nursing, and Public Health in addition to the College of Medicine.) The Dean of the College of Medicine is also considered Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs, and this may

be a title provided for interaction with the hospital structure. The Vice Provost for Research reports to the Provost.

U.C. Berkeley. The Campus leader is the Chancellor, The Provost is executive Vice Chancellor, and the Vice Chancellor for Research reports to the Provost. There is no medical school on the Berkeley campus.

University of Utah. This institution is organized in a way that appears similar to our current structure. There is a Senior Vice President for Health Sciences who reports directly to the President and is on the same organizational level as the Senior VP for Academic Affairs (Provost). The Vice President for Research does seem to report directly to the President, but apparently is considered to be lower on the chart than the Provost.

UT Austin. The Provost is Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Research reports to the Provost. The medical school at Austin is just being completed now, and there is no clear reporting line. We have been unable to find an organizational chart at the level of the President.

These examples from our peers show that by and large the preferred model has the senior administrator concerned with research reporting to the Provost. The latter serves as the chief academic officer, and all final decisions in the academic sphere ultimately reside in his/her office. That is currently not the case at the UA.

We further understand that the UA's two Colleges of Medicine present exceptional administrative challenges. While recognizing the progress the former SVP for the Health Sciences made in improving the biomedical scholarly endeavor, we note that such a high-level administrative position outside the normal academic structure of the university is highly problematic. While such a position may lead to better collaboration between the diverse Health Sciences Colleges, it is also the case that the Deans of the Health Sciences campuses are expected to be capable of and responsible for administering their respective Colleges. Most medical school deans are charged with interaction with clinical entities that may or may not be a separate organization, without the SVP-HS

arrangement we have in place at the UA. If the President deems such a position to be a necessity for organizational purposes, then we urge: (1) a more direct connection to the Provost, (2) the eventual appointment of an individual with broad scholarly credentials including long-term success and experience with extramural federal funding, (3) a reassessment of funds flow to the Deans in the Health Sciences, especially with regard to the clinical monies from Banner, and finally (4) the continued empowerment of Deans in the Health Sciences with regard to academic directions.

RCM, the Colleges and the Deans.

Two years ago, the UA underwent a dramatic shift in its budgeting model for the Colleges with the adoption of Responsibility Centered Management (RCM.) In brief, this model was meant to assure transparency in the allocation of funds and to reward Colleges that have the greatest success in attracting students, majors, and external support (e.g. competitive grants). We sought to understand how RCM funds that flow to the Colleges are distributed to individual departments. We queried the Provost's office about their current picture of how the Colleges distribute RCM funds and also contacted a number of the Colleges directly to request their most recent plans. Documentation of RCM plans provided by the Provost's office is presented at the C11 website, and the results of our investigation are shown in Appendix B. (We thank the Deans of the Colleges listed in the chart for sharing this information.) Readers can review this chart and draw their own conclusions. Our review has shown that there is considerable variation in the transparency of the distribution of RCM funds by the Deans. Some Colleges provide complete openness to all faculty, while others distribute funds in an opaque fashion. We understand that while openness is generally valuable, in some cases there can be reasons for confidentiality. Because a central goal of RCM is transparency, however, opaqueness bespeaks a core failure of RCM. We urge Colleges that do not provide clear information about the allocation of resources to consider the potential harm of a lack of clarity. We also urge the Provost, to whom the Deans report, to attend to this issue, so that transparency is not sacrificed to unnecessary secrecy.

We would not feel comfortable concluding this discussion without noting the feeling among some faculty that the RCM model has harmed the scholarly mission of the institution. Like it or not, the RCM approach is a business-like model. Funds flow to those units that are most successful at attracting students and external support. This creates two kinds of problems. First, there will always be some units, central to any great university that cannot generate adequate funds under RCM to support themselves. Hence, they need subvention, and this can lead to tensions between those units that fare well under RCM and those that do not. Second, the model creates competition for students, which can be both good and bad. Such competition expresses itself in several ways, including clashes between units that each want to offer courses they consider to be within their domain. Such clashes need to be adjudicated somehow, which means that RCM requires robust governance mechanisms. Much of the dissatisfaction faculty express about RCM relates to the absence of sufficiently robust governance to date. In a related vein, this kind of competition, and the governance needed to mediate it, can stifle interdisciplinary efforts, both in instruction and in scholarly efforts. This too concerns many faculty, who have experienced shifts in the willingness of Deans to work across College lines, and Heads to work across Departmental lines, since they need to ensure their own funds flow first.

Finally, we point out that the connection of RCM to transparency is a false equivalence. It is possible to have transparency under any system of resource allocation. We DO NOT advocate dismantling RCM. Rather we suggest fine-tuning, such that all aspects of resource allocation from the Provost to the Departments are open and clear to faculty to the extent possible, and that robust governance structures be established to mitigate the problems noted above.

The Faculty – responsibilities and rights.

We close with a brief discussion of the faculty. The UA has by and large welcomed shared governance. While not all decisions can be made in a fully democratic fashion, the administration of the University has mostly shown itself to be open to the faculty viewpoint. Although there is a significant disparity between the protections to all

concerned that flow from fairly detailed bylaws at the College or other unit level, the University has generally respected the rights tenure affords the faculty, and thankfully, as yet, so has the State.

This protection, however, comes with reciprocal responsibilities. We strongly support real, constructive feedback as a result of a rigorous regular performance review (conducted by peers), and this of course extends to meaningful post-tenure review. While there is a Regents mandated Annual Performance Review, the rigor with which individual units pursue such reviews is variable. We urge that both APR and post-tenure reviews be conducted with rigor and effect for the overall quality of the University. The overwhelming majority of the tenured faculty of the UA strive daily to be leading scholars in their fields and to be involved, caring educators. It is our responsibility as faculty to insure this level of professionalism is found throughout all departments and colleges of the University. Faculty whose careers transition from one area, for example away from a large concentration on research, should be expected to serve the University in another productive manner, such as through an increased teaching load.

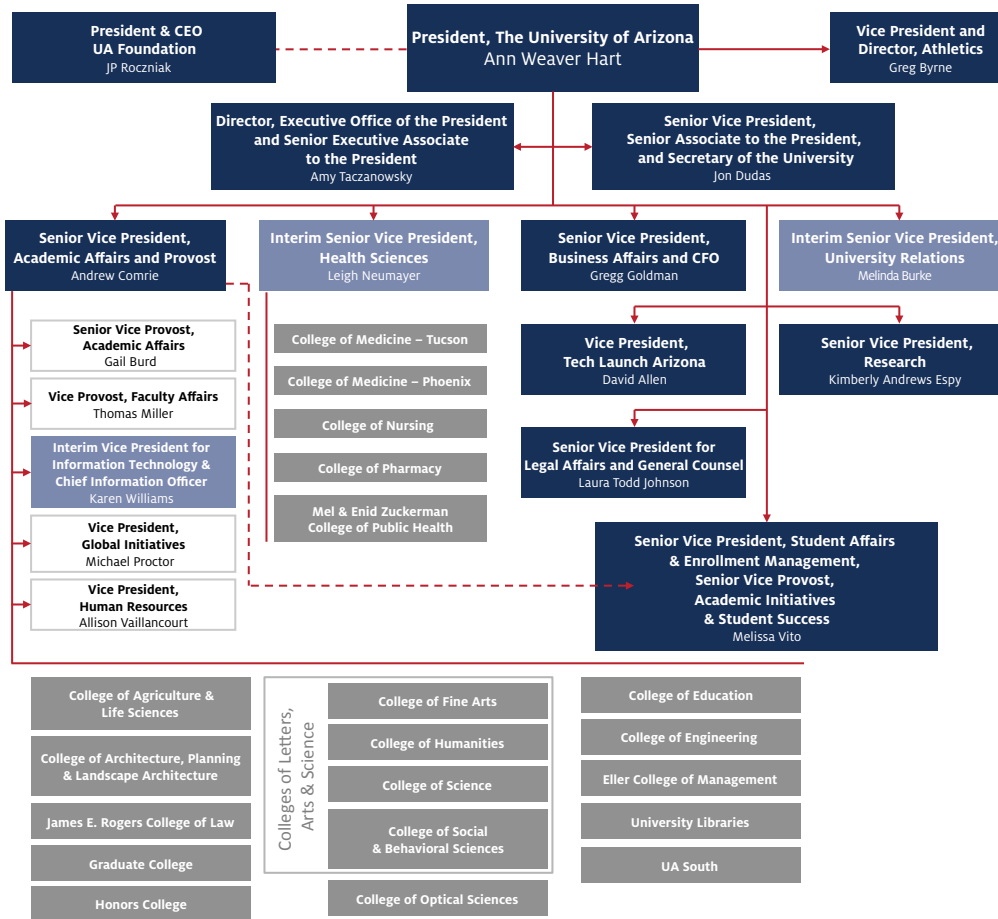
With the scrutiny of post-tenure review, we point to one area of concern: that is the current situation of College of Medicine (Tucson) clinical faculty whose salaries depend on an outside entity (Banner). They should have the same protections that any other UA faculty appointment provides – especially those with tenure. We urge the COM to provide those protections including potential reorientation of career should there be a loss of clinical income.

APPENDIX A – Organizational Charts

The University of Arizona

ORGANIZATION CHART

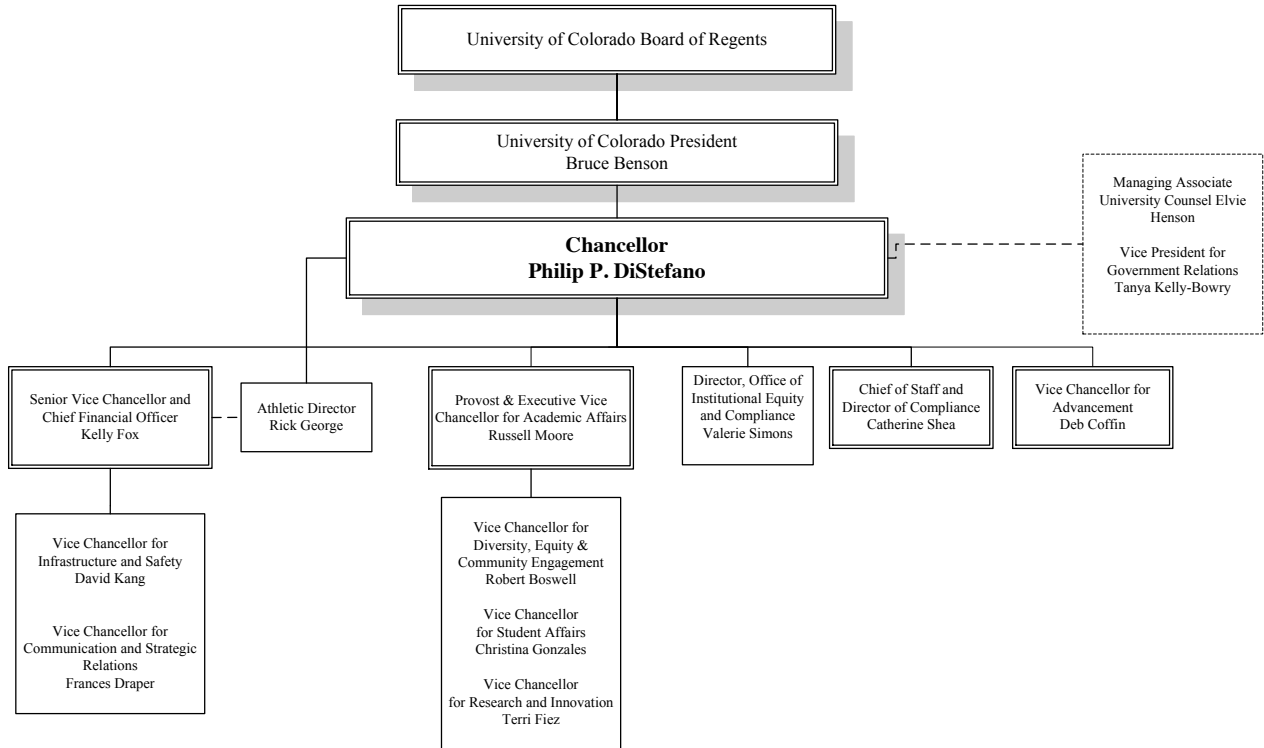
January 1, 2017



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Figure A1: University of Arizona Organizational Chart

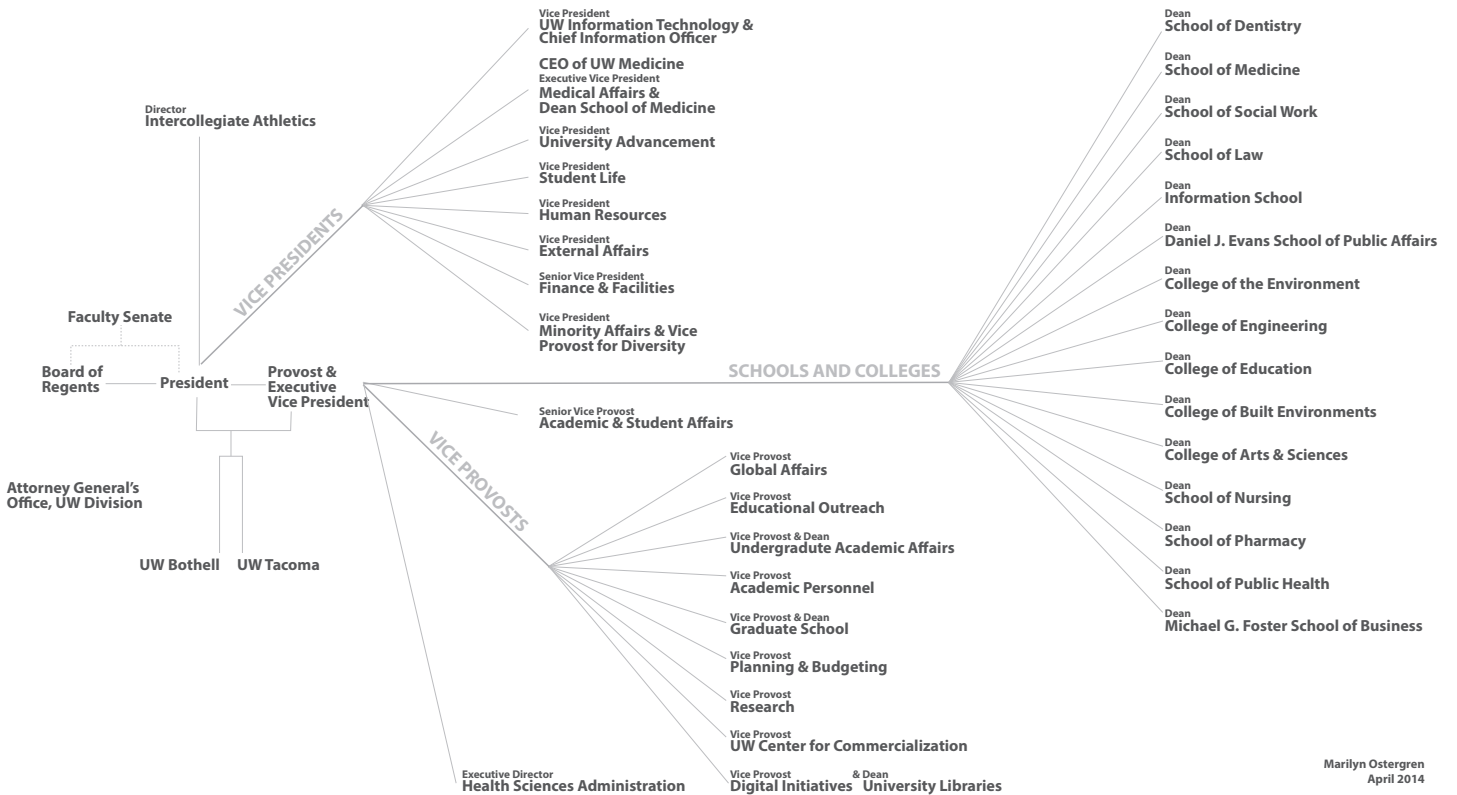
University of Colorado Boulder Office of the Chancellor



Updated January 31, 2017

Figure A2: University of Colorado, Boulder Organizational Chart

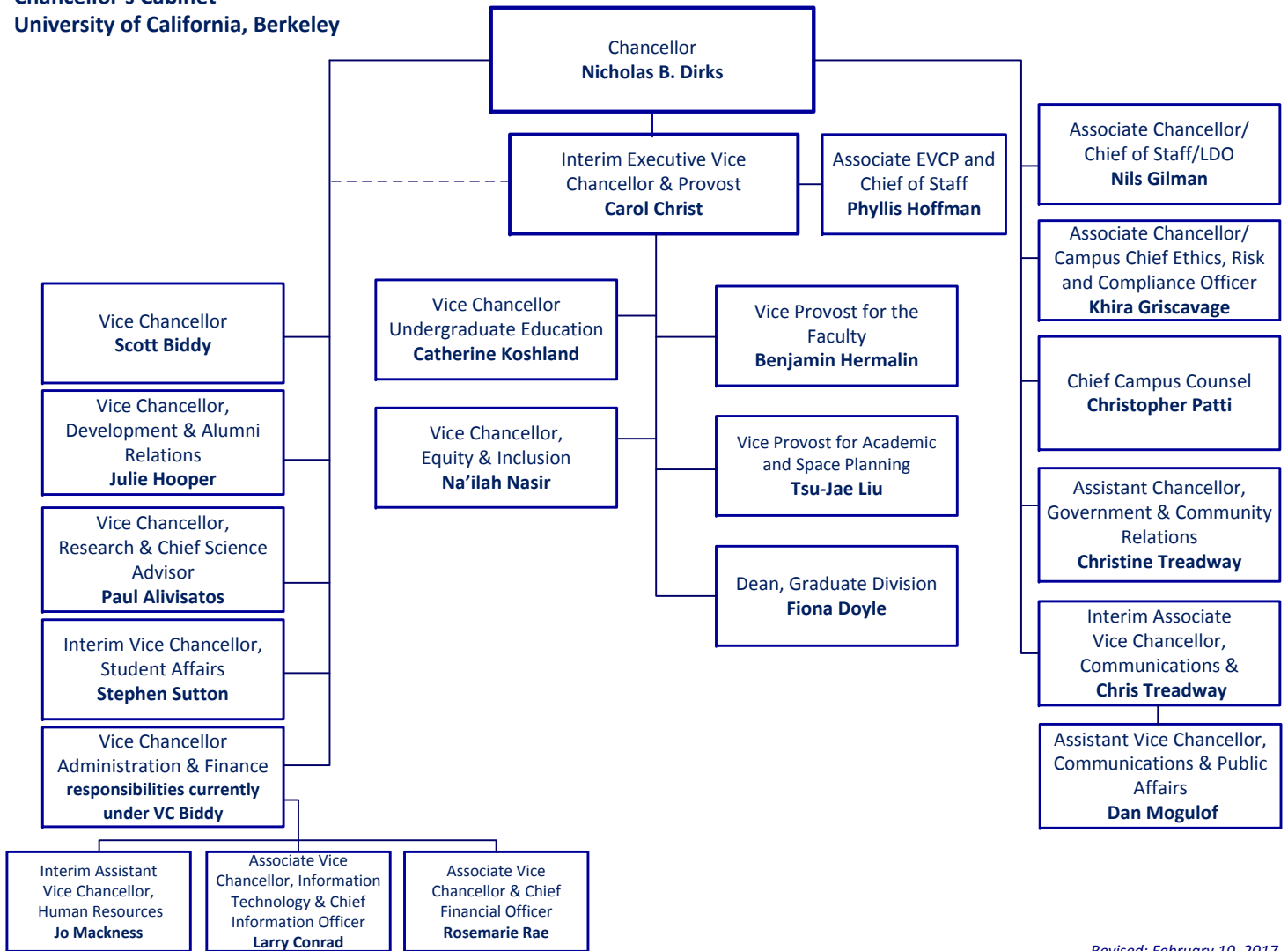
University of Washington Organizational Chart (modified)



Marilyn Ostergren
April 2014

Figure A3: University of Washington Organizational Chart.
(We do not know what they mean by modified; this is what they list on their website)

**Chancellor's Cabinet
University of California, Berkeley**



Revised: February 10, 2017

Figure A4: University of California, Berkeley Organizational Chart

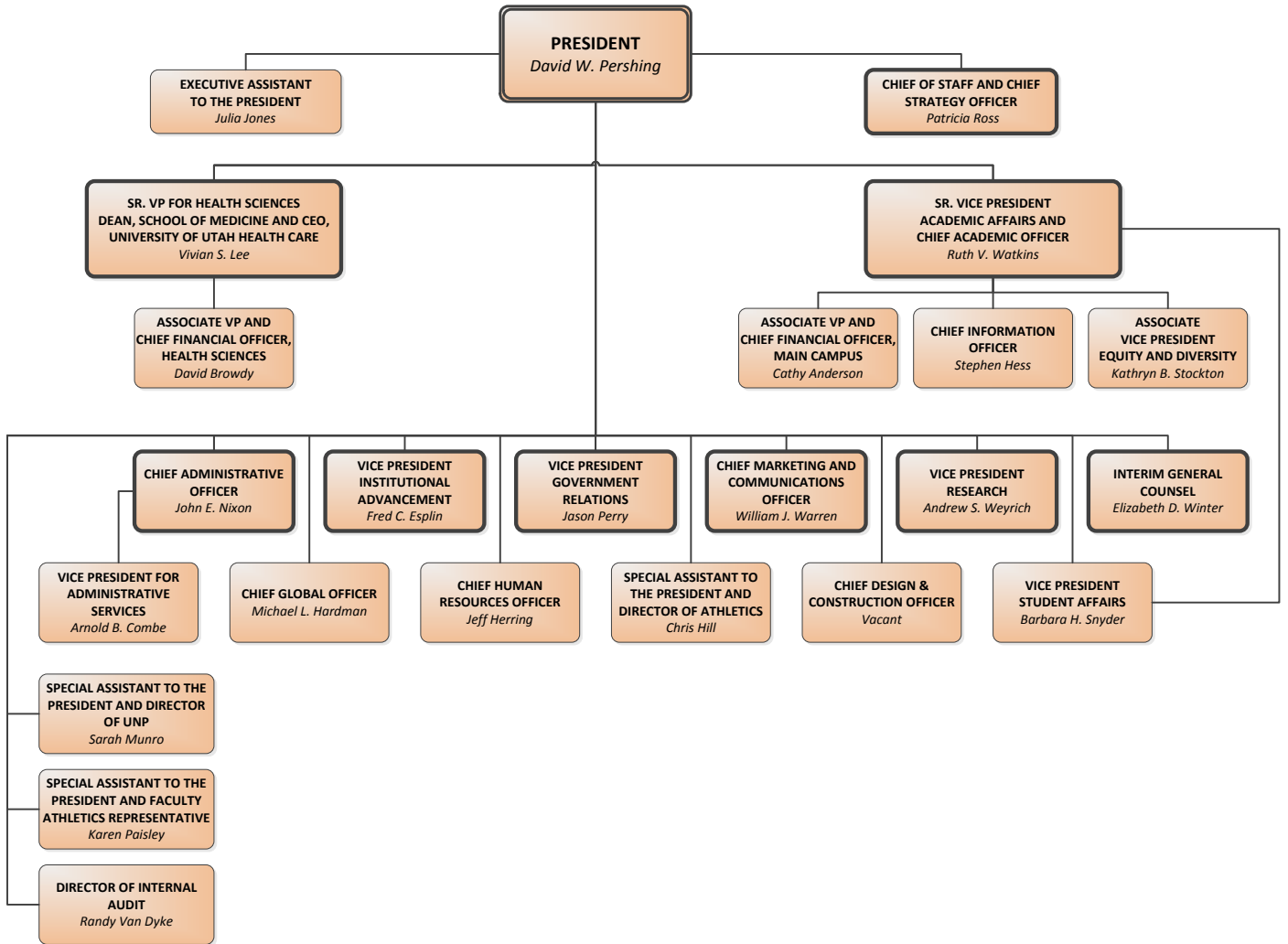


Figure A5: University of Utah Organizational Chart

Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost
2016-2017 Organizational Chart

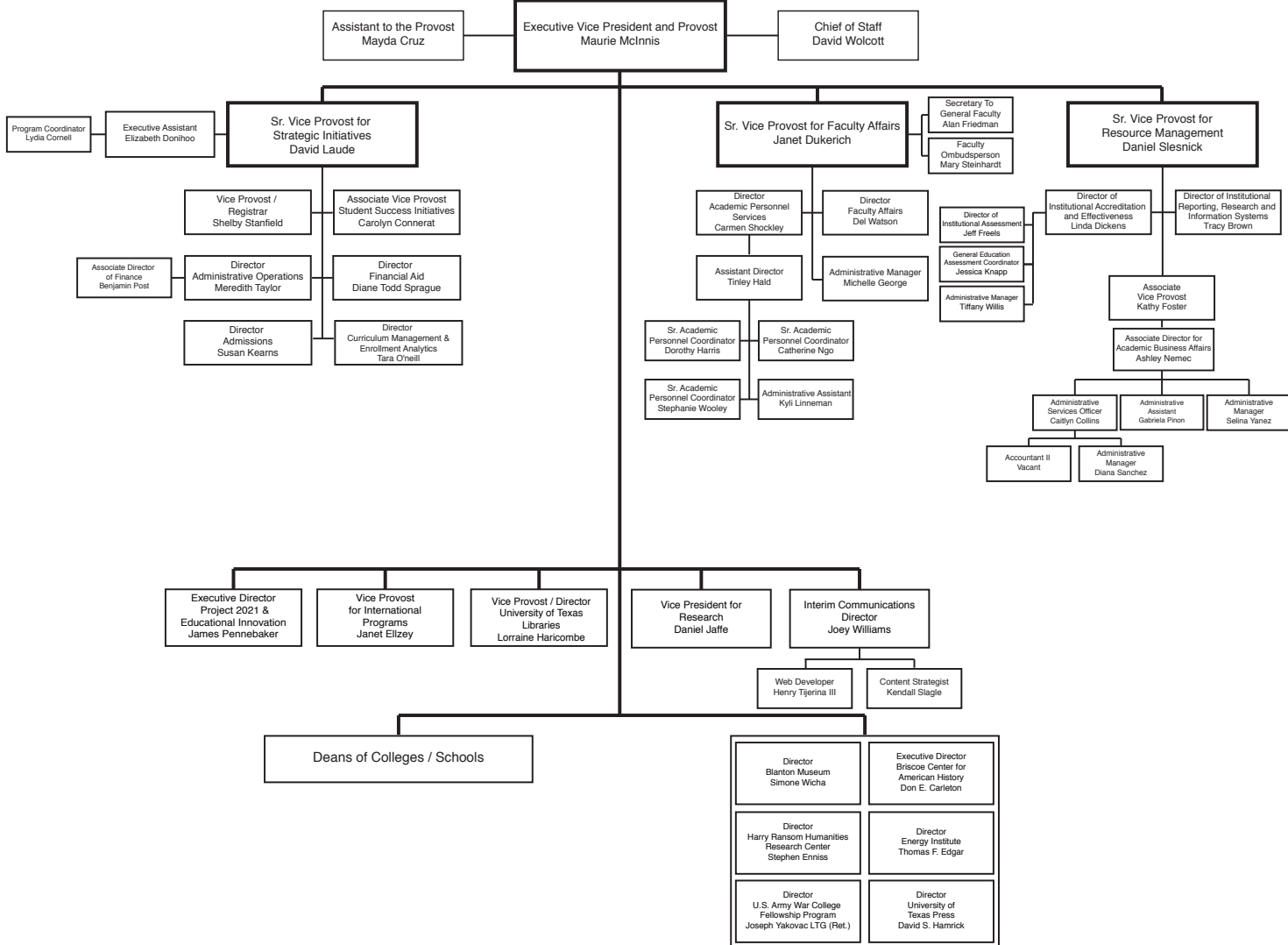
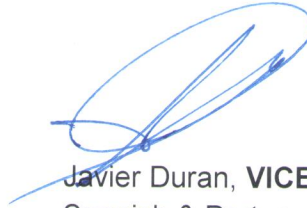


Figure A6: Organizational chart of the Provost's office at UT Austin

COMMITTEE OF ELEVEN
2016-2017



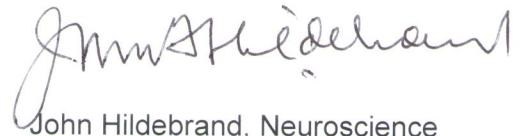
Steve D. Schwartz, **CHAIR**, Chemistry/Biochemistry



Javier Duran, **VICE CHAIR**,
Spanish & Portuguese



Matthew Abraham, English



John Hildebrand, Neuroscience



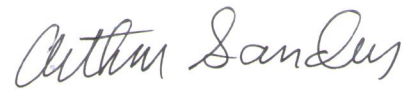
Lynn Nadel, Psychology
Chair of the Faculty, *ex officio*



Moisés Paiewonsky, Music



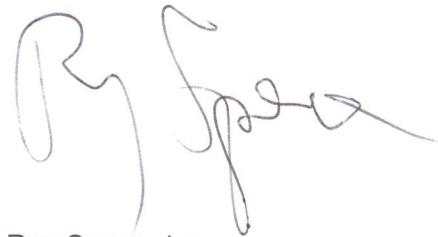
Marcia Rieke, Astronomy



Arthur Sanders, Emergency Medicine



Jasmine Sears, Graduate Student, Optical Sciences



Roy Spece, Law