Shared-Governance Concern in Recent Office Space Relocation

Recent office space relocation by moving the Office of Dean of College of Sciences to the operational Suite OLVR 201 of the School of Computing and Informatics posed a serious concern in lacking shared-governance, as reflected in the attached 2-page timeline. This resolution seeks to have a full investigation into this matter.
Timeline

On May 21, the Wednesday after the Academic Year had concluded, Dr. Hongyi Wu, the Director CACS and CMIX, was summoned to Dean Ackleh's office. He was told that Oliver 201 (the central office of CACS and CMIX) will be expropriated as the Dean's office. He was told exactly which room would be used by the Dean and which rooms will be occupied by Dean's staff members. In that meeting, he was not asked to provide any inputs or alternative solutions. It was simply a notice about the decision.

Dr. Wu expressed several concerns about immediate negative impact on CACS and CMIX, as it would hurt the function of the School and the morale of the faculty, especially when the School is under expansion and in desperate need of space. He was told the decision was made by the Provost. Therefore he requested Dean Ackleh to convey his concerns to Provost Henderson.

One week later, he was informed by Dean Ackleh that the Provost's decision remained the same (without explanation of why to keep the same decision and how to address his concerns).

On May 29, he met the senior faculty members who were on campus and informed them of the decision. At the same time, he tried to schedule a meeting with the Provost to request that faculty members be involved and their inputs and suggestions be considered in the decision process.

On June 15, he met Provost Henderson and Dean Ackleh. He presented the faculty's great concern and the faculty's strong wish to sit down with the administrators to work out a plan for the relocation of the Dean's office.

During the subsequent month, he did not receive any feedback from the upper administration.

On July 14, Dr. Henderson emailed Dr. Wu that the decision remained the same (again, without explanation of how to address my concerns), and he would announce the decision soon. Dr. Wu requested to have a faculty meeting before the announcement. It was denied.

On July 15, Dr. Henderson made the announcement via email that the move of the Dean of Sciences office to Oliver 201 was to be completed within the next month.

From May 21 and throughout this process, the administration's position was that the decision was final, providing no feedback of the faculty's concerns.

The July 15 email caught a lot of faculty and staff by surprise and there were confusion among many. There were questions as to how this decision was reached. Many could not understand how the moves of the two deans’ offices were handled so differently: from the space to the timetable. The Liberal Arts dean’s office will be located in part of a remodeled laboratory and the move will be completed in 2015.

On July 15 evening, Dr. Nian-Feng Tzeng wrote on behalf of the senior faculty to Provost Henderson requesting a meeting to discuss the matter. Dr. Vijay Raghavan sent separate email to Provost Henderson to request the faculty to be heard and consulted.

Dr. Wu called a faculty meeting on July 17 to provide information as he knew it. Faculty members from different ranks in the School attended and their feedback was collected by two faculty members. See the attached document for the faculty feedback.

On July 21, Dr. Wu met Dean Ackleh and presented the faculty's response along with the standing offer of working out a plan to locate the Dean's office in Oliver Hall that meets the Dean's needs.

For about two weeks, the faculty was not able to meet with or even to schedule a meeting with Dr. Henderson. Dr. Magdy Bayoumi and Dr. Henry Chu then requested a meeting with President Savoie.

On July 22, Robert McKinney emailed a move instruction to related faculty and staff members.
On **July 23**, Dr. Wu called Robert McKinney, asking several questions, including (1) the room information about Nona's office is incorrect. (2) how to accommodate the storage space needed by Nancy and Shari? (3) Since the senior faculty in the school have scheduled a meeting with Dr. Henderson, should we wait until after the meeting? They agreed to hold off the move until Mr. McKinney had clarified those issues. In addition, Dr. Wu asked Robert McKinney if he developed the plan of moving Dean's office to 201 or suggested such an idea. He said no, because he was not involved in making such a decision.

On **July 30**, Robert McKinney emailed Dr. Wu to ask the progress of the move, disregarding the earlier agreement of holding off the move until Dr. Wu's questions had been answered.

Dr. Wu was leaving for family vacation on July 31.

On **July 31**, Dr. Henderson directed that the move proceed as scheduled. Note that a request for the faculty to meet Provost Henderson had not been answered since July 15. If the move continued, what's the point of the meeting? The faculty desperately waited for a meeting schedule because they wanted their inputs to be taken into account for decision-making, which had no discussion with, and totally excluded, the faculty.

On **August 5**, the locks were changed at the end of the day. Note that, this was done when the faculty had expressed strong objection and a meeting with President Savoie and the Provost was just 5 days away.

On **August 6 morning**, two female administrative assistants (Nancy and Shari) were escorted to the second floor and asked to move out immediately under the watch of the staff from Dean's office. Shari suffered from serious back pain due to carrying heavy boxes of documents and office items to her temporary room on the third floor and had to stay at home for recovery in the following two days.

On **August 11**, the School's senior faculty (Drs. Magdy Bayoumi, Henry Chu, Arun Lakhotia, Dmitri Perkins, Nian-Feng Tzeng, and Hongyi Wu) finally had a meeting with President Savoie, Provost Henderson and Dean Ackleh. They expressed their concerns collectively and requested the decision be reconsidered.

On **August 19**, Dr. Wu met the Provost and Dean again to hear their feedback to the concerns discussed in the meeting on August 11. Dr. Wu was informed that, although a minor remodeling could be provided for support undergraduate advising, the move would proceed as it was planned. No justification was provided. Dr. Wu offered to remodel part of Oliver, specifically designed for Dean's office. If the Dean's office must be moved immediately, a space can be allocated in Oliver as the temporary home for the Dean office. Even if Oliver 201 must be used for this purpose, it is also fine. When the remodeling is completed, the Dean's office then relocates to its new permanent home. The offer was rejected, with no discussion or explanation.

On **August 22**, Dr. Wu submitted his resignation as the director of CMIX and CACS.

On **September 2**, the Provost and the Science Dean met with School faculty members in OLVR Rm. 113 for general discussion about the office move, its execution, its impact, and how to move forward. Attending faculty members again raised their serious concerns and proposed alternative dean's office arrangements. Turning down proposed alternatives, the Provost mentioned for the very first time the creation of a “task force” to assess the impact of this office move, with task force report due in one year when this issue will be revisited, taking the report into account. The faculty members expressed strong objection to this task force, questioning its need and worrying the long duration of assessment during which prolonged uncertainly and potentially escalated friction would further damage the School of Computing and Informatics.

On **September 3**, the Advertiser ran an article on “Students, faculty fight to take back office from UL admin,” where the Provost stated to implement the task force for one-year assessment, despite strong objection from the faculty members without any agreement or adequate discussion.

On **September 10**, the Vermilion had its cover story on “Parting is such suite sorrow – Conflict continues over CACS office occupancy,” capturing concerns and objections raised by faculty members during the meeting of September 2, beside comments from a student and the Provost.