Memorandum

December 19, 2008

To: Robert Shelton, President

         Meredith Hay, Executive Vice President and Provost

From: SPBAC Transformation Subcommittee

Re: Recommendations on Administrative White Papers

The SPBAC Transformation Subcommittee has reviewed the white papers submitted by the Vice Presidents to the President and Provost as contributions to the UA Transformation Plan. In assessing these white papers, we proceeded from the assumption that the units discussed in these white papers exist to provide critical support to the academic units and the university as a whole in its efforts to achieve its mission and aspirations. We also assumed that these areas are expected to join the academic units in the effort to fundamentally re-assess and transform the ways they accomplish their missions through reorganizations, collaborations, innovations and streamlining in order to improve quality and productivity and create cost savings.

As with the academic proposals, we considered the extent to which these white papers reflected consultation with and support from those who would be affected by the proposed changes. And our discussions were informed by comments provided through the Provost's website and/or to us directly.

Our feedback on the individual white papers is attached here. In addition, we offer here some comments and recommendations on this group of white papers as a whole. Most importantly, we recommend that a second stage of the process be initiated that would enable/require discussion among the Vice Presidents with the goal of identifying strategies for collaboration across their areas that might yield greater cost savings and enhance their effectiveness. We noted that there seem to be possibilities for collaboration or centralization with regard to marketing and communications activities. Other opportunities less obvious to us might also emerge from such an effort.

We recognize that many of these units have taken substantial cuts over the years and have been actively engaged in developing strategies for doing more with less. And in fact, the degree to which certain areas are apparently under-resourced compared to peer institutions led us to wonder whether there might not be approaches to supporting these areas deployed by our peers that we should learn from. In addition, a number of these white papers make the point that modest and carefully selected initial investments would enable significant cost savings over the longer term. We are persuaded by this argument and strongly urge you, even in the current dismal financial context, to pursue the approach, taken on a grand scale with the Mosaic project, of investing now so as to avoid future costs, enable future cost savings and increased productivity, and even, in some cases, achieve positive return on investment.

At the same time, we noted that a number of these white papers did not fully take up the current imperative to think creatively and transformatively about how to approach the future. We had hoped that the leadership of the university would set an example for the rest of the campus, especially given the great interest and concern expressed by many members of the campus community about whether the administration would also be contributing to the Transformation. While some of these white papers are exciting positive models, others were unfortunately disappointing.

Finally, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on these proposals and we hope that you will find our advice useful.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
Business Affairs

The majority of this white paper focuses on cuts that have been absorbed in the past. Insofar as it discusses strategies for further cost savings by Business Affairs, it focuses to a large extent on cuts to facilities management services and the elimination of the lowest paid staff (custodial and landscaping). With regard to future-oriented strategies, it largely suggests actions that would impact or have to be enacted by other areas including: reconsidering consolidation of summer activities in time and space (4-10 work week and use of fewer buildings) as well as consolidation of animal quarters, reduction of wages, reduction of travel, and revisiting the PAIP report of 1993, which focused on academic programs.

We recommend that Business Affairs (with participation from the Directors of its various units) take this opportunity to explore possibilities for reorganizations, mergers and/or collaborations across units both within and beyond Business Affairs. As part of this exploration, we would hope that Business Affairs might seek opportunities for efficiencies in the deployment of personnel at all levels.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
External Relations

In reading this white paper, the committee was impressed by both the extreme resource constraints (especially by comparison with peers) and the efficiency and productivity of External Relations under these circumstances. And we certainly agree that collaboration with donors and alumni who might provide financial or in-kind support is a strategy that should be pursued.

However, we do feel that the admirable emphasis here on productivity and efficiency might be supplemented by some other strategies. In particular, we recommend that External Relations more aggressively seek opportunities for collaboration within the UA, especially with other units engaged in communication and marketing (the Alumni Association is an obvious example; and there is a proposal for such collaboration in the HR white paper). Such collaboration might not only enable cost efficiencies and streamlining of operations but more consistent and coherent messaging.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
Office of the General Counsel

While this white paper does not propose any radical restructuring, we recognize that OGC is a relatively small unit and thus the opportunities for such transformations are necessarily limited. We support the specific proposals made here (with the possible exception of the proposal to delay hiring a specialist in intellectual property law, as the absence of this expertise would seem to pose significant risks for a research university). In particular, we appreciate the proposal to increase collaboration with risk management and recommend that this collaboration be encouraged and facilitated. Likewise, the proposal to proactively increase education and outreach efforts seems crucial and we wonder if there might not be opportunities to collaborate with HR (which proposes to establish a New UA Leaders Orientation that could be an opportunity for such educational activities) and other units.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
Human Resources

This is a very impressive white paper, taking up the call to "transform" in a thorough and thoughtful way. The committee appreciated quality of the presentation and the wisdom offered in the substantive framing of the project, especially the emphasis on the question "What kind of administrative support will enable the UA to achieve its aspirations?" This is one of the white papers that points to the value of a strategy of investing "judiciously in programs and services designed to attract and grow remarkable talent while containing costs and effectively managing institutional risks." Given the quality of the proposals offered here, we believe that it would be judicious to make the necessary investments to enable the transformations of HR to proceed.

Furthermore, we recommend that HR be supported in its efforts to collaborate with other units to achieve its goals. Collaboration with other units is mentioned as necessary to the centralization of employee recruitment and advertising, the creation of a New Hire Center and the revision of the University Service Awards program. Also, collaboration is implicit in the proposal to embed HR professionals in the colleges; with regard to this particular proposal, we recommend gradual implementation, extending the successful experiment with the Health Sciences to other colleges at a deliberate pace, with a primary focus on gaining understanding of the particular academic and administrative cultures of each college.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
University of Arizona Alumni Association

This white paper takes up the task of transformation in an earnest and creative fashion. The committee was particularly impressed with the innovative proposal to create a multi-tiered membership program that would be inclusive while encouraging participation at higher (importantly, dues paying) levels. The various realignments of positions and responsibilities proposed here demonstrate that the white paper development team took the trouble to fundamentally reassess the ways the organization uses its resources to accomplish its goals. (And it is worth noting that this white paper is the product of a team effort and thus would appear to have the support of key staff within the organization as well as the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.)

The "Final Thoughts" section focuses on opportunities for providing services to and working in collaboration with academic units. We recommend that the colleges be encouraged to take up the Alumni Association on its generous offer to provide an array of services that would enable them to better serve and thus galvanize the support of their alumni. In these difficult times, the more we can do to mobilize the support of our extended community, the better.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
Office of the Vice President for Outreach

This white paper addresses the task of contributing to meeting the future needs of the university, especially to accommodate 14,000 additional students by 2020. It offers exciting ideas for providing low-cost or revenue-positive education to increasing numbers of students, thus answering the concerns and ambitions of ABOR. In so doing, especially through collaborations with community colleges and through Arizona Educational Extension, the proposals support our land-grant mission to serve the people of the state, potentially making a UA education more accessible to diverse constituencies and non-traditional students. And at the same time, we strongly support the Global Studies Initiative, which would help extend the impact of the UA beyond our state and support the efforts of those units on campus already engaged in the recruitment and education of international students.

It is clear that getting these proposals off the ground will entail some initial investment. We recommend that the Provost identify the necessary funds to enable the worthwhile projects identified here to move forward.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
Office of the Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies and Economic Development

This white paper proposes to organize the twenty-nine units reporting to the VPR into seven "functional groups" so as to improve collaboration between them, streamline their work and strengthen service to the campus and community. We applaud the effort demonstrated here. The changes proposed here should certainly proceed. In addition, we encourage further efforts to enhance collaboration with units beyond the OVPR such as, for instance, External Relations.

This white paper provoked a few thoughts and concerns beyond its own scope. First, we were struck by the very large and diverse portfolio of the VPR. Recognizing the crucial importance of the work of the VPR in supporting research development and technology transfer, we wondered whether this extensive portfolio, including everything from the UA Museum of Art to the Office of Biosafety and Biosecurity to the Udall Center, allows for the best use of the VPR's time and attention. While we recognize the need of many of these interdisciplinary units (the GIDPS, the Museums and Press, the Research Units) to be located outside of any one particular college such that they are best enabled to serve the university as a whole, we nonetheless recommend examining whether all such units are truly in the ideal institutional location and/or whether the university administrative structure is properly organized to support the university-wide research, outreach and, in some cases, teaching units that now find themselves within the purview of the VPR.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
Student Affairs

This white paper appears to be the result of an outstanding effort to fundamentally rethink how best to provide services and advance the mission of the university. We applaud this effort and, in addition, offer the following thoughts and recommendations:

First, we recognize that any merger or rearrangement of the student centers providing support to our diverse student body is a very delicate matter. And, as noted in a letter we received from the President's Hispanic Advisory Council, we know that great efforts have been made to engage the affected constituencies and take their perspectives into account. As service to the diverse people of Arizona is central to our land-grant mission, we encourage continued engagement, attention to the details of the local cultures of each affected group and sensitivity to the complexities of supporting diverse needs on a large campus as the details of the plans in this area are developed.

With regard to the proposed reorganization of Academic Support activities, we want to reiterate here our recommendations made in conjunction with earlier white papers from University College and the Department of Mathematics. We recommended there that a Task Force be formed to explore the best way to provide high quality support for at-risk and undecided students. Given the current dispersion of academic support (advising, tutoring, retention) functions across a number of units around the university, we feel strongly that a task force inclusive of all units currently providing these services be created and empowered to examine all such units and make a recommendation regarding a structure that would best serve the campus is the right approach to this complex but crucial matter. The committee feels that improving retention is key to our ability to achieve our mission and a cost-effective approach to increasing enrollment and degree-production.

And finally, we recommend that Student Affairs explore opportunities to collaborate with other units, especially External Affairs on marketing activities and the Alumni Association on recruitment and other activities related to the student experience on campus.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
University Information Technology Services (UITS)

This white paper is thoughtful and forward-looking. We particularly appreciate the goal of becoming "the IT partner of choice providing innovative expertise, solutions and strategies." It would certainly be ideal if a certain degree of centralization of IT could occur because various units across campus could see the concrete benefits of voluntarily choosing to make use of high quality services offered by UITS.

With regard to specific proposals for increased efficiency:

1) The white paper notes that LTC and Research Computing will be negatively impacted by a reduction in TRIF funding and further that this will occur at the same time we can expect to see tremendous growth in online instruction. Given the need of the campus as a whole to make increased use of IT for various instructional activities (especially as we seek to reduce the cost of instruction while improving access and increasing enrollment), this is a serious issue that must be addressed. We recommend that action be taken immediately to develop a plan, including the strategic investment of resources as possible and necessary, for providing high quality support for online instruction.
2) We support the exploration of outsourcing for various functions but urge great caution to ensure that this approach really does provide gains in quality and cost-efficiency in each particular case.
3) The white paper notes that the Mosaic project will enable a new operations and support structure to emerge although the details of such a structure are as yet unclear. We strongly recommend that reorganizations in and across all the administrative units represented in this round of white papers be considered in conjunction with the changes required and enabled by Mosaic to the greatest extent possible at this time.

SPBAC TRANSFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON THE WHITE PAPER REGARDING
Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost
Office of Institutional Research and Planning Support
UAPresents

While the Executive Vice President and Provost (EVPP) is responsible for the vast majority of academic and support activities across campus, the Office of the EVPP is in itself relatively small. We certainly support continued cost saving efforts as proposed here, while recognizing that the local opportunities for transformation and cost savings are quite limited.

At the same time, we note that the EVPP (along with the President) would be the appropriate leader to encourage the kinds of collaboration and reorganization across vice presidential areas that we have suggested in a number of our recommendations here.

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning Support (OIRPS), addressed in a separate white paper, reports to the Office of the EVPP through the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. The white paper from OIRPS, in addition to describing the work it is doing to develop its capacities in areas such as financial analysis and Teacher Course Evaluation among others, identifies needs and concerns going forward that we recommend be addressed by the EVPP or designees (such as the Vice Provost):

1) First and most importantly, with regard to Planning Support, the white paper notes that this unit is unclear about its mission and role. We strongly recommend that this situation be corrected and further that Planning Support be one of the primary missions of this unit. Obviously, within this mission, priorities would need to be established (regarding extent and types of service to the President and Provost, the Vice Presidents, the shared governance bodies, the colleges etc), but we urge this unit to step up to the crucial job of providing analyzed data in support of future-oriented decision-making.
2) With regard to Mosaic Business Intelligence, we strongly support the statement made in this white paper that OIRPS needs to be fully engaged in decisions about data to be included, the ways that data can be accessed and analyzed, and the presentation of that data through reports, dashboards etc. As OIRPS is primarily responsible for responding to data requests from a wide variety of internal and external bodies, it has expertise that is absolutely crucial to the project of re-building our business intelligence capacities. We also strongly recommend that OIRPS take responsibility for ensuring that the reporting enabled by Mosaic is standardized and consistent with local (college and department) data.

UApresents, which, like OIRPS, is addressed in a separate white paper, also reports to the Office of the EVPP (specifically to the Associate Vice President). We appreciate and encourage the work being done by UApresents to improve its financial situation and enhance its collaborations with diverse units across the campus. Further, we recognize the crucial value of UApresents not only in its interdependence with our academic

performing arts programs but also as an outreach service that serves the broader community, enhances the attractiveness of Tucson as a site for economic development, and builds relationships between the UA and members of the Tucson community. The crucial issues presented here are the development of a sustainable financial model and the proper alignment between UApresents and the College of Fine Arts. As UApresents, with guidance from the Provost's office, is already working on these issues, we can only recommend that that work continue apace.