April 14, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Revised Draft Report for School of Computing Now Available

Dear Colleagues:

I want to thank you for your active participation and input over the last several months on Mason’s proposed School of Computing (SoC). One year ago, I charged a working group to conceive a new School of Computing that “reflects upon and shapes the future of our research, education, and translational programs in computing.” Under the leadership of Deb Crawford, Vice President for Research, Innovation and Economic Impact, the group developed an interim report in December 2019 that we then shared for broad campus feedback. The working group hosted five town hall meetings while receiving numerous write-in emails and direct conversations. There was a great deal of interest across campus on this project, right up until the COVID-19 crisis. The working group has since revised the report and its recommendations to reflect your input.

The revised report, attached herein, provides context and proposes a multidisciplinary implementation framework for the new school, while describing the steps necessary to its successful launch. Specifically, it recommends how to organize the new school and how it will relate to and interface with the rest of the university. Key revisions of the report include:

- Revises the timeline for the School of Computing (SoC) with a launch anticipated during the 2020-21 academic year, with first SoC class in Fall 2021.
- Recommends that the dean of the new Volgenau College of Engineering & Computing (VCEC) will also serve as the leader of the School of Engineering, and a new VCEC Vice Dean and Director will lead the School of Computing (SoC).
- Indicates that the SoC Director will also be responsible for working with the Stakeholder Committee to ensure the SoC realizes its multidisciplinary mission, including but not limited to coordinating strategic multidisciplinary faculty hiring processes across all relevant units within the university.
- Recommends how the SoC faculty community will be organized. Faculty with primary, joint, and secondary appointments in the school will be able to serve as instructors of record for SoC classes, and have the associated revenues flow to their primary units.
- Notes that TTIP/SoC funds shall be allocated as necessary to support the increased workload of all related units supporting students in computing programs.
- Describes that an outside evaluator will be engaged to work with the SoC Director and the Stakeholders Committee to evaluate and assess the school’s progress to inform lessons learned and allow mid-course and organizational corrections.

As you will find in the report, the Mason faculty community has already contributed a great deal to the development of formidable strengths in computing education and research—strengths that span all of our colleges and schools. The formation of a new school of computing creates a unique opportunity to create disciplinary and transdisciplinary programs that harness
the power of computing to advance a diversity of fields, and to establish Mason’s leadership role in promoting multidisciplinary discovery and learning emanating from modern computing.

I hope you take time to carefully review the revised draft report. Should you have additional feedback, please email them to Deb Crawford at dcrawfo7@gmu.edu no later than Friday, May 1, 2020.

I would like to offer a sincere thank you to Deb Crawford and the working group members for their hard work and devotion to this exciting initiative.

Sincerely,

S. David Wu
Provost and Executive Vice President