

# SWOT THREAT ASSESSMENT – REPORT CULLEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY



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## Threat Assessment

On Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, the Engineering Merger SWOT Task Force met to discuss seven of nine threats identified during the SWOT focus groups. The seven threats discussed were:

1. Identify path for any College of Technology (COT) programs that are not traditionally part of College of Engineering (COE) technical programs.
2. Maintain access for lower-GPA students to College of Technology programs.
3. Maintain distinct faculty expectations with regards to tenure and promotion.
4. Maintain merger ideology in administrative changes. (Name, appointments)
5. Avoid loss of program identity (brand recognition) of COT programs.
6. Address issues with differences in College by-laws and status of non-tenure track faculty.
7. Creating a clear narrative on the purpose and benefits of a merger of COT and COE.

Consistent with the remit on the threat assessment, two threats identified in the SWOT sessions that were not discussed in the threat assessment meeting were 1) funding equity and 2) program location (e.g. main campus, Sugar Land, or Katy).

## Process

The Task Force was asked to consider each of the seven threats and to provide an opinion on if a solution could be reached in a merged college environment that would allow for the potential benefits of a merged college to be attained. There was a unanimous agreement that none of the seven threats posed an insurmountable issue that would cause severe disruption to the current levels of success and progress within the two colleges.

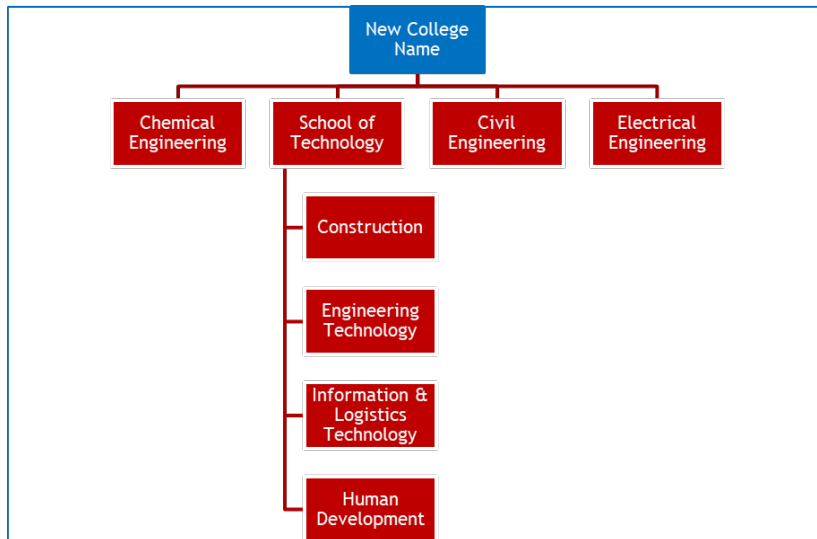
## Recommendations

- 1) Make a decision as soon as possible if a merger is going to take place.
- 2) Create a clear narrative of the purpose of the merger and the expected benefits (outcomes) that the merger will provide to the University, faculty, and students.
- 3) Create a realistic timeline for the merger process that will identify key mileposts along the timeline.
- 4) Provide assurances to faculty that they will be reviewed for tenure and promotion based on the conditions and expectations at the time of their hire with an option to adopt an new guidelines that are implemented post-merger.

## Discussion Points

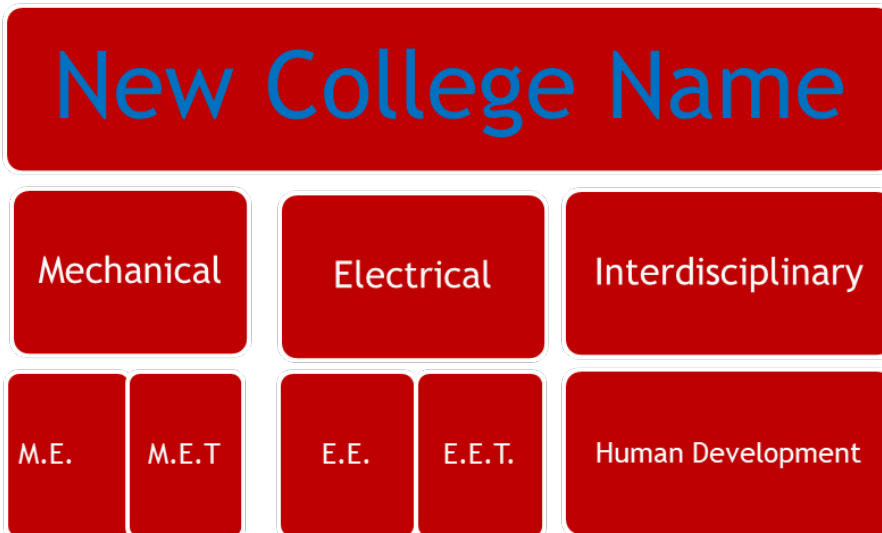
The Task Force viewed and commented on three possible administrative structures for a merged college. The differences are based in the level of integration of the COT and COE programs as the department level.

**Model 1** - Attaching the COT to the College of Engineering as a School of Technology that would keep department structures and programs the same. This structure is the easiest and would be the



quickest to implement. The School of Technology and its programs would essentially be allowed to continue to operate as-is but reporting to a new Dean. While it is the easiest to implement, it also does not provide the environment that would achieve many of the benefits that were identified by the SWOT analysis. It was suggested that this is probably the best short-term solution.

**Model 2** - Fold associate COT programs into COE departments. This model received the most push back and the Task Force indicated that it would not be accepted by the faculty. The main issue is differing expectations of faculty regarding Teaching, Scholarship, and Service when being

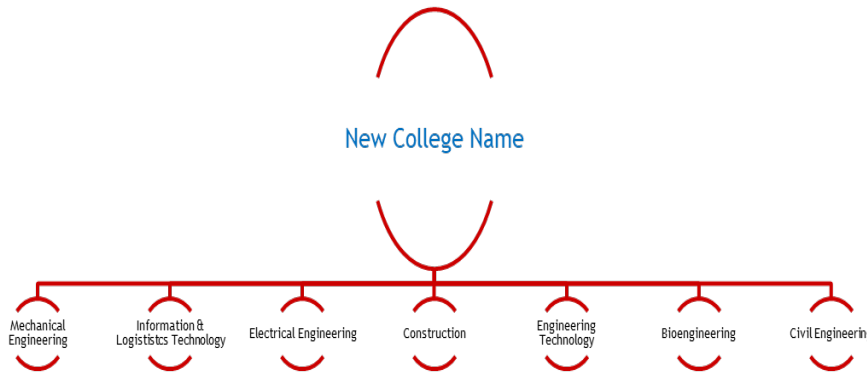


considered for tenure and rank promotions. Difference in admission standards for the different program types could create conflict among students in different programs within the same department. Two sets of criteria within the same department would cause disruption and conflict between theoretical and applied program faculty. This model, if deemed the

desired structure, is the most complex and would take the most time to resolve differences and negotiate workable policy and departmental standards.

**Model 3** - Merge COT and COE departments (programs) all reporting to the Dean of the merged college. This model was the preferred long-term model of the Task Force and was assessed to be the option which captured the most merger benefits. To make this model successful a great deal of

work and planning would need to take place that would create new College by-laws, student admission policies, and assess department and program fit within the new college.



## Next Steps

If the decision is to move forward with a merger, the Task Force felt that the immediate action would be to implement **Model 1 - Attaching COT within the COE** leaving current COT admission and by-laws in place. Create a clear public narrative of the expectations of benefits that will be achieved from this merger. Appoint a transition team consisting of faculty and staff from the newly merged college would then begin a long-term strategic planning process that would address future structure, policy, practice and name of the new college that will positioned to achieve the intended outcomes of the merger.

