

Shepherd University
Academic Affairs Transformation and Realignment
Executive Summary
March 6, 2026

The Academic Affairs Transformation and Realignment initiative represents a comprehensive review and restructuring of Shepherd University’s academic division designed to strengthen program identity, improve administrative equity, and advance student-centered outcomes. As described in the Academic Affairs Transformation and Realignment document (Appendix A), the process was guided by a strategic objective to position Academic Affairs to be innovative and future-focused while maintaining a three-college model and exercising fiscal responsibility.

The transformation differed from prior restructurings in that it was not driven by immediate financial pressures. Instead, it was grounded in broad faculty and staff engagement and informed by both quantitative and qualitative data. Surveys, a faculty conference, focus groups, leadership workshops, benchmarking research, and institutional data analysis contributed to identifying recurring themes that shaped the final model.

Sections I and II of this report provides the historical context for the current Academic Affairs Transformation and the objectives and principles guiding the entire process. Section III outlines the entire process, describing the core values behind the strategies for information gathering and consultation, and detailing the multiple opportunities faculty and staff had to participate. Section IV synthesizes and defines the themes that evolved consistently from this feedback. Those five essential themes are as follows:

- Program Identity and Visibility
- Role Clarity, Hierarchy, and Consistency across Units
- Staffing and Workload Equity
- Communication, Transparency, and Shared Governance
- Data-driven Decision-Making and Metrics

Section V provides a table that details the current and future action plans that have been activated to address those thematic priorities.

The revised organizational structure of Shepherd’s academic colleges included in Section VI reflects specific attention to program identity and administrative equity, and leverages program strengths to heighten market distinctiveness to support future innovation.

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences	College of Business and Technology	College of Science, Health, and Wellness
Department of English, History, and Modern Languages	Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Engineering	Department of Natural and Physical Sciences
<i>16 faculty</i>	<i>8 faculty</i>	<i>17 faculty</i>
Department of Social Sciences	Department of Business and Sport Administration	Department of Psychology, Social Work, and Counseling
<i>8 faculty</i>	<i>16 faculty</i>	<i>9 faculty</i>
School of Education		School of Nursing
<i>8 faculty</i>		<i>12 faculty</i>
School of the Arts and Media		
<i>17 faculty</i>		
Interdisciplinary Studies - 6 areas		

In addition, this section outlines the roles and responsibilities for other areas within the division, including Faculty Affairs, Enrollment Management, Student Academic Enrichment, Institutional Effectiveness, Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs.

Section VII explains the “Anticipated Outcomes and Benefits” of the Transformation, which includes program identity, the allocation of administrative assistant resources, and clearer governance and communication pathways. A few of the specific market advantages for the revised organizational structure are also defined:

- *College of Business and Technology* – Aligns high-demand, workforce-oriented programs under a unified structure that integrates business, applied technology, and innovation; strategically repositions Computer Science to strengthen market responsiveness while maintaining a strong STEM foundation and industry relevance.
- *College of Science, Health and Wellness* – Reinforces Shepherd’s historic strength in the sciences and nursing while creating a scalable platform for growth in allied health and wellness fields (e.g., mental health counseling, social work, exercise science), aligning academic programming with regional workforce needs and student demand.

- *School of the Arts and Media* – Unifies music, art, theatre, and communication into a mutually supportive creative ecosystem, leveraging existing community engagement and interdisciplinary collaboration to strengthen recruitment, visibility, and program sustainability.

The Academic Affairs Transformation and Realignment report concludes by explaining the many steps required for implementation in Section VIII. Several policies and new job descriptions are under development to be in place by the end of the academic year. President Hendrix formally brings forward the new organizational structure to the Board of Governors by March 15, 2026, providing the necessary 30 days for public comment. Academic units are asked to hold chair/director and senator selections by April 1, 2026. Finally, the report notes that campus surveys will be administered in spring 2027 to assess stakeholder experience with the new organizational structure.

In sum, the outcomes of the Academic Affairs Transformation and Realignment process align organizational structure with institutional mission, reinforce program identity, promote administrative equity, help address uneven workload distribution, and better position our distinctive academic programs in the higher education marketplace. The initiative positions Shepherd University to operate with greater clarity, stability, and strategic focus while maintaining its commitment to shared governance and fiscal responsibility.