

**Academic Positioning**  
Applied Engineering and Technical Management (AETM)  
Administrative Reorganization  
2024-2025

**ACADEMIC POSITIONING (AP) VISION**

To embrace our responsibility to future generations of students, faculty, and staff by strategically enhancing academic affairs to position UNI, our graduates, and employees to thrive into the future.

**CONTEXT**

In May 2024 President Nook and Provost Herrera met with campus and industry stakeholders to discuss the dramatic enrollment decrease in Applied Engineering and Technical Management. After preliminary discussions with Deans, AETM leadership, industry partners, and AETM faculty and staff regarding challenges, President Nook and Provost Herrera decided that UNI would decouple Applied Engineering and Construction Management to promote and nurture each program's distinctiveness, provide a more focused student experience and strengthen the marketing and recruitment opportunities for both programs. UNI will use the Academic Positioning (AP) process to revise the organizational structure of AETM. **The goal, pending necessary consultations and approvals, is that beginning in Fall 2025 Applied Engineering and Construction Management will be two distinct departments, both housed in the new Applied Engineering Building.**

In Summer 2024 an Executive Advisory Committee (EAC) was created and included: Nick Bruns, John Deere; Drew Conrad, UNI; Jennifer Cooley, UNI; Ben Hammes, MBI; and Deirdre Heistad, UNI. President Nook and Provost Herrera met with the EAC throughout the summer to create a number of goals and objectives for the Academic Positioning Project Management Team (PMT) to achieve in 2024-2025. In addition to meetings with AETM leadership, some faculty and staff, and representatives from the Construction Management advisory committee, Provost Herrera maintained communication with stakeholders via email communications that encouraged the sharing of questions and concerns.

**NEXT STEPS**

In Fall 2024 and Spring 2025, the AETM reorganization will move through Academic Positioning in three phases. AP leadership, the Project Management Team (PMT) and the Focused Working Groups (FWGs) will be charged with achieving specific goals related to departmental structures, space allocation, staffing needs, recruitment, strategic planning, etc. within the prescribed timeline. All recommendations must be approved by the Provost prior to their implementation.

Interim Associate Provost Deedee Heistad and Associate VP and Dean of Graduate, Research, and Online Education, Stephanie Huffman will serve as the Academic Positioning co-chairs. Together, they will co-chair the Project Management Team (PMT) to guide and support the Focused Working Groups. If you have any questions, comments or would like to learn more about the AP process please, contact Deedee Heistad at [d.heistad@uni.edu](mailto:d.heistad@uni.edu)).

## Academic Positioning

AETM Reorganization

Construction Management (CM) Focused Working Group (FWG)

PHASE 1

**CM-FWG members:** Andy Anderson; Lisa Riedle; Randy Sharp; Joseph Ugrin

### **CM-FWG Objective 1:**

Move the administrative oversight of Construction Management(CM) to Wilson College of Business (WLSN). **Charge:** Review the evidence provided below and provide any additional evidence that may be missing **on or before Thursday, September 12th, 2024.**

Recommendation parameters:

- CM will not physically move. The labs and faculty will be in the newly renovated Applied Engineering building. The change is focused on administration, leadership, and new business/industry connections.
- The CM curriculum would not have to change and CM students would not be required to complete the business core curriculum.
- The department could pursue Construction Management specific accreditation (i.e. ACCE, ABET) and would not be part of the Wilson College AACSB accreditation.
- Interactions and collaborations will remain strong between Applied Engineering faculty and Construction Management faculty who will reside and teach in the same building.
- CM faculty would oversee their own tenure and promotion guidelines.

Benefits:

- The Department of Construction Management would be 1 of 6 departments within the Wilson College of Business, instead of 1 of 16 departments and 4 centers within the College of Humanities, Arts, and Sciences. The move would decrease managerial complexity and provide UNI the opportunity to better promote Construction Management as a marquee program.
- This could be a way to distinguish ourselves from other programs. For example, placing the department under the leadership of the Wilson College of Business will help highlight our graduates' unique management skills, and will help distinguish our program from that of Iowa State's (which focuses much more on construction engineering).
- Portions of the CM curriculum are already business-related, and strengthening those skills and connections, internally and externally, could be a benefit. For example, connections to the real estate program within the Wilson College of Business could provide competencies that many CM graduates request later in their careers.
- Examples exist of CM in a business school (i.e. Missouri State, The University of Denver). CM is often defined within data reporting taxonomy as a business program
- Construction Management has not reached its enrollment potential within an applied engineering department. WLSN is committed to growing and elevating the program

- The Wilson College of Business leadership has a strong history and understanding of professional accreditation and would have the capacity to support the unique accreditation needs of Construction Management should that arise

Potential challenges:

- Process and information sharing would be extremely important due to the fact that any changes to structural alignment can create anxiety and pushback from impacted units, faculty leadership, external constituencies, students, and others.
- Moving CM from CHAS to WLSN could reveal culture changes that faculty, staff and students would need to work through
- Reorganization efforts must include maintaining transparent, intentional and systematic lines of communication with Foundation fundraising efforts. Failure to do so could hamper relations and negatively impact fundraising.
- The Wilson College of Business has differential tuition while AETM has departmental fees. The revenue model will have to be considered and calibrated, including if the tuition should apply to this program and the implications.

**CM-FWG Objective 2:**

Propose a preliminary space allocation plan that would indicate Construction Management specific space, office assignments and shared spaces (i.e. classrooms, labs, meeting rooms, student space) Submit preliminary proposal to AP leadership [on or before Tuesday, October 15th](#)

Proposal parameters:

- Both departments will be housed in AEB and share labs and classroom space.
- Phase II AEB construction should be taken into consideration.
- The intent of this proposal is to serve as a conversation starter concerning space allocation decisions that will be finalized as the reorganization takes shape.
- The Applied Engineering Focused Working Group will be asked to engage in a similar exercise.

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**AP Next Steps:**

The results of the phase 1 work will impact the scope and composition of the phases 2 and 3 work. Phases 2 and 3 will ask FWGs to make recommendations related to the following:

- Propose a structure for Construction Management that includes internal governance
- Provide a landscape analysis of what employers are looking for in recent Construction Management graduates using data such as Iowa Workforce Development, Lightcast, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes Explorer, etc.
- Establish Construction Management Advisory Board.
- Collaborate with Construction Management faculty, university and industry partners, Enrollment Management and UR to create a recruitment and marketing plan for Construction Management.
- Create a new strategic plan that includes success metrics
- Consider whether or not Construction Management should pursue accreditation.