

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Robert Damrau  
Senate Clerk  
Office of the Senate  
228 English Building (MC-461)

**From:** Robert H. Dodds, Jr. *Robert H. Dodds, Jr.*  
Head, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering

**Date:** March 21, 2006

**Re:** Support for Proposed Merger of TAM and MIE Departments

I write to express my very strong support for the proposed merger of these two departments to form the new Department of Mechanical Sciences and Engineering. I will be in California conducting University business on March 27, 2006 and have asked Professor Leslie Struble (Senator from Civil & Environmental Engineering) to read portions of this memo into the record if possible during the debate.

The motivation and driving forces for the merger are summarized correctly in the written proposal submitted to the Senate by Interim Dean of Engineering Adesida and need not be repeated here. The future of education and research in the field of mechanics will be best served on this campus with the core faculty located in the new, merged department.

The name selected for the merged department reflects a clear appreciation for the role of mechanics and will be unique among the leading engineering colleges in the U.S. Before the merger discussions began, the MIE department already had a strong core group of 8-10 faculty very actively engaged in mechanics education and research. Over the past year, six TAM faculty transferred into the MIE department as the merger discussions progressed. Consequently, the focus for mechanics in the College of Engineering has shifted almost completely to the current MIE Department.

The large group of mechanics faculty in MIE now ranks among the very best in the U.S. and will increase the reputation and national ranking of the new Mechanical Sciences & Engineering Department. I encourage the remaining faculty in TAM to join with their colleagues in the merged department to complete this process, to move the College of Engineering forward, and to further enhance the stature of mechanics at Illinois. We have this opportunity to substantially increase the reputation and national recognition for the merged department – let us seize this opportunity.

The Departments of Civil & Environmental Engineering and Theoretical & Applied Mechanics have enjoyed very close and collegial relationships for many decades, almost from the founding of the College of Engineering. With a now larger and stronger group of mechanics faculty in the merged department, we look forward to a much increased level of synergy in new research efforts and education between CEE and MS&E.

I strongly encourage the Senate to approve the proposed merger.

cc: I. Adesida

RHD:rp