

# **Academic Unit Merger - A World Turned Upside Down**

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**College of Forestry, Agriculture,  
& Natural Resources**

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of Agriculture Meeting  
College of Southern Idaho  
Twin Falls, Idaho**



**British Surrender at Yorktown-1781**

✓ **TODAY: Universities are seeking to serve students that are diverse:**

- ✓ **Degree Interests**
- ✓ **Economic constraints**
- ✓ **Social Backgrounds**
- ✓ **Academic preparation**
- ✓ **Career goals**

**SETTING**

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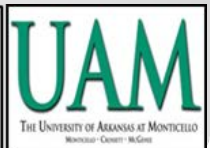


✓ **TODAY: Universities are faced with challenges:**

- ✓ **Legislative performance funding demands**
- ✓ **Higher expected levels of student success**
- ✓ **Student desires for alternative course offering approaches**
- ✓ **Budgetary constraints requiring review of current efforts and reallocations of limited existing resources**

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- ✓ **Impacts on Students & Faculty**  
may be overlooked in the  
administrative adjustment  
processes that take place.
- ✓ **Resulting Outcomes** may involve:
  - ✓ Expanded problems
  - ✓ Missed opportunities

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## **Case Studied:**

**Merger at a small, state university  
of two separate academic units -**

✓ **School of Agriculture**

✓ **School of Forestry & Natural**

**Resources**

**SETTING**

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## **UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT MONTICELLO**

- ✓ **1909: 4<sup>th</sup> District Agriculture School established by Arkansas General Assembly along with three other schools.**
- ✓ **September 14, 1910: First students admitted and classes begun.**
- ✓ **1925: Became Arkansas Agricultural & Mechanical College of the Fourth District and accredited as junior college in 1928.**

# **BACKGROUND**

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- ✓ **1940: Accredited as a 4-year institution.**
- ✓ **1945: Established Forestry program.**
- ✓ **1971: Joined University of Arkansas System and became University of Arkansas at Monticello.**
- ✓ **2003: Added vocational and technical education with Colleges of Technology at Crossett and McGehee, Arkansas.**

**BACKGROUND**

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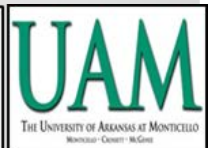


## **Timeline of Merger Development**

- ✓ **December, 2017 - Agriculture and and SEREC faculty are told that changes including a merger are being negotiated.**
- ✓ **May, 2018 – Personnel offices began to receive directives to begin moving.**
- ✓ **July 1, 2018 – Announcement made by UAM administration that merger occurred.**

**BACKGROUND**

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# **Actions and decisions made regarding a merger can:**

- **facilitate success of the merger process,**
- **create obstacles to its success,**
- **or possibly both.**

**HYPOTHESIS**

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- **Construct institutional timelines outlining the development of both academic units.**
- **Gather analytical data on faculty, staff, and students within the new College of Forestry, Agriculture, and Natural Resources.**
- **Compile historical records of student enrollments and degrees awarded by academic unit.**

## **METHODOLOGY**

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- **Conduct a survey of faculty, staff, and students within the College of Forestry, Agriculture, and Natural Resources.**
- **Compile responses into a data set.**
- **Analyze faculty responses for means and statistical significance by data item.**
- **Analyze student responses by age, gender, major, and class level.**
- **Identify patterns, trends, & levels.**

## **METHODOLOGY**

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School of Forestry  
& Natural Resources



University of Arkansas  
At Monticello

School of Agriculture

U. of A. Southeast Research  
& Extension Center

Cooperative Extension Service



Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station

**MAJOR PLAYERS**

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## UAM

- Reduced # of academic units.
- \$ savings of % of Dean salary.
- Farm Manager salary
- Ag faculty summer appointment \$

## UA Division of Agric.

- Elimination of beef cattle herd.
- Eliminate SEREC faculty members
- \$ savings of % of Director salary
- Reduce equipment research investment

**GAINS/LOSSES**

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# Productivity Results



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# GRADUATES BY ACADEMIC UNIT

	Dec. 2016	May 2017	Dec. 2018	May 2019
<b>Agric. B.S.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>For./Nat. Res. B.S.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>For. M.S.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

**Productivity  
Comparisons**

University of Arkansas at Monticello  
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# ENROLLMENTS BY ACADEMIC UNIT

Agriculture Bachelor of Science				10 Yr. Av.
	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	
Freshman	56	56	66	43
Senior	26	28	22	24

**Productivity  
Comparisons**

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# ENROLLMENTS BY ACADEMIC UNIT

Natural Resources Management Bachelor of Science				10 Yr. Av.
	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	
Freshman	28	44	42	47
Senior	12	8	15	15

**Productivity  
Comparisons**

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- Survey forms were first distributed electronically by email to all 210 students in undergraduate & graduate degree programs in the CFANR.
- Survey forms were also distributed electronically by email to all 28 members of the CFANR faculty, staff, and administration.
- Technical problems in the student survey process required a manual redistribution.
- Follow up survey requests were made to any non-responders.

## DATA SOURCES

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# Respondent Demographics

<u>Age</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>#</u>
18-23	52	Male	55	Fr.	1
24-35	8	Female	16	Soph.	21
36-50	5			Jr.	20
Over 50	5			Sr.	15
No Resp.	1			Grad.	1
				Fac/S/Ad	12

(N=71)

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# 1. When did you first learn about the merger?

<b>Dec-'17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>May-'18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Sep-'18</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Jan-'18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>June-'18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Dec-'18</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Feb-'18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>July-'18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Jan-'19</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Mar-'18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Aug-'18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>May-'19</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Apr-'18</b>	<b>1</b>				

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# 1. When learn about merger?

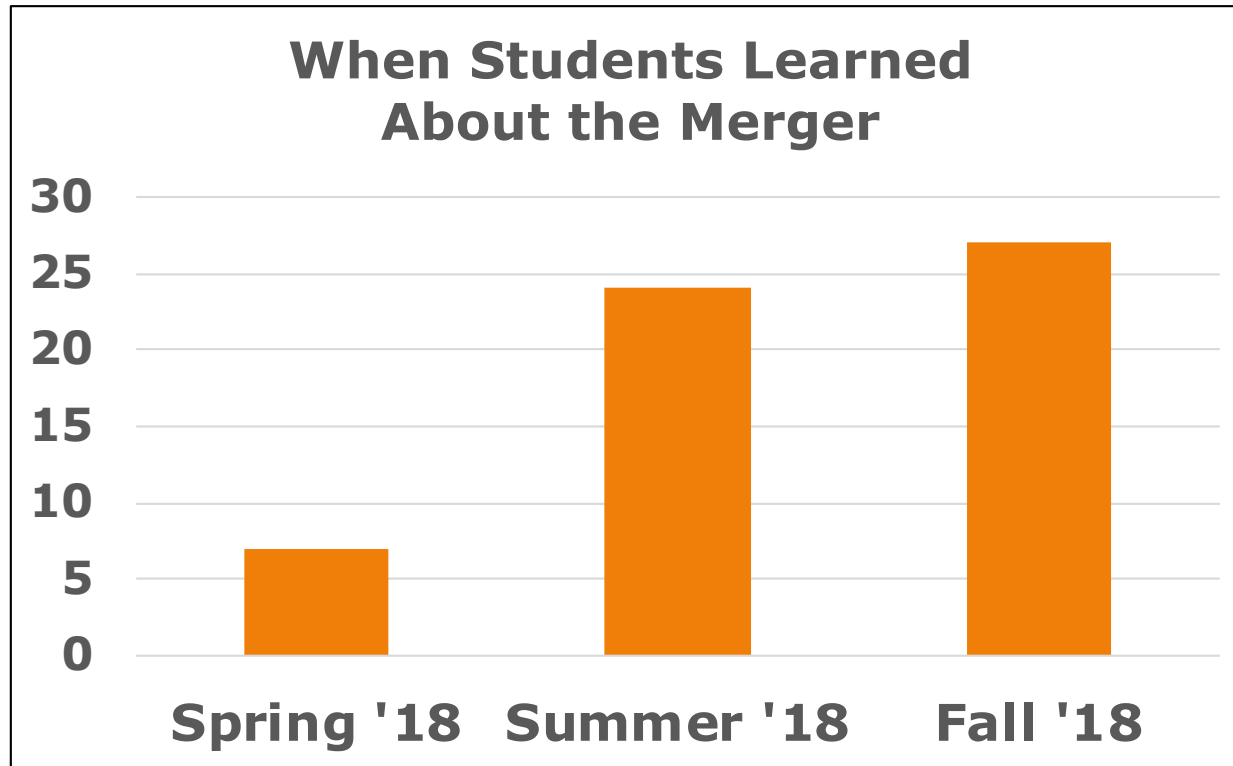
<b>Dec-'17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>May-'18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Sep-'18</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Jan-'18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>June-'18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Dec-'18</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Feb-'18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>July-'18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Jan-'19</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Mar-'18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Aug-'18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>May-'19</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Apr-'18</b>	<b>1</b>				
<b>Spring 2018</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Summer 2018</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>Fall 2018</b>	<b>12</b>

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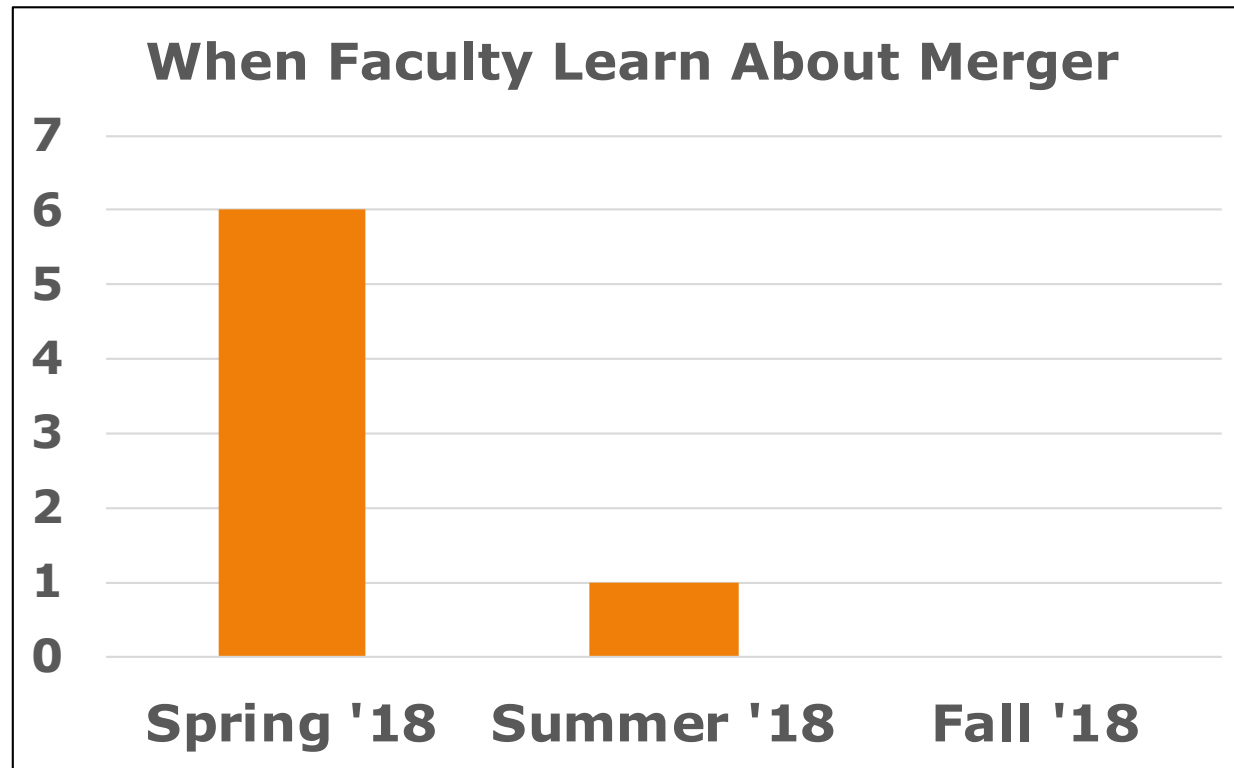
# 1. Students learn about merger?



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# 1. Faculty learn about merger?



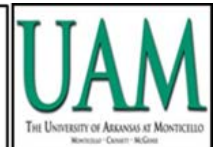
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## 6. Affect you attending UAM?

YES	5	NO	53
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## 6. Affect you attending UAM?

YES	5	NO	53
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## 7. Recommend different actions?

YES	17	NO	51
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## 6. Affect you attending UAM?

YES	5	NO	53
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## 7. Recommend different actions?

YES	17	NO	51
-----	----	----	----

Students	YES	8	NO	49
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Faculty	YES	9	NO	2
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## 6. Affect you attending UAM?

YES	5	NO	53
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## 7. Recommend different actions?

YES	17	NO	51
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## 8. Take actions to make merger work better?

YES	14	NO	54
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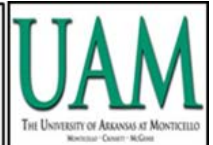
## 8. Take actions to make merger work better?

<b>YES</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>54</b>
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<b>Students</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>51</b>
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<b>Faculty</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>3</b>
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# Faculty/Staff Attitudes

## 9. Attitude when first learned?

Definitely Opposed	Pessimistic	Somewhat Pessimistic	Somewhat Optimistic	Optimistic	Definitely Supportive
2	3	3	2	1	3

## 10. Attitude now?

Definitely Opposed	Pessimistic	Somewhat Pessimistic	Somewhat Optimistic	Optimistic	Definitely Supportive
1	0	1	5	3	5

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# Attitudes of All Respondents

## 11. Long Run Expectations about merger effects on degree programs and research?

<b>Greatly Benefit All</b>	<b>Benefit One or More</b>	<b>No Major Effect on Any</b>	<b>Harm One or More</b>	<b>Greatly Harm All</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

- Note: 3 omitted respondents checked both of the first two responses on the left.

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# 11. Long Run Expectations?

<b>Greatly Benefit All</b>	<b>Benefit One or More</b>	<b>No Major Effect on Any</b>	<b>Harm One or More</b>	<b>Greatly Harm All</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Students</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
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<b>Faculty</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
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- 1. Faculty were not told about the merger until well into the process.**
- 2. Students learned about the merger much later than faculty.**
- 3. Faculty have been much more active toward making the merger a success.**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

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- 4. Faculty attitudes toward the merger are more positive now than when first told.**
- 5. Faculty remain more uncertain about the Long Run effects of the merger than students.**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

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- Dr. Phil Tappe – Dean UAM College of Forestry, Agriculture, & Natural Resources

# APPRECIATION

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# QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?



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