Professor Aminmansour,

Having served on the TAM faculty for 36 years—more than half of those as associate head, student recruiter, undergraduate advisor, society advisor, graduate program coordinator, technical editor, thesis reviewer, alumni contact, historian, and instructor in undergraduate TAM courses at all levels, I have developed an intense pride in the instruction provided by the TAM Department.

I am certainly not in favor of a merger.

My principal concern is the lack of commitment of the ME Department to the continuation of undergraduate service teaching in mechanics.

Indeed, we have been told that the ME faculty are not interested in continuing TAM's 115-year proud legacy of providing this basic instruction to all students in engineering. I have been named to a powerless committee of "constituent departments" to see how to spread this instruction around the College of

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Engineering. I have to ask, "Why?" Professor Blahut, head of ECE, will you be calling on TAM faculty to help you teach ECE 110 next semester? Professor Snir, head of CS, will you be calling on Mechanical Engineering faculty to help you teach CS 101? I dare say not. Faculty at large, do you want to teach basic courses in other departments, even if your curriculum requires them and you are qualified? I dare say not—your time and expertise are much better spent on your own courses. Then why should ME be calling on faculty in any of TAM's many served departments to teach statics, dynamics, and strength of materials, especially if ME already has 25+ faculty in mechanics, as claimed?

Meanwhile, I have been told that the College is considering alternative ways of providing this basic instruction. Again, I have to ask, "Why?" Why is not the current administration of the ME Department declaring loudly and proudly its commitment to teach the best courses in mechanics at all levels—including the challenging mechanics service courses taken by 2500 students every year? How does the College

propose to "strengthen mechanics" if it allows ME to disavow any interest in meeting this critical challenge?

On the other hand, TAM has been meeting this need efficiently and effectively for more than a century. In the absence of an unequivocal commitment from the ME Department to meet this need in the future, I urge the Educational Policy Committee to reject this merger proposal.

James W. Phillips
Professor and Associate Head, TAM
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