Dear Colleagues:

In November 2018, George Mason University announced plans to launch a new School of Computing (SOC) to enhance our capacity to graduate students in computing-related majors to support our region’s employers and economy. The School of Computing was conceived as a multidisciplinary academic unit that will bring the power of computing to a wide variety of fields, fostering collaborations across the university to advance the application of computing technology and data sciences to sectors ranging from government to business to education or health care.

Shortly after this announcement, a School of Computing Working Group was formed to develop specific recommendations and plans to launch the new school. Chaired by our then-vice president for research, innovation and economic impact, Deb Crawford, the working group collected input from the entire Mason community over the next year-and-a-half to formulate a detailed plan that defines a mission and vision for the future of computing at Mason. This plan will establish our university as a national leader in computing education and research, as well as the leading source of talent for our region. The School of Computing (SoC) will be established as a new academic division within a reorganized College of Engineering and Computing, alongside the Volgenau School of Engineering.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your engagement as the report was formulated. Hundreds of members of the Mason community provided critical feedback through town halls and other formats in shaping this report.

I am very pleased to send you the culmination of that engagement, the Final Report of the Working Group.

Since the previous version of the report, additional feedback from the campus community has been reviewed carefully and integrated in the report. Consequently, some of the changes to the final report have included:

- Mason’s new College of Engineering & Computing (CEC), will have two schools, each lead by a divisional dean including:
  - Volgeneau School of Engineering, which will house all academic programs accredited by the ABET Engineering Accreditation Commission; and
  - School of Computing (SoC), which will house all academic programs accredited by the ABET Computing Engineering Commission along with other computing related programs.
- The Multidisciplinary Stakeholder Committee has been expanded to include: 1) five deans appointed by the provost; 2) the chairs of the three SoC Departments (CS, IST and Statistics); 3) two at-large faculty selected to represent the university community’s broad multidisciplinary interests in computing; and 4) the divisional dean of the SoC.
The evaluation process is more thoroughly described and includes an academic program review framework with annual evaluations and a formal progress review after three years.

There is much work yet to be done, and we are confident that the report provides a roadmap that will ensure the success of the School of Computing, as well as across all of Mason’s academic units and disciplines that are being transformed by the ubiquitous presence of computing.

As we continue to implement the plan and begin each of the critical tasks identified in the report’s timeline, we will continue to engage the Mason community for input. As a next step, a process soon will begin for both the appointment of interim divisional deans and members of the stakeholder committee.

I look forward to our continuing collaboration to fulfill the potential of the new School of Computing and in affirming Mason as global academic leader in the digital era.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Ginsberg, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President