

Notes of ACC Meeting, 14 May 2008, Havasupai A/B (University Union), 1:00-3:00pm

1. Updates

- A. (Executive Director) Roy St. Laurent provided a number of updates from the President's Cabinet and other sources: (1) ABOR is mandating a tightening up of "internal controls" including financial controls and increased auditing of budget expenditures (especially travel), but also including compliance issues and access to student and other sensitive records. The Financial Controls Office is available to help departments assist/advise in setting up local processes. It may come down to mandatory annual training for all PeopleSoft (student records) and Advantage (budgetary) users. (2) The state's budget is still up in the air for the next fiscal year and therefore the university budget situation is also uncertain. It is likely that the universities will receive a cut in their state budget for Fiscal Year 2009 (which begins July 1, 2008). (3) Eleven chairs attended the workshop with Dee Fink on May 12th. Attendees generally were "underwhelmed". (4) Phoebe Morgan will begin work in Fall 2008 as the new part-time Ombuds. (5) The New Chair / Administrator Workshop to be held in August will be one-and-a-half days with the first day intended primarily for new chairs / administrators and the second, half-day including topics of interest to both new and returning chairs. Suggestions for workshop topics were solicited, a popular suggestion was a session on budget, in particular how to supervise and review the department staff person responsible for budget and "what should I ask for?" from that person.
- B. In response to the budget discussion, chairs raised issues concerning decision-making around temporary staffing requests for Fall 2008. Specifically, it takes too long for the powers-that-be to decide what positions will get funded, and the salaries for temporary positions (full and part-time) are "insulting".
- C. As the ACC representative Pam Foti gave a brief update on the work of the "Parental Communication" Committee. Included in her handout, the goals of the committee are to: (1) establish goals for parent communication in consideration of learning outcomes and faculty concerns; (2) establish guidelines for parental communication practice to meet the goals of NAU, students, and parents; and (3) consideration of FERPA in parental communication. Among things to be decided, who should be the point person (faculty, department chairs, etc.) in speaking with a parent who has a concern about the academic performance of their child.
- D. Maribeth Watwood agreed to serve as ACC representative on the university Strategic Planning Council, Laurie Dickson was elected to the ACC Executive Committee, and Cynthia Kosso agreed to serve on the True Blue Fridays Implementation Committee.

2. Proposed policies for Summer Session 2009: Ron Pitt, Assoc Provost for Academic Administration

- A. The responsibility for managing Summer Sessions has been moved from Distance Learning to Academic Affairs. This will be part of Ron Pitt's portfolio beginning with summer 2009. His discussion with the ACC focused on a number of possible changes in how summer sessions is marketed and run. He indicated that everything in his presentation to the ACC should be viewed as a proposal – no final decisions have yet been made.
- B. Ron is proposing changing the marketing of Summer Sessions to target specific student populations including WUE (Western Undergraduate Exchange), out-of-state, Finish-in-Four, three-year degree, and international students. Other possible target audiences could include students pursuing summer research, and dual degree / dual major students.
- C. The summer schedule will still be constructed using the existing DLS system (not PeopleSoft) in spite of ongoing chair concerns about the inefficiency of maintaining two separate course scheduling systems.
- D. Ron proposed having the summer schedule ready in November so that students can enroll in both Spring semester and Summer Session at the same time, moving up registration to February, and the idea that no class will be cancelled as of March 9th (or some similar date), so that students

may be assured of a course “making” after that date. Also proposed is a standard pro-rated contract across the university, with on-line and on-campus the same. Ron also asked chairs to respond to the idea of a minimum enrollment requirement in order for a class to run. The proposals are meant to make summer viable for the several purposes it currently serves: meeting student needs for classes, providing summer income to faculty, and providing discretionary (over-attainment) dollars to colleges and departments.

- E. A lively discussion ensued. Responses included: it may be difficult for departments to build the summer schedule on the time schedule proposed. Consider focusing the early build on freshmen and sophomore –level classes. The removal of the salary cap effective for summer 2008 will have an unknown impact on the generation of summer over-attainment dollars as higher paid senior faculty who previously did not teach in the summer may now find summer teaching attractive – and possibly reduce a department’s/college’s profit. One proposal being floated is to allocate some amount of base overhead to departments early, with a final allocation later. This would help address a chronic complaint of chairs and deans concerning to how long it takes to release over-attainment dollars.
- F. Ron pointed out that with the elimination of the salary cap, there is a greater possibility that certain faculty may exceed the permitted total salary compensation for the calendar year (calculated from their academic year “daily rate”). This complicates the administration of summer and may require restrictions concerning how many credit hours a faculty member is allowed to teach in a summer.
- G. Part of the Summer Sessions proposal would increase the rate of pay for instructors and other non-permanent faculty who teach over the summer. But this rate previously has been tied to the rate of pay for part-time faculty during the academic year. So changes in summer rates may impact academic-year part-time salary schedules. The ramifications of this are not clear.
- H. Because of the competing interests of meeting students’ need for summer classes and the desire of departments to generate over-attainment as a source for faculty development (often travel) funds, is there a way to separate these – by funding faculty development differently?
- I. The chairs’ input into this issue will result in further refinement of this proposal and additional discussion with the chairs early in Fall semester.

3. Discussion of Academic Dishonesty Policy: Ron Pitt & Maribeth Watwood

- A. Maribeth Watwood’s interest in the university’s penalties for academic dishonesty was sparked by several serious incidents of academic dishonesty in her unit this past year. She expressed her concern that the penalties in the university’s existing policy are not harsh enough. Several items on the list of “progressive penalties” could reasonably be viewed as not penalties at all [e.g., “assign the student extra course work” (#1) or “require the assignment or examination to be repeated” (#2)].
- B. As Associate Provost for Academic Administration, Ron Pitt is responsible for the oversight of all cases of academic dishonesty that occur on campus (and that are reported to his office). He noted that in most cases the penalty imposed is a “zero” on the assignment (#4). The majority of incidents involve some form of plagiarism.
- C. After discussion, a consensus was reached that the ACC supports a close review of the Academic Dishonesty Policy (likely by the Academic Standards Committee that has jurisdiction over proposing changes in this area). Suggestions for this review include the need to provide a more thorough definition of what academic dishonesty includes (e.g., submitting the same piece of one’s own work to satisfy the requirements in two different courses); including “identity deceit” (i.e., representing oneself in an online format as someone else) as a form of academic dishonesty; a re-examination of the penalties listed in the policy; a clarification that departments and faculty need not “start” with the least severe penalty in dealing with a(n apparent) first-time case of dishonesty.

- D. Other comments include: a need to explicitly educate students as to what academic dishonesty is (often students claim ignorance, even after having it pointed out to them that a course syllabus makes explicit mention that they are responsible for being familiar with the university policy). One department (Criminal Justice) addresses this by requiring all students enrolled in a department course complete a tutorial on academic dishonesty as part of the Vista course shell, so that ignorance is not a permissible defense. Criminal Justice also has an explicit policy that the penalty imposed cannot be” (#1) or (#2) [see A. above] in the university’s list of progressive penalties.
- E. Faculty also need to be educated as to what to include in a syllabus and the need to follow through with penalizing students for dishonesty.

4. Guidelines for Named Gifts: Betsy Putman, University Advancement

Betsy reviewed the Named Gift Guidelines distributed in advance of the meeting. She highlighted the changes being proposed including the increase in the minimum amount necessary to endow a scholarship from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Existing scholarships endowed at the lower amount will be grandfathered in.

5. Discussion of status of chair compensation across the colleges

- A. The Executive Committee brought to the ACC the issue of revisiting chair compensation across campus. Is there an interest among ACC members in updating the 2002 “Chair’s Compensation Report” (available on the ACC webpage: <http://www2.nau.edu/~acadcc-p/>) to determine what the current norms are in the various colleges.
- B. Items that might be examined include: the uniformity of chair compensation across campus; variation in the length of appointment (9, 10, 11, or 12 months); form of monetary compensation (addition to base salary, addition to academic year salary, and/or stipend); teaching load; the availability of an assistant or associate chair; and post-service leave.
- C. A number of complicating factors (concerning which there was not consensus) include whether or not differential compensation should be associated with size or complexity of the academic unit and to what extent this needs to take into account discipline-specific factors (for example, the chair of a “small” unit may still have substantial responsibilities with regard to organizing and staging frequent public performances).
- D. The consensus was that the ACC should pursue updating the survey in the coming 2008-09 academic year.

Meeting adjourned at 3:03pm.