



Northern Arizona University

A University for the 21st Century

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We are at a crossroads, along with hundreds of public higher education institutions throughout the country, as changing conditions related to funding, technology, the economy, and student demographics compel us to rethink our mission, priorities, organizational structures, and budgets. NAU has been through an extraordinary journey over the last two decades. We have matured as a university in our teaching, research, and service to the community and clearly stand as one of the best institutions among our peers in the nation. Presidents Walkup, Hughes, and Lovett each contributed to this evolution whether through construction of buildings, creation of a distributed learning network, or recruiting quality faculty and staff. We can no longer allow growth in academic programs, research units, athletics, or technology that is unrelated to our Strategic Plan nor can we spend a single dollar that is unrelated to our core mission and driven by our stated goals.

I thank and applaud our faculty, students, and staff for contributing creative ideas about how the University should be organized for the future. Much of that discussion has been very innovative and constructive. As your president, I must reorganize NAU's academic mission such that the University continues to provide the highest quality undergraduate education, that it ensures a close connection between undergraduate education and our graduate mission, and that it effectively brings together our human resources, technology, and facilities to serve our students. As I announce my plan for restructuring NAU for the 21st century, please listen as a "citizen" of the University, rather than as a member of a department or college. We must join together in the best interest of NAU now and for the next decade.

I. Mission/Vision

Last year, the Arizona Board of Regents opened the doors through Changing Directions for NAU to pursue its distinctive missions, to focus its efforts in ways that assured the University could confront the challenges of the 21st century. Whether we have realized it or not, the University is well along the path of a fundamental shift in organizational culture. We are clearly focused on priorities, have measures of accountability, and are determined to pursue more focused goals.

NAU's core mission is undergraduate residential education on the Mountain Campus. We must be the state's leading undergraduate university providing small classes, close interaction of faculty and students, state-of-the-art classrooms, and an unmatched living-learning environment. What are the indices of our success? We must aspire to graduate 80 percent of the students who choose to study with us while holding our academic integrity, be certain that a large percentage of our graduates go on to graduate and professional schools or secure positions in their chosen professions, and ensure that we have the highest satisfaction rates among our alumni of any institution in the country. The relationship of teaching and research should characterize our curriculum as well as our commitment to the environment and diversity. We should seek an increase in multicultural student access, retention, and success; and we must guarantee that our professional programming evolves with changes in the marketplace and with demand. These themes dominate our Strategic Plan and our Changing Directions initiatives.

As we carry out our mission, we must recognize our key strengths: NAU has distinguished and loyal faculty; we have dedicated staff. We are an institution that conducts focused research and graduate education in several key areas, especially in the environment, biosciences, education, and workforce development. We must be an economic engine for Flagstaff and the surrounding communities. We must build graduate programming from our excellence in undergraduate education, and ensure that outstanding graduate programs enhance undergraduate education. Finally we are a university that has developed unmatched capacity to offer our programs any time, and any place within the state of Arizona, realizing the dream of many citizens for baccalaureate and master's education that is close to home, work, and family.

II. Responses to the challenges

The University has already responded in numerous ways to attack our problems and to create new approaches. Over two years ago, we began the reorganization of all our student recruitment and student affairs offices. This has enabled us to recruit more effectively and to support and retain the NAU students who will eventually graduate. A recent forum

on the freshman year experience and establishment of the Gateway Center heralded a new commitment and approach to undergraduate students.

We have completed the reorganization of all our public affairs and marketing offices to better position the University within the state and the western region. NAU has a compelling story to tell. We are now in a position to tell that story effectively. Our efforts have included use of a nationally respected marketing firm and investigation of new advertising efforts and recruitment techniques critical to the well-being of the modern university. I thank the faculty and staff who, over the past two years, have totally reorganized our distributed learning offices, expanded our programmatic offerings, switched to new delivery systems using WEB technologies, and evolved new partnerships with the community colleges. Off-campus enrollment now represents nearly one-third of our total credit hours in any semester. Continuing change is critical to our future.

Our Division of Administration and Finance has collapsed divisions, shifting personnel to meet new demands. The most important of these initiatives is the beginning of nearly \$200 million in renovations and new buildings to create the NAU campus of the 21st century. The renovation of the communication building is on schedule for the fall, ground breaking for the new business building begins in summer 2004, and architectural designs for renovations in engineering and a signature building for our environmentally focused initiative, the Applied Research and Development building, follows next summer.

Finally we have been through a four-year implementation of PeopleSoft, a new management, academic, and business system for the University. New dollars have been allocated to expanding our capacity on the Internet and the University will now turn its attention to the next wave of technology changes, including wireless communication.

III. NAU's Current Academic Structure

Although the academic division has experienced cuts to faculty and staff, it has not confronted an organizational structure that is more historical than

planned, and with the effects of rapid growth in people, programs, and units. So let's look briefly at the signs of this bewildering array of units and programs. We have a program inventory of

- 95 undergraduate majors (over 1200 varieties of degree combinations)
- 47 master's programs
- 30 undergraduate certificates
- 12 graduate certificates
- 9 doctoral programs

In

- 10 schools and colleges
- 34 departments
- And close to 40 research and outreach centers and institutes

The colleges and schools range in size from 16 faculty to 209, and the departments vary from 4 faculty to 35. There are 5 schools smaller than either the department of English or Biology. There are 11 departments with 8 or fewer faculty. Our investment in research centers consists of \$5 million in state dollars and an additional \$7 million dollars in local funds with staff totaling 220. The growth over the last 15 years has been phenomenal but scattered, often unplanned, and on occasion not directed by either priority or mission. Here are the problems that this organization requires us to solve:

1. Isolated silos of academic programs, research, and teaching
2. Decentralization focused on individual unit rather than university mission
3. An array of centers and institutes with inadequate oversight and poor integration into the university mission
4. Growth that is historical rather than planned, unmanaged rather than strategic
5. Imbalanced academic budgets where 90 percent of the dollars are in personnel leaving little money to fund operations

IV. Background to Decision-Making

This past Fall, the University faced enrollment shortfalls and unfunded mandates for health and retirement insurance. It was very clear that we had reached the point where a close look at our basic organizational structure was inevitable. In November, the Provost and I appointed a Blue Ribbon Task Force

to review our structure and, if appropriate, to present options to create an organization that is capable of controlling growth and expenditures, focuses dollars on essential priorities, aligns more closely teaching and research functions, and rationalizes the developments of the last 20 years. I thank the Task Force for its tireless and selfless work.

The results of the Blue Ribbon deliberations were that the University must make changes; change is no longer a matter of choice but necessity. The short-term benefit is to save dollars by thinning the administrative structure and centralizing service functions, such as budget, technology, and development. However, the long-term solution is to create a structure that focuses our efforts for the future.

Following the release of the Blue Ribbon report, the Provost and I assembled the academic leadership of the institution at a retreat to again ask the basic question: is it time to restructure and refocus the University? The overwhelming response from 54 people in an anonymous survey was overwhelmingly affirmative. Since that time the campus has been involved in 6 weeks of intense debate in colleges, departments, centers, and institutes. As a campus, we have generated more and more plans, and nearly 50 separate communications to the president and provost. As we embark on the work of restructuring, we would do well to read the Blue Ribbon Task Force's report again as a study of the current state of the University using every statistic about budget, FTE, and staff in every unit. I have welcomed the ways in which shared governance has worked with debates in the Faculty Senate, Academic Chairs' Council, within and among the deans, and with both the President's and Provost's Office.

Now that the internal dialogue and debate have ended, the key issues are clear: How much money will be saved? Will this new organization focus us on priorities? Should we abandon the historical model of the arts and sciences? What is the appropriate role of the professional schools?

V. A Plan for NAU in the 21st Century—Changing Directions

It is time to tell you of my decision for restructuring the academic organization of NAU. My intent has been to create clarity from a bewildering array of plans, to focus on the University's needs rather than those of individual units, to allay student concerns, and to confront the political realities of our campus. There is no perfect plan; indeed the success of any plan depends on the goodwill and energy of the faculty and staff charged with its implementation. Because the University consists of the men and women who carry out its mission, it is the faculty and staff who will guarantee the future of NAU in the 21st century. My plan is driven by the following considerations:

1. Build on academic strength and tradition
2. Link research and teaching wherever possible
3. Streamline administrative functions and maximize savings over the long term.
4. Create an environment that stimulates change at departmental and school faculty levels—this is only the first step in the continuing strategic development of the University
5. Position the University to make programmatic changes and to develop new programming where faculty determine the need

Over the last several weeks, there has been considerable debate over whether restructuring the University will save any significant resources. This debate has both sharpened our focus and required that we understand that although these changes will take time they will save significant resources. There are three sources of savings. The first and most immediate source (estimated at \$400,000) is the direct return from deans' salaries and other administrators in the shift from a 10-college to a 6-college structure. The source of longer term savings is centralization, a critical part of the cultural shift of the University's organizational structure. Centralization will enable us to work toward a goal of saving \$1,000,000 over a four- to five-year period. The third source of savings as we move the University from a decentralized service structure to centralized service organization in budget, IT, development, and marketing/public relations is cost avoidance. Together with strategic attrition, cost avoidance will result in an anticipated

savings of between \$300,000 and \$500,000 through the constant reassessment of how all funds, including local and state funds, are used to serve functions that have hitherto been decentralized in each college, research, and outreach center.

The new structure combines elements of Plans A and B and reflects the careful work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force and the debates within the Senate, Academic Chairs' Council, and Council of Deans. I have named the constituent colleges descriptively, solely for the purpose of this presentation; there are many different titles to work on that will give better definition to the organizations proposed.

1. Science and Engineering
2. Humanities and Fine Arts
3. Social & Behavioral Sciences, and Communication
4. Business
5. Education
6. Consortium of Professional Schools and Colleges
 - a. College of the Health Professions
 - b. School of Hotel Restaurant Management
 - c. School of Forestry

VI. Characteristics of the New Organization

In the illustrative diagrams, we have strategically moved research centers to colleges where the teaching and research agendas can be better merged. A number of centers and institutes have dual reporting lines that reflect their complex outreach/research missions and still others will report directly to the Vice Provost for Research. For example, the Ecological Restoration Institute is clearly part of the School of Forestry but also has critical connections with the President's office because of the dependence on federal dollars and inter-university partnerships. By contrast, the Center for Professional and Technical Writing, allied as it is with the Department of English, reports to the Dean of the new college that houses the Humanities and Fine Arts. Similarly, the Arizona K-12 Center is most appropriately housed within the College of Education.

The major innovation of my plan creates two new colleges oriented around the Sciences and Engineering

on the one hand, and the Humanities and Fine Arts on the other. Although my plan divides the current College of Arts and Sciences, historical tradition has already partially accomplished that split. When the north and south campuses divided, social and behavioral sciences were separated from the arts and sciences. Although some departments have favored rejoining these disciplines, there is no support for this concept in the social and behavioral sciences.

There has been considerable energy generated to create a unit that draws together the real strengths of the University in science and engineering. This college will join our research and teaching missions and could propel us into a major position in undergraduate education as well as in applied research across the college.

The formation of a college of Humanities and Fine Arts provides opportunities for faculty and students to explore affinities in scholarship and instruction in the Humanities and creative work and instruction in the Arts. These opportunities highlight the connections between the enduring, foundational disciplines of a liberal university education and the special domains of performance, practice, and creativity.

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences will embrace faculty of units that, over the discussion period, have been discovering and exploring a range of disciplinary and intellectual connections and opportunities to benefit students. The addition of the School of Communication, the Department of Geography, Planning, and Recreation, and the Program in Ethnic Studies will enhance the ability of the college to offer students integrated programs in the broad social sciences.

The College of Business and the College of Education remain largely unchanged except for their strategic association with key centers whose research and outreach missions resonate with the instructional missions of these colleges.

The organization that houses the Professional Schools will not be a college in the traditional sense. Each professional school has a unique mission in terms of its preparation of students for the workforce but they share

tasks like advising, recruitment, accreditation, corporate boards, and student internships. I believe that the professional schools will expand dramatically in the future and that the new economy will see us develop new areas of expertise and new programming. This structure is designed to facilitate that development without impinging on the more traditional areas of the academy. A consortium will accommodate closer collaborations and interactions over time as well as the forging of new, different alliances to respond to the challenges and opportunities in the new economy.

Each professional school within this college will be led by a director. Each school must streamline its administrative structure. One of the directors in the Consortium will simultaneously carry the title and function of a dean within the various governance structures of the University, but the integrity of each professional school both in and outside the University will be maintained.

These changes will have a dramatic impact on current deans and deans' offices. We expect changes to begin as early as July 1, 2004, subject to the formal acceptance by the Arizona Board of Regents. The President and Provost will appoint the deans of these new units for a period of three years after consultation with the faculty and staff.

VII. Implementation of the Plan

Announcing the plan is the easy part. There is a great deal of work yet to be accomplished. The Provost and I are willing to spend the next few weeks visiting with all affected units to explain the rationales and answer questions raised by faculty and chairs. Simultaneously the plan will be presented to the Arizona Board of Regents at its April meeting and likely will be reviewed and considered for approval at the June meeting. I have asked Susan Fitzmaurice, outgoing chairperson of the English Department and chair of the Blue Ribbon Task Force to serve as Special Assistant to the President, and Chair of the Implementation Committee for the 2004-2005 academic year.

The Provost and I will appoint an Implementation Steering Committee whose members will represent the governance structure as well as key staff and

administrators in the areas of budget, planning, and technology. It will include representation from the Provost's office, the Deans, the Academic Chairs' Council, the Faculty Senate, the research/outreach centers and institutes, the Strategic Planning Committee, as well as ASNAU. We will announce its membership in the next two weeks. Its composition may expand in the Fall, in anticipation of the work that must be done over the next academic year.

VIII. A University for the 21st Century

We are about to embark on a new journey. This plan will focus us clearly on our priorities and goals as a university, control and direct the mushrooming growth of programs and research endeavors, concentrate on quality indices of undergraduate education, save significant dollars devoted to administration over three or four years, and make a strong statement about the health and intellectual energy of this community. This is our opportunity to say to our students, to the Arizona Board of Regents, and to the citizens of Arizona that we are a unique Arizona institution offering the very best undergraduate education in the state and perhaps in the West, directed by a teaching and research faculty of extraordinary quality, in an environment unmatched for its beauty and its opportunities. Change is our ally and the possibilities for the future limited only by our imagination. We are a university of promise and possibility if we now pull together as university citizens to build a new NAU that builds on the strengths of the past. I ask you to come with me and help to accomplish this plan.



ADDENDUM

Details of the Proposed Academic Units

SCIENCE and ENGINEERING

Existing Departments

Sciences

Biology
Chemistry
Environmental Sciences
Geology
Physics and Astronomy
Mathematics and Statistics

Engineering

Civil and Environmental Engineering
Electrical Engineering
Mechanical Engineering
Computer Science
Construction Management

Existing Programs

Quaternary Studies

Research Centers

Arizona Earthquake Information Center
Avian Cognition Lab
Merriam-Powell Center for
Environmental Research
Center for Sustainable Environments/ Institute
for Tribal Environmental Professionals
Colorado Plateau Cooperative Ecosystem
Studies Unit
Keim Lab (dual report to President)
Electron Microscope Facility

HUMANITIES and FINE ARTS

Existing Departments

Humanities

English
Humanities, Arts and Religion
Philosophy
History
Modern Languages

Fine Arts

Theatre

Existing Programs

Master of Liberal Studies

Asian Studies
Latin American Studies

Existing Areas

Music
Art
Art Education
Arts Management
Interior Design

Centers

Center for Community, Culture and
the Environment
Martin-Springer Institute for Teaching the
Holocaust, Tolerance and Humanitarian Values
Center for Professional and Technical Writing

SOCIAL and BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES/COMMUNICATION

Existing Departments

Anthropology
Applied Indigenous Studies
Criminal Justice
Geography, Planning and Recreation
Political Science
Psychology
Sociology and Social Work

Existing Areas

Advertising
Speech Communications
Electronic Media
Journalism
Merchandising
Photography
Public Relations
Visual Communications

Existing Programs

Ethnic Studies
Women's Studies
Southwest Studies

Centers

Institute for Future Workforce Development
Institute for Native Americans (dual report to the President)
Gerontology
Social Research Lab
Institute for Future Workforce Development
Health Psychology Center
Environmental Communications Resource Center

BUSINESS

Existing Areas

Accounting
Business Administration
Economics
Finance
Information Systems
Management
Marketing

Centers

Center for Data Insight
Bank-One Center for Business Outreach and subsidiary units
Center for American Indian Economic Development
Bureau of Business and Economic Research

EDUCATION

Existing Departments

Educational Leadership
Educational Psychology
Educational Specialties
Teaching and Learning

Existing Centers

Arizona K-12 Center
Gear-Up
Science Learning Center

PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Existing Departments

Communication Sciences and Disorders
Dental Hygiene
Exercise Science
Health Promotion
Nursing
Physical Therapy

Existing Schools

School of Forestry
School of Hotel Restaurant Management

Centers

Ecological Restoration Institute (dual reporting to President)
Bureau of Forestry Research
Arizona Hospitality Research Center
Hotel Restaurant Management Ethics Center
Institute for Human Development
Exercise Physiology Center
Gait Lab
Dental Hygiene Clinic
Speech and Hearing Clinic

OTHER CENTERS

Vice Provost Research and Graduate Studies

Academic Shops
Animal Care Facility
Bilby Research Center
Greenhouse

Vice Provost Undergraduate Studies

Center for Research, Assessment and Development in Electronic Environments
Center for Technology-Enhanced Learning
Gateway Advising Center
Pre-Health Advising Resource Center

Assistant Vice President, Administration and Finance

High Altitude Sports Training Center
(current home)