

Steering Committee Meeting
May 5, 2006; 1:00 – 3:00 (reception to follow)

Attendees: Casey Donoho, Laura Taylor, Richard Coast, Wayne Sjoberg, David Camacho, Cindy Anderson, Patrick Deegan, Eric Yordy, Claudia Bakula, Jeane Spada-Allgood, Ramona Mellott, Mary Reid, Jennie Duran, Ed Cahall, Deborah Harris, Angela Willetto, John Campbell, Christy Arazan, Becky Butcher (via phone), Cynthia Childrey, Pat Haeuser, Stephanie Jacobson, Susanna Maxwell, Don Carter, Gypsy Denzine, Fred Hurst, Samatha Willie, Karen Pugliesi, Kathy Cruz-Uribe, Joe Collentine

Excused: Molly Munger, Mike Beatty, Kara Levinson, Diane Verkest, Betsy Putnam, Dorothy Briggs

1. Task force Presentations

Task Force #1: Mission and Integrity

Evaluative Statement: Relevant documents are accessible to the general public in a variety of high profile forms.

- * Numerous mission statements
- * The President states his own philosophy for the public to view on the direction of NAU
- * Planning, Budget and Institutional Research web sites provides a robust set of data

Evaluative Statement: Northern Arizona University faculty, staff and community understand and recognize diversity of its learners and the greater society it serves.

In its mission documents, the organization addresses diversity.

- * ABOR affirms the value of recruiting women and minority students
- * Mission relevant statements value the needs of a broad base of constituencies' need for access to higher education
- * NAU 2005 strategic plan provides evidence of how it fostered a culture of diversity
- * The university prohibits discrimination in hiring
- * NAU has instituted a US and a world Diversity requirement

Evaluative Statement: Administration, faculty, staff and students understand and support Northern Arizona University's mission. The mission is reflected in formal documents that govern internal organizations and groups.

- * University's mission statement
- * Student Handbook
- * The office of the President involves the university community in a number of activities where faculty, staff, students, and community members can provide feedback about the strategic planning of the university and its mission
- * A yearly strategic planning document is circulated and access is available to all university and state citizens

Evaluative Statement: Northern Arizona University's planning and budgeting priorities flow from and support the mission.

- * Strategic planning documents
- * Capital improvements and projects support the mission

* More prominent facilities have been rented in Tucson, Phoenix and Yuma for instruction in the university's distance learning program

Evaluative Statement: Northern Arizona University demonstrates a commitment to operating with integrity in the delivery of its programs and services and in the fulfillment of its mission.

- * Faculty grievance procedures
- * Student grievance procedures and codes of conduct
- * Faculty and staff training procedures on harassment
- * The University values and provides transparency and inclusion in its budgeting and strategic planning processes

Evaluative Statement:

A comprehensive study on the variables that affect the retention of minorities appears not to have been completed since 1989. Such a study would be well advised given the future demographics of the area.

It may be healthy to involve the entire campus community in a redraft (or a revisit) of the mission statement, which is largely in the same form it was some 8 years ago. To the extent that the student and faculty populations have changed in such time and the state's needs have changed, it would be fruitful to evaluate the fit between the statement and the actual goals.

Increase voluntary campus engagement. While the President and his staff have conducted numerous fora for campus discussion, the level of participation on the part of the staff, faculty and students could be more robust.

Task force #2



Northern Arizona University
Criteria Two Task Force
Summary
Spring 2006

**Criteria Two:
Preparing for the
Future**
The organization's
allocation of resources
and its processes for
evaluation and
planning demonstrate
its capacity to fulfill its
mission, improve the
quality of its education,
and respond to future
challenges and
opportunities.

Factors Shaping
Strategic
"External to the
University" [E]
and "Internal to
the University"
[I]

Evidence
"Thick" Description of
NAU's Planning and Budget
Processes (Strategic Planning
Group and President's Budget
Group including how they use
"budget scenarios")

Rapid hyper growth-
workforce development
Regents Accountability
Measures (RAM)
ABOR/Redesign documents
Changing Directions
NAU restructuring
Imaging/marketing- preparing
ourselves for the future

Strengths
Number of campus
presentations and student input

Limitations
Not all plans may not be at the
same level of quality, are not
readily accessible, and are not
yet fully articulated with overall
University strategic goals.

2d. All levels
of planning
align with the
organization's
mission,
thereby
enhancing its
capacity to
fulfill that
mission.

Evidence
Human Resources Workforce Dev. Plan
ARU/AZUN Business Plan

Strengths
Good use of data

Limitations
Support internationalization efforts

2a. Core
component-
Organization
realistically
prepares for
a future
shaped by
multiple
society and
economic
trends.

Evidence
TRIF Planning and Reporting
NAU Master Plan

Strengths
Salary progress tied to planning

Limitations
Budget not flexible to shift priorities

2c. The
organization's
ongoing
evaluation and
assessment
processes
provide reliable
evidence of
institutional
effectiveness
that clearly
informs
strategies for
continuous
improvement.

Evidence
Consultants' Marketing Reports
OAA Assessment Plans

Strengths
Systematic senior and alumni surveys, NSSE,
SRI, CIRP

Limitations
Implementing employer surveys

2b. Core
component-
The
organization's
resource base
supports its
educational
programs and
its plans for
maintaining
and
strengthening
their quality in
the future.

Evidence
NAU 5 Year Strategic Plan
VP Strategic Plans

Strengths
Foundation/alumni follow university plans

Limitations
Coordination/staff for policy development

Task Force #3

NCA Accreditation Statement:

Criteria 3: The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Northern Arizona University Mission

Provide an outstanding undergraduate residential education strengthened by important research, graduate and professional programs and a responsive distance learning network delivering programs throughout Arizona.

Educational Values (Most relevant to Criteria 3)

- **Excellence in Education**—Offer a rigorous, high-quality education to all students
- **Student Success**—Place learner needs at the center of our academic and service planning, policies, and programs
- **Educational Access**—Provide all qualified students with access to higher education

Our Goals (Most relevant to Criteria 3)

- Strengthen undergraduate educational excellence in a residential learning community
- Build on our national reputation for excellence in professional programs
- Provide leadership in the development, use, and assessment of technologies in educational programs

The task force arrived at many statements and evidence cited to support the proposition that NAU meets this accreditation criteria. Below are the areas we feel should be highlighted in the general report narrative, as well as the challenges and aspirations of significance to recognize and discuss.

Highlights (and Challenges):

3a: The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible

Highlights

- Engagement of the academic community in assessment plans and the resources being devoted to them.
- Writing and implementing new Liberal Studies rubrics.
- NAU has many co-curricular activities. (Though, not programmatic or cohesive – silos. STAR, Living Learning Communities, Recreation Center, Fronske Health. Isolated efforts to integrate in UAC, LS, FYE, and RES)

Challenges (aspirations)

- Translation of degree program assessment into classroom assessment and teaching/class evaluations.
- Integrating the liberal studies programs with the degree programs. Specifically, developing an approach that degree programs take some responsibility for continuity of the NAU learning outcomes (i.e., critical thinking, and Communication – written, oral, and visual)
- Coordinate co-curricular activities with linkage to academic learning outcomes.
- *Close the loop* on curricular changes based on assessment plans and reports.
- Technology literacy (perhaps should be renamed fluency) is no longer a Liberal Studies goal.

3b: The organization values and supports effective teaching.

Highlights

- The teaching/learning culture that differentiates us from ASU and U of A. We have a unique place in the state of Arizona University system. Academic Strategic Plans and COFs document.
- Hiring process is “teaching focused.”
- Common understanding that teaching and research are inextricably intertwined.

Challenges (aspirations)

- Faculty salaries and morale related issues.
- Students must do their part to be responsible learners. Purposeful program and effort to develop a student culture of shared values and high expectations.

3c: The organization creates effective learning environments.

Highlights

- Learner centered course development, small class sizes.
- Undergraduate research opportunities and student collaboration with faculty.
- Over 80% of the online courses are taught by regular residential campus faculty.
- STAR and SI programs.

Challenges (aspirations)

- Culture clash of a face-to-face, residential university with the technology of distance learning.
- High enrollment lower division courses with high DFW rates

3d: The Organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Highlights

- Cline Library, especially resource teams alignment with academic units.
- Great new buildings and renovations – Business, Applied Research, Science Labs, Communication, Engineering.
- VISTA shell for every course.
- Teaching and learning development opportunities – Faculty Development, LCE, E-Learning.

Challenges (aspirations)

- Maintaining and enhancing learning spaces in aging buildings with limited budget resources allocated for these purposes.
- Classroom technology planning and support very uneven.
- Faculty travel and support for conference and professional development outside the university setting.

Task Force #4

Institutional Mission and Strategic Questions: Potential Themes for Self-Study

Institutional Descriptors from Mission and Identity Marker Discussion

(A1) Is NAU a student-oriented institution with a focus on learning and teaching?

NAU demonstrates its commitment to students and faculty by promoting both learning and teaching activities

Faculty:

1. A variety of development workshops, audio and videoconferences, conversations on best practices and roundtable discussions are available through E-Learning Center, Office of Academic Assessment and Faculty Development Program. Teaching with Technology Training to develop online resources, understand and use WebCT and WebCT Vista, apply pedagogical best practices that are unique to online education, & use other applications to assist in building online materials and resources. Teaching resources are available through the Faculty Development library.
2. The Faculty Development Program grants sponsorships to provide opportunities for NAU faculty to attend excellent teaching and learning retreats and conferences.
3. A sabbatical is offered to faculty with six years of continuous full-time service at NAU. Leave is for research and other creative endeavors, faculty renewal and/or retraining.
4. NAU is committed to faculty engaging in scholarly activity as evidenced in the COFS document

Students:

1. The Cline Library website, resources, and services are developed and enhanced to support student success in accomplishing course and program requirements. The Library offers tools and products that are appropriate for 21st century knowledge workers and relevant to learning and research after graduation.
2. Technology Support Services are provided to students.
3. The liberal studies program provides a unifying educational experience for all undergraduates that is future oriented and focused on current issues.
4. NAU provides undergraduates with many research opportunities not available to undergraduates at most doctoral universities. Undergraduates conduct and publish research under the guidance of senior faculty.
5. NAU's value of problem-based learning is evidenced through problem based teaching strategies are regularly utilized with the aim of furthering student's abilities to be life-long learners.

Faculty and Students:

1. ITS provides technological support to faculty, staff, and students.
2. The Electronic library reserves benefits both students and faculty.
3. Turn-It-In, a WebCT Vista-integrated online service, allows instructors to comment directly on submitted papers without having to download the paper. This tool gives instructors high levels of interaction with students.

(A2) Does NAU combine a strong liberal arts foundation with high quality professional programs?

• Liberal arts foundation

1. The Liberal Studies Program at NAU is purposefully designed to help students gain the **breadth of knowledge** needed for active citizenship and leadership in a rapidly changing world (five distribution blocks, three thematic foci, and a diversity requirement).

2. NAU students are expected to be proficient in speaking and writing English, and possess introductory skills in quantitative reasoning.
 3. Nine essential skills are identified to prepare the NAU student for life-long learning.
 4. A coherent Liberal Studies Program was adapted at NAU in 1999. The Liberal Studies Program continues to improve and develop, striving to become an integrated part of a complete education, rather than merely a checklist of general education courses. *
 5. NAU students have several opportunities to be well-informed about the Liberal Studies program purpose and content
 6. The Liberal Studies requirements can be effective and relevant because they are open to critical review; course offerings and requirements are altered and improved as needed over time.
- **High quality professional programs**
 1. NAU regularly performs program level reviews that assess student outcomes against state, national, and professional standards
 2. Many programs solicit input from advisory boards
 3. The use of outside accrediting agencies is cited as a necessary part of any department's program; skills and professional competencies essential to a diverse workforce are considered
 4. New courses and programs are proposed and reviewed by department, college and university curriculum committees.
 5. Completion of a junior-level writing course is a signature requirement for the "NAU student".
 6. The Capstone requirement is the vehicle by which NAU institutionalizes breadth of learning at the upper-division level.
 7. Various programs outside of the Liberal Studies Program help students gain critical skills for success

(A4) Do graduate programs, applied research and public service that benefit region and enrich undergraduate education?

NAU uses scholarship and research to stimulate organizational and educational improvements.

1. NAU is classified under the New Carnegie Classification system as a comprehensive doctoral institution, with a high residential undergraduate and a research institution with a high research activity.
2. NAU provides undergraduates with many research opportunities not available to undergraduates at most doctoral universities. Undergraduates conduct and publish research under the guidance of senior faculty.
3. Course offerings and many capstone experiences include a research component.
4. Undergraduate research and creative activities are celebrated in a variety of ways
5. Institutional programs (e.g., MARC, MSD, NSF REU programs), practices (e.g., P&T), financial support (Faculty Development Research Grants, Intramural Grant Program for faculty, Student Travel Grant Program, Hooper Undergraduate Research Awards), infrastructure (new buildings, OGCS) support research and creative activities
6. Centers and Institutes promote scholarly activities

NAU promotes service learning as a component of undergraduate education.

1. Many organizations promote service learning (e.g., Honors Program, Institute for Native Americans, Institute for Human Development, Northern Arizona Regional Gerontology Institute, Institute for Future Workforce Development, Greek Life at NAU, Office of Student Life)
2. Courses and certification programs in several colleges have community service requirements.
3. NAU awards the "Gold Axe" to outstanding graduating seniors who have demonstrated not only academic prowess, but who have been involved in outside activities including university and community service and scholarly activity.

Strategic Questions for the Future

(B1) How will Northern Arizona University evolve to serve Arizona—how can we manage change and shape the future?

- *NAU is involved in continuous assessment of its program, services and curricula to ensure that we continue to serve the citizens of Arizona and manage change and shape the future.*
 1. The liberal studies program is dynamic and participates in continual review specifically to attend to currency and relevancy of the liberal studies courses.
 2. NAU values active learning. Problem based teaching strategies are regularly utilized with the aim of furthering student's abilities to be life-long learners.
 3. Regular program reviews to evaluate and continually improve NAU's academic programs. Components of the review include the entire curriculum offered by the unit and student outcome assessment.
 4. Institute for Future Workforce Development: "The mission of the Institute for Future Workforce Development is the advancement of today's and tomorrow's workforce through training, education, and community service."
 5. The Library offers tools and products that are appropriate for 21st century knowledge workers and relevant to learning and research after graduation.

(B5) How can Northern Arizona University best integrate the growth of online and face-to-face distance programming? What strategies and practices will Northern Arizona University use to increase student success and persistence?

(B8) How do we ensure that we are making most effective use of resources (fiscal and human) to sustain and increase the quality of all Northern Arizona University programs?

(B9) How do we engage with the world, prepare students for the future, and sustain a focus on serving the state of Arizona?

1. Formal program reviews conducted for response to the Arizona Board of Regents, and external accrediting bodies that give consideration to skills and professional competencies essential to a diverse workforce.
2. Continued investment in electronic library resources and reserves to support student success in accomplishing course and program requirements and to engage students in today's technological society
3. Technological support to faculty, staff, and students.
4. Problem-based learning library/support

Task Force #5

This task force submitted a 31 page work plan that was handed out and can be accessed in the NCA Self-Study online course on the homepage in document, "Task Force Work Plans"

2. Consultant Evaluators for the Higher Learning Commission – Continued (Fred Hurst)

Content:

- Evidence rather than prose
- Tell the truth
- Think about what you want to highlight in graphics
- Close each section with a summary and challenges / aspirations
- This is not the proper place to bare your soul, be up front about weaknesses, but they should be couched in ways to improve

Writing:

- Clear and concise, the shorter the better
- Consistent voice
- Repetition is okay
- Write for the audience → keep in mind they know nothing of the institution
- No complicated, wordy explanations
- Convey a feel of the institution

Organization:

- Follow NCA outline
- Accurate table of contents
- Accurate index (very thorough index also)
- Use of graphics and pictures
- Use white space – allows reviewers to write notes in columns
- Proofread, proofread, proofread

Format:

- USB drives with all appendices
- CDs with all appendices
- Book bags with packets of stuff including, though not limited to: catalogs, handbook, events calendar, weekly news (Inside NAU), alcohol and drug policy, annual report, pad of paper in leather folder, promotional materials

Additional:

- Appendices can be in electronic format only; may chose to add some key appendices to the actual report; additionally the self-study resource room should have all appendices
- Should have a piece of paper (card stock) attached to each document in the resource room that reviewers can sign when they take the material as essentially a “check out.”

3. Next Steps / Plans for AY 06-07

NCA Self-Study Report Preparation Projected Timeline

May- 2006: Steering Committee Review of Task Force Reports that are placed on the course or contact Christy at Christine.arazan@nau.edu for a file to be emailed to you → Input solicited via email.

*Becky will synthesize input for Team.
Formative assessment of self-study process.*

June-September 2006: Prepare First Draft of Self-Study Report

Team.

September-October 2006: Task Force Review → Input solicited by email, course and meetings

Task forces should be prepared to review draft and meet to formulate collective comments/input to team about draft. Steering Committee will meet monthly. Steering Committee will vet input from task forces.

November-December: Revision of Self-study Report (Draft #2)

Steering Committee and Task force Co-chairs will meet monthly to plan for university/stakeholder dissemination and engagement.

January-February: University/Stakeholder Review and Input [Meetings, Website, Campus Groups]

*Steering Committee with support of Team.
Articles from task forces synthesizing relevant sections of self-study.
Online course with prizes for completion.
Luncheons focusing on criteria and cross-cutting themes.
Other??*

March-April: Finalize Report

Team

May- Publication & Celebration

*Public Notification of Comprehensive Review
Dissemination of Executive Summary and Report*