

Academic Update October 28, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

It is rewarding to see such a high activity level within the academic community. There is a steady agenda of events across campus that involve significant work by the faculty. Those efforts pay off with educational opportunities for our students, employees, and the Shoals community. UNA recently hosted two significant conferences-diversity and sustainability. We had a series of musical, theatre, and art events. We continue with our activities focused on student research efforts. There were numerous academic events scheduled around Homecoming including the dedication of The Generator (a student incubator site for entrepreneurship) by the College of Business. A glance at any bulletin board on campus will indicate the almost daily activities available to our campus and community. Thanks to all of you for making UNA a vibrant and energetic place to work and study.

Council of Academic Deans (COAD) meeting on October 26

1. The current quartile system used to determine compensation and released time for department chairs is not adequate but finding a fair and equitable replacement has proven difficult. The COAD discussed the issue and plans to offer a modified plan that addresses concerns in previous revisions.
2. The COAD reviewed the distribution of summer school revenues and budgets for faculty development and faculty research. The deans will receive those funds shortly for use by faculty.
3. On October 21, the deans, associate deans, faculty senate chair, and shared governance chair met to review a draft of the tenure and promotion document. A final meeting will be held on December 2 to complete that review.
4. The College of Nursing is close to signing an agreement with a firm that will assist with marketing and enrollment on behalf of its online programs. The COAD discussed these kinds of partnerships and their role in the future of higher education. The College of Business currently has such an arrangement on behalf of its online MBA.
5. A review of the instrument used to evaluate college deans by the faculty was completed and that evaluation will take place during this school year.

Meetings with Academic Departments

President Kitts and I are meeting with each academic department over the course of the next few months. These meetings have proved very helpful in getting to know the concerns of the departments and possible issues that need to be addressed by the administration.

One of Many Examples of Good Work by Our Departments

On the Wednesday before Homecoming, the Mathematics Department held a chili cook off around the noon hour. They invited faculty to prepare chili and then asked the students to judge the various entries. They also provided t shirts to the students. The event created a sense of community among the math students. It connected them to the math faculty and to UNA outside of class. Research shows that level of campus engagement by students is a major factor in student retention. Good job!