

Academic Update April 8, 2016

Council of Academic Deans (COAD) meeting on April 4

1. Lisa Keys Matthews, Director of the QEP, met with the Council and provided an update on QEP progress and plans for Research Day.
2. Vince Brewton, Interim VP for Enrollment Management, met with the Council and provided information on the scholarship budget.
3. The COAD discussed issues related to the abbreviated employee summer schedule on Friday and how to reconcile that schedule with summer classes (in 2017).
4. The COAD discussed the role of centers and institutes and how directors for those units are selected.
5. The COAD discussed the academic awards gala and how to improve the selection process for faculty awards based on feedback from the selection committees.
6. The COAD engaged in discussion to clarify instructional roles among visiting professors, non-tenure track faculty, and tenure track faculty.

Additional Questions at Faculty/Staff Forum

1. **Question:** Michael Crow advocates a flatter organizational structure to replace the traditional hierarchical college-centric model. This could help reduce redundancy and inefficiency. Is this a strategy UNA would consider? **Answer:** In the “new normal” paradigm, all ideas should be on the table, including the flat structure proposed by Crow. It could help reduce costs and address redundancy in services and administration. Such a plan would need to be counter balanced against work load concerns. Under the college-centric model, UNA has four colleges to meet the academic needs of students, faculty, and the campus. There is a substantial amount of work flowing through the four colleges that has to be done. Also, the leadership for academic progress resides within the dean’s office of those four colleges. How to accomplish the required work, sustain leadership expectations, and save money without a significant sacrifice in efficiency would be the challenge.
2. **Question:** How can UNA do a better job of organizing STEM disciplines to support each other without adversely impacting the other disciplines? **Answer:** In the last few years, there has been significant movement in the STEM area at UNA. There is great synergy between the faculty in mathematics and computer science. The new engineering technology department has been created. The new science and technology building has been dedicated. A new multi-disciplinary sustainability center is now active. Numerous summer workshops in STEM fields are planned. The collective energy behind these and other initiatives is impressive so the current decentralized approach seems to be working, but we need to monitor those efforts and make changes as needed.

Busy End of Semester

The schedule for April is full of activities and meetings but there are a few that I wish to highlight. The visit by Dr. Jackson Katz in Norton on April 13th is a great opportunity for UNA to not only hear a great speaker, but also to gather together as a campus community and send a message about our commitment to work toward an end to violence toward women. What better way to do so than fill up Norton Auditorium. The Awards Gala in the GUC on April 25 affords the campus an opportunity to

acknowledge the exceptional work done by students, faculty, and staff. And finally, keep in mind that April 27 is administrative assistant day. Let's use one of the days that week to say a special thank you for the support of our administrative assistants. Lunch and/or gifts would be nice.