

## 2005-06 Plan Division of Academic Affairs



### Overview

President Eisler has focused the Ferris community on the development of a vision for its future. This vision is anchored by three principles, or pillars: the creation of a learning centered university, working together and becoming an engaged campus. The Division of Academic Affairs embraces these overarching principles and relies on these fundamental guides as the Division strives to establish its own strategic focus and respond to the task force recommendations. Much of the work over the past nine months involved enhancing and sustaining a sense of divisional identity, working together as a division and developing specific goals within the pillar framework. This cultural shift has been fostered in a variety of ways:

- Meeting as a division each semester.
- Meeting monthly with deans, department heads, and chairs.
- Enhancing divisional representation and participation on campus initiatives such as Banner implementation; technology hardware replacement; physical teaching spaces; communication/FSU messaging; enrollment; professional development.
- Re-examining existing processes and structures to insure successful progress toward divisional priorities such as accreditation; assessment of student learning outcomes; on-line course development; partnerships with community colleges and career-tech centers; enhanced graduation rates; adequate hours for graduation; new programs; curriculum development; class scheduling; ease of student transfer; and constructive working relationship with the Ferris Faculty Association (FFA).
- Implementing the Growth Incentive Model.
- Assuming responsibility for Freedom to Learn program.

An integral part of this refocus involves a re-examination of how we make decisions and develop strategies for successes. Specifically, decision-making must be driven by data collection and analysis through an evidence-based participatory process. As a result, existing processes have been challenged in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, for example:

- **General Education:** The coordination of General Education has been directly assumed by the Office of Academic Affairs. A new emphasis has been given to assessment of learning outcomes.
- **Outcomes Assessment:** A faculty member has been assigned the responsibility of coordinating outcomes assessment across campus. As an initial phase of this project, a database of current assessment activities is being developed.
- **Administrative Program Review:** The Administrative Program Review document has been revised to reflect the emphasis on outcomes assessment.

## Enhanced Academic Environment: Selected Successes

### **PILLAR I: Learning-Centered Campus**

The creation of a learning-centered campus requires a clear focus on student learning and student success.

#### Professional Development

- Revitalized the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning-FCTL (name change to reflect focus; search for instructional designer) FCTL provided 144 days of workshop training for 425 faculty.
- Assessed professional development activities
  - Professional development activities within each college have been assessed, including recommendations on future activities.
  - Professional Development of Administrators. Includes regular meetings of Deans, Associate/Assistant Deans, Department Heads/Chairs (DDH); summer professional development seminars planned; financial support for professional development opportunities off campus (Conference on New Faculty Developers, IUPUI); leadership training opportunities in the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Education and Human Services and Optometry.
- Reviewed Sabbatical Leave process. The current sabbatical review process and procedures is under review by a joint committee of faculty and administrators
- Developed faculty orientation program. The hiring of 42 new faculty members this year has prompted Academic Affairs to develop a “New Faculty Orientation” program, scheduled for August 15-20.

#### Structural Reexamination

- Addressed General Education issues. General Education had been an issue of discussion/controversy on the campus for nearly two years. Major issues have been addressed, including the coordination of General Education which has been moved into the Office of Academic Affairs, and the web site has been modified to clarify and simplify policies and procedures for faculty and students. A review of “directed electives” was conducted. The results have been distributed to the colleges for review and action. Changes in requirements (specifically in Social Awareness category) have been made.
- Examined structure of academic units. Completed restructuring of College of Allied Health Sciences. Currently looking at others.
- Emphasized the importance of accreditation and preparation of self study with divisional oversight. Preparation and self study reviewed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). Successful reviews in Pharmacy, Construction Management, and Nursing.
- Assumed responsibility for Assessment of Prior Learning.
- Reviewed the guidelines for graduate programs.

### Enhancements for Student Success and Curriculum Development

- Evaluated hours for graduation. Core to the issues of retention and graduation rates. In order to tackle the issue and promote progress, there is a need for empirical analysis. With the help of Institutional Research and Testing, the analysis of data has begun.
- Evaluated our capacity to attract out-of-state and international students.
- Developed strategies to enhance summer enrollment.
- Received a variety of grants for research and sponsored programs.
- Provided leadership for the maintenance of a topical, current curriculum.
  - Program closure in Environmental Health and Safety Management and Environmental Health and Safety Technology in response to changing environment
  - Curriculum Development: A variety of new programs, courses, certificates, curricular revisions have been initiated in the colleges

### **PILLAR II: Working Together**

Working together demands sharing responsibility for educational quality and student success.

#### Working together as a division

- Developed and implemented Growth Incentive Model.
- Developed guidelines for hiring letter that reflects divisional values.
- Reviewed small class size and low-enrolled programs to increase efficiency.
- Enhanced and sustained a sense of divisional identity: working together as a division through divisional meetings and dean, department head, chair meetings.

#### Work collaboratively within the University

- Supported Banner, technology, information, and University initiatives.
- Worked with faculty through contract maintenance to create a “win/win attitude” and more productive relationship.
- Collaborated with other divisions and a variety of units to achieve taskforce goals.

#### Work collaboratively with external partners.

- Ease of Transfer: We have made progress in regard to enhancing the ability of students to transfer. Changes in General Education are part of this issue. We now have a full time position in Academic Affairs devoted to community college articulation. We have also developed significant partnerships with Macomb Community College, Mott Community College, Lansing Community College and Northwest Michigan College.
  - We are a partner in the North Central Tech-Prep Consortium and Michigan Occupational Dean Administrative Council (MODAC).
  - We have developed program-specific articulation agreements with career-tech centers.
- Freedom to Learn: The Freedom to Learn initiative was successfully transferred from Michigan Virtual University to FSU. The project provides Ferris the opportunity to be a leader and to partner with the Michigan Department of Education and the public schools

to provide professional development opportunities to schools as they integrate technology into the classroom.

- Spaghetti Bridge Competition: supported ongoing project with high schools.

### **PILLAR III: Engaged Campus**

Work to support and to provide opportunities for student, faculty and staff engagement with the University and the community and the discipline.

- Supported research on engagement to provide direction for future planning.
  - American Democracy Project (ADP) survey of civic engagement in the fall of 2004 through SSCI 490 course: Applied Community Research.
  - Academic Affairs is working with the Division of Student Affairs to conduct the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
- Supported attendance at Equity in the Classroom Conference and sponsored faculty travel to National ADP conference in Portland, Oregon, and the Civic Engagement Institute at IUPUI.
- Initiated a variety of opportunities and forums for discussion and collaboration within the Division of Academic Affairs.
- Engaged Student Government and other student organizations in discussions of issues related to students

<b>Ongoing or Proposed Significant Activities</b>
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Enhance Academic Environment. Institutionalize academic activities and processes that ensure an excellent, cost-effective teaching and learning environment rooted in a culture of ongoing improvement. The Division is committed to responding to the issues raised by the task forces. Specific taskforce-related activities are embedded in our divisional plans and have been highlighted in the following:

#### Enhance Academic Environment

- Continue reorganization efforts: College of Business, University Center for Extended Learning, College of Technology, Michigan College of Optometry, FLITE.
- Respond to consultant reports on Office of International Affairs and College of Technology.
- **Establish Learning Communities in order to increase student engagement** and to increase student retention: College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Education and Human Services, University College.
- **Review Implementation of Growth Incentive Model** and continue work to examine needs at program and department level.
- Continue Contract Maintenance.
- Prepare for FFA negotiations.

Insure a current and relevant curriculum that focuses on student learning.

- Begin systematic review of curricula in each college. Factors impacting the review will include hours for graduation, small class size, numbers of graduates, and ease of transfer.
- Support Student Outcomes Assessment within the colleges.
- Address the issue of “directed electives” in General Education in relation to ease of transfer and in relation to Banner graduation audit function.

Review processes that impact divisional effectiveness.

- Address issue of low enrolled programs and courses.
- Develop an Office of Sponsored Research and Programs.
- Hire Dean of College of Technology.
- Examine feasibility of instituting an administrative assessment instrument.
- Identify Banner sets that meet college/institutional data needs.

Continue to enhance faculty development.

- Review faculty evaluation process (Student Assessment of Instruction-SAI) in order to create a process that provides more meaningful feedback to faculty for continuous improvement of the teaching and learning environment.
- **Maintain high quality technology for faculty and staff.**
- Work collaboratively to revise current Post Tenure Review process in order to create a process that is responsive and relevant.
- Address findings of joint committee on sabbatical review process and procedures.
- Review and evaluate New Faculty Orientation.
- Work to facilitate successful completion of current faculty searches.

Continue to promote a clear path to student success.

- Address General Education issue of “directed” electives and hidden prerequisites.
- Address issue of hours for graduation.
- Address issue of ease of transfer into the University.
- Address issue of movement between programs.
- **Continue to enhance physical teaching spaces.**
- **Continue to improve technology in classrooms.**
- **Collaborate on the development and implementation of a meshed wireless network that covers the campus footprint.**
- Make On-Line Catalog more accessible and user-friendly.
- **Review and address results of NSSE assessment.**
- Address results of Academic Profiles with campus.

Review processes that impact enrollment growth and retention, external partnerships.

- Solidify partnerships with Macomb Community College, Mott Community College, Lansing Community College, Grand Rapids Community College, and Northwest Michigan College.
- Utilize Bus Tour opportunity for enhanced partnerships with community colleges.
- Pursue off campus opportunities in Livingston County.
- Continue work with Career Tech Centers.
- Utilize opportunities through Freedom to Learn to develop relationships with public and charter schools throughout the State.
- **Collaborate to initiate a university-wide effort to create a consistent message/identity for the institution.**
- Increase On-line courses and Distance Education.

This plan reflects the cooperative efforts of the members of the division. Much of the work over the past nine months involved enhancing and sustaining a sense of divisional identity which is reflected in these efforts.