

August 22, 2005

MEMO TO: Members of the Faculty
FROM: Cheri Jimeno, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
SUBJECT: Academic Issues

Welcome Back! I hope each of you had a great summer, and you're ready to engage in some exciting academic issues during the coming year.

Faculty/Staff Retreat

As you know, the Research and Development Committee (Lanny Wilke, Chair) planned the Wednesday sessions. Special thanks go to Lanny, Joel Brodeur, and Stacy Dolezal for their work on this project throughout the summer. Steve Jamruszka and I will also review a variety of transfer policy changes approved by the Board of Regents in May.

In Celebration of the Academy

Please mark your calendars for **Monday, September 26, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.** All faculty are invited to this event to recognize the major academic achievements of their colleagues. If you are being honored and if you have a class scheduled during this time, please be sure to bring your class with you. You just need to let me know the numbers.

Student Datebook/Handbook

The format of the student handbook was changed this year. Hopefully, you and the students will find the handbook easier to read and follow. A copy of the handbook will be in your mailbox. Students will be able to pick up the handbook (free of charge) at the Library or in the SUB. Special thanks go to Jim Potter and Bill Lanier for spending many hours on this project.

Catalog

The AY 2006 catalog is also in your mailbox. Special thanks to Shirley Shortell and Jim Potter for getting this done in a very short timeframe. We still need to make July 1 the publication date of the catalog. In order to achieve this date, the following due dates for curriculum will be strictly implemented:

December 31, 2005

All curricular items being considered for the 2006-07 catalog must be submitted to Academic Senate.

February 1, 2006

The review of all curricular items by the Curriculum Committee will be completed and forwarded to Academic Senate.

March 1, 2006

All curricular items included in the 2006-07 catalog will be voted on by the full faculty.

The above schedule means that all recommended program changes to the AY 2007 catalog must be completed during fall semester 2005. However, as soon as your

curriculum changes are approved by your Department/College, forward the curriculum changes to Academic Senate so the curriculum review process can begin.

Also, all courses that have not been taught for at least three years need to be removed from the catalog. In addition, if you haven't reviewed your course descriptions for a while, please do so. You need to make sure course descriptions accurately reflect the content of the courses.

Program Outcomes and Assessment Plans

All program outcomes and assessment plans must be completed during this academic year (AY 2006). The members of the assessment committee will be very active this year assisting faculty with this project.

Northwest Accreditation

This year, we will be putting together a variety of committees to begin work on the nine standards for our upcoming Northwest Accreditation. Please be sure to volunteer to serve on these committees.

Dr. Al Johnson from the Northwest Commission will be visiting our campus the morning of **Friday, September 9**. All Assessment Committee members should make sure they are available during this time frame to meet with Dr. Johnson.

General Education Core

Yes, we have implemented a new general education core; however, we still have much work to do. The General Education Committee (Greg Clouse, Chair) will be charged with working with the faculty to further develop assessment strategies for the core.

Program Review

The following programs need to complete a program review before the end of fall 2006:

- Community Service, BA and minor
- Graphic Design, BA and AAS
- Native American studies, minor
- Education/Social Science Broadfield (5-12 Teaching)
- Agricultural mechanics, operations, and technology (all degrees)
- Computer information systems (all degrees excluding the secondary education minor)
- Business technology (all degrees excluding the secondary education business education major and minor)
- Counselor education, M.Ed.

Please work closely with your Deans and Chairs to make sure the above is accomplished. Remember, major program changes need to be discussed and presented the spring and fall semesters before the catalog is due to be printed. So, if you are making major changes to the AY 2007 catalog, curriculum changes would be submitted during spring 2006 or fall 2006.

Level II Changes

New programs and program options must be approved by the Board of Regents. Therefore, if your department/college is bringing forward a new degree and/or option, Level II documentation must be submitted when you submit your curriculum proposal to the Curriculum Committee. See your Chairs and/or Deans for assistance for this type of documentation.

Office Hours

Make sure you list office hours on your syllabi and that you post your office hours on your office door or window. Give a copy of your schedule to your Dean, Director, and Chair; a form is attached for your convenience. You are welcome to use the attached form to develop a form of your own. Do *not* list all office hours by appointment.

Finals Week

Remember that all classes (excluding evening classes) should meet during scheduled times during finals week.

Course Scheduling

We will continue to refine one-year course schedules. In addition, we will be moving toward including the semester the course is offered within the course description listed in the catalog. This information is particularly important for students who need to take classes offered on an alternate year or a fall- or spring-only basis. We are continuing to explore the possibility of going to a 60-minute class schedule along with other types of scheduling models.

Please note that each course credit requires 15 hours of class contact time. If you do not need this type of contact time for your classes, you should consider reducing the number of credits required for the course. For example, a 3-credit course should meet for 45 hours during the semester (excluding out-of-class work and assignments). If you're finding you can cover course content in 30 contact hours, you should change the course to a 2-credit rather than a 3-credit course.

Academic Plan

The Board of Regents and the Commissioner's Office is requiring that all campuses submit a detailed academic plan by the November 2005 Board of Regents. As a result, I will be working closely with Academic Senate and the Deans and Director to complete this project by the required deadline.

Professional Development

During the coming academic year, we will continue to focus our energies on providing professional development opportunities that will improve your skills and abilities in providing online courses and also keep you up-to-date in trends and issues within higher education.

One of our priorities for the year will be to fully support the online BSN degree. We have offered parts of this degree for many years. By the beginning of fall 2006, this degree will be a fully supported online degree.

Curriculum Questions

As I review the catalog, I have some curriculum questions that I want you (the faculty) to discuss:

- 1) Why do we require 39 upper division credits in the BAS degree? Please remember that this degree is an inverted degree; hence students must come into the degree with a completed AAS degree. In addition, all bachelor degrees require completion of the general education core. If our general education core is 33 credits (and predominately lower division courses), it would make sense that the BAS degree require a maximum of 33 credits of upper division course work. I want the COTS faculty to take a close look at this requirement.
- 2) What do we have so few elective credits in most of our degrees? In addition, if we require elective credits, why do these credits have to be approved by the advisor? Should we differentiate between advisor-approved electives and *electives*?
- 3) Why do we have so few secondary education majors and/or minors? We need to review the curriculum in the secondary degrees we offer. We also need to make sure we are offering the right combination of secondary majors and minors to attract participation. And, do you realize we require 39 credits of professional education coursework for all secondary education majors and minors? This seems a little high to me – I want the content-area faculty and the education faculty to review and benchmark this area of the curriculum.
- 4) Isn't the VOED rubric dated? And, have we eliminated only offering VOED 350, 360, and 370 in the summers? We cannot require any courses in an undergraduate program that are only offered during the summer.
- 5) Instead of listing a variety of HPEA courses in the catalog, how about going with a generic HPEA 1XX course named Activity Skills (or whatever name is appropriate) with a variable credit designation? We could then eliminate the long list of activities courses (some that probably haven't been offered for years), but still offer activity courses of interest without going through the curriculum process for each individual course. For example, I would expect significant interest in a fly fishing activity course. With a change in curriculum, we could simply offer the course under the HPEA 1XX rubric. Other activity courses would follow the same venue.
- 6) Why don't we offer more certificate degree programs? High demand certificate programs (one or two semesters only) would not only fit within our mission, but also increase enrollment.

- 7) What happened to our honors program? I've asked Dean Rawn to work closely with some of you to develop a plan for an honors program that would be academically sound, fit our student's needs, and also be economically feasible.
- 8) Why don't we offer an Associate of Science degree *and* an Associate of Arts degree?
- 9) How does the curriculum required by your program benchmark with similar programs? Is your program inherently unique or should it more closely resemble similar programs? If your program is so unique, how is that uniqueness defined and assessed through your program outcomes?

Curriculum development and review is an exciting process. As professionals in our field, ongoing review should become our mantra. Deans Kegel and Rawn, Director Pappas, and I are looking forward to working with you on these venues during the coming year.