

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Item Name:** Addendum to the 2016-2017 Academic Strategic Plan for Northern Arizona University (NAU)

- Action Item
- Committee Recommendation to Full Board
- First Read of Proposed Policy Change
- Information or Discussion Item

**Issue:** Northern Arizona University asks the board to approve the addendum to its 2016-2017 Academic Strategic Plan.

**Enterprise Strategic Plan**

- Empower Student Success and Learning
- Advance Educational Attainment within Arizona
- Create New Knowledge
- Impact Arizona
- Compliance
- Real property purchase/sale/lease
- Other:

**Statutory/Policy Requirements**

ABOR Policy 2-223.A, "The Academic Strategic Plan"

**Background/History of Previous Board Action**

- NAU requests approval for one new program as described in the attached table.
- NAU requests approval for an Honors College, a progression from the Honors Program.

**Discussion**

Northern Arizona University requests approval to establish a new Honors College, transforming the current Honors Program into a living and learning community as outlined in the operating and financial review presented in September 2016.

Additionally, the university requests the addition of an Informatics, BS program to build out the programmatic and student pipeline for this critical workforce area which Northern Arizona University built into its research and doctoral programming.

Information on each request is contained in the attached tables.

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**Committee Review and Recommendation**

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee reviewed this item at its November 16, 2016 meeting and recommended forwarding the item to the full board for approval.

**Requested Action**

Northern Arizona University asks the board to approve the addendum to its 2016-2017 Academic Strategic Plan.

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Northern Arizona University  
 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

**Table 1 - Proposed New Programs**

Name of Proposed Degree (degree type and major)	College/School (location)	Program Fee Required? (Yes or No)	Additional State Funds Required? (Yes or No)	Brief Description/Justification (max 100 words)	Projected 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Enrollment & Implementation Date
Informatics, BS	College of Engineering, Forestry and Natural Sciences/School of Informatics, Computing and Cybersystems	YES \$500/yr in junior and senior years	NO	The BS in Informatics program will address national workforce needs in rapidly growing areas of data-intensive analysis and software development for engineering and scientific work. This program will build on existing coursework from computer science, mathematics, statistics, and electrical engineering, complemented by a selection of cognate emphasis areas that reflect existing and emerging areas of strength for NAU. Students will select from emphases in bioinformatics, ecological informatics and astrophysics. Undergraduate research will be required of all majors. The program is designed to leverage interdisciplinary research that supports the goals of professionals and those pursuing graduate studies.	The implementation date is Fall, 2017. In year three (FY20), we anticipate enrollment in the program will be between 50-60.

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**Northern Arizona University  
 ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS**

**Table 2 - Proposed New Academic Units**

Proposed Unit	Level (College, School, or Department)	Location (College, School, etc. where it will be located)	Brief Description/ Effective Date (max 50 words)	Justification/need (max 100 words)	New Resources, if any, and Source* Savings/Efficiencies Gained
Honors College	College	Flagstaff, AZ	<p>The Honors College will further expand upon a highly successful Honors Program through an innovative curriculum to recruit and retain top-tier students in Arizona, and an academic plan that integrates academic majors with the new Honors Capstone Pathways.</p> <p>Effective Date: Spring 2017</p>	<p>Building upon the successful Honors Program, the College is a natural progression towards increased integration with academic majors, and the introduction of a unique and exciting innovative curriculum. A distinct experiential Honors Capstone Pathways will fully integrate the student's major through internships, mentoring, and career shadowing with businesses, industry, and alumni to help them achieve academic and career goals. In addition to traditional freshman student recruitment, NAU's Honors College will build close connections between community college honors programs and will seek to be a leading Honors</p>	<p>Resource needs will be handled through internal re-allocation.</p>

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				<p>College for a diverse student population. Recruitment and retention of top-tier students meets numerous university goals beyond simply increasing the number of high achieving students at the University. Expanding a challenging curriculum for high achieving students will also promote undergraduate research, and creative activities, secure national and international scholarships and awards, and assist Arizona in providing a highly qualified workforce.</p>	
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Attachment A: Request to Establish a New Academic program requiring a Program Fee

<b>Program name/Degree:</b>	Informatics, BS				
<b>Requested by (include University, College, School, etc.)</b>	Northern Arizona University, College of Engineering, Forestry and Natural Sciences				
<b>Initial Student Enrollment (indicate per Sem/Yr)</b>	Year 1: 15 students				
<b>Level</b>	Graduate		Undergraduate <b>X</b>		
<b>CIP Code</b>	11.0104				
<b>Program Description</b>	<p>We propose a new Bachelor of Science in Informatics (BSI) program to enhance NAU's investments in building research capacity within the School of Informatics, Computing, and Cyber Systems (SICCs) which will allow the institution to broaden the impact of these investments to undergraduate students. Students will select from emphases in bioinformatics, ecological informatics and astroinformatics. Undergraduate research will be required of all majors and is designed to leverage interdisciplinary research that supports the goals of professionals and those pursuing graduate studies. After the program's initial launch, there will be further development of additional emphases in collaboration with partner units across the institution. The program is designed to provide rigorous training in computing and key application areas that center on an informatics core that consists of existing coursework from computer science, mathematics, statistics, and electrical engineering.</p>				
<b>Justification for Program (State/regional need; relationship to institutional and system strategic plans)</b>	<p>The BSI will leverage interdisciplinary research and existing resources and course offerings, thus enabling the success of this new degree program during a time of constrained resources. The program will appeal to high-achieving students which will support NAU's recruitment efforts in building an academically strong student body. Since informatics and its associated sub-disciplines of computer science and data analysis have long been identified as key areas of national workforce needs, the BSI program has the potential to make important contributions to the State and Nation's workforce demands. The BSI program will also join existing undergraduate programs in related areas in supporting ongoing efforts to grow and diversify Arizona's economy in informatics-centric areas, which have been identified as critical to the State's future.</p>				
<b>Projected Student Demand</b>	5-year projected annual enrollment				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	15	33	52	60	60

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### **Information on the creation of an NAU Honors College**

**Why does NAU want to move the Honors Program to an Honors College?** Formation of an Honors College at Northern Arizona University will enhance the visibility of the Honors experience for both internal and external audiences, attracting more students. The creation of an Honors College dovetails with NAU's mission and vision to provide an outstanding undergraduate residential education. The transition to a college is an intentional approach to immerse talented and motivated students in a challenging intellectual environment in a living-learning community.

The Honors College is not only about recruiting and retaining top students, but also about fostering their future successes. The opportunity to engage in rigorous and rewarding experiences—well beyond the standard curriculum—within a living-learning community of students, faculty, and staff will make an NAU Honors College a desirable destination for high achieving students. Recognizing that an Honors College must be founded on curricular innovation, visionary leadership, and educational excellence, the creation of a signature, state-of-the art Honors College will build on the strengths and existing infrastructure of the current Honors Program.

The signature feature of the NAU Honors College will be the “pathways” program integrated with the students' major—innovative opportunities for students to complete internships at home and abroad, gain laboratory research experience, work side by side with practitioners, alumni and professionals, conduct experiential research, create businesses, or complete scholarly or creative works.

**How many students do we anticipate enrolling in an Honors College and what is the expected growth from the current population?** We anticipate an average increase of about 125 students per year from the FY16 baseline of 1,055 resulting in a total Honors population (allowing for normal attrition) of about 1,500 by FY21.

**How does the creation of an NAU Honors College fit with the ABOR Enterprise Strategic Plan?** The creation of an Honors College is a strategy that will primarily address Goals 1 & 2 (Educate and Achieve) by promoting the highest levels of academic quality and curricular innovation. The Honors College will positively impact student success. Ninety percent of Honors program freshmen are retained at NAU, and students who enter the university in the current Honors program graduate in four years at a rate over twenty percent higher than non-honors students. The creation of a College and its innovative programs will increase the numbers of Honors Students and should also increase their high retention and graduation rates. The Honors College will also enable strong transfer student recruitment and articulation from Arizona community college honors programs, while enhancing student diversity. We expect that an Honors College will also advance educational achievement in Arizona by increasing the number of high-achieving students at NAU who, through the rigorous Honors curriculum, will be increasingly competitive for national and international scholarships and awards (e.g., Rhodes, Truman, Fulbright, and Marshall).

The Honors College would also contribute to ABOR Goals 3&4 (Discover and Impact) as the required capstone experiential pathways will lead to greater undergraduate participation in research and creative activities; the College will also enhance opportunities for students to engage directly via internships and team-based projects to help solve complex problems of economic development, healthcare, and sustainability in Arizona communities

**What increases in personnel are needed for the transition to a College and how will NAU pay for them?** Only modest increases in college staffing are required: Year 1 (FY 17), Administrative Assistant; Year 2 (FY 18), Dean, Associate Dean, and additional advisor (replacing a Director and Assistant Director); and Years 2-5 (FY 17-21), 3 non-tenure track faculty; funds for part-time faculty

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and student wages. We also plan to hire additional faculty in academic units to meet overall enrollment demand and some of these faculty will have responsibility for mentoring and teaching in the Honors College. The additional operational costs of transitioning to an Honors College would be funded through an increase in the current program fee that will be requested during the tuition and fee setting process in February 2017 and through internal reallocation of university funds, including the use of savings from the elimination of University College. Should the program fee be approved by ABOR, its implementation, coupled with the additional enrollment, will result in program fee revenues that will cover over half of anticipated increased expenses in the period FY17-FY21.

**Where will the Honors College be housed?** Many students in the current Honors Program are housed in a single dormitory with Honors learning spaces housed in other locations. As part of transitioning to an Honors College, NAU will be proposing to ABOR, through the appropriate processes, a project to create an Honors College living-learning facility with combined residence hall and learning spaces. The proposed project will be in partnership with a third party to optimize the use of limited university resources.