

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**Item Name:** 2013-2014 Academic Strategic Plan for Northern Arizona University

Action Item       Discussion Item       Information Item

<b>Issue:</b> The Committee is asked to review and approve the 2013-2014 Academic Strategic Plan for Northern Arizona University.
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### Background

ABOR Policy 2-223.A requires each university to submit an annual Academic Strategic Plan to the Academic Affairs Committee for approval. The Plan is intended to provide information on the key academic initiatives planned by the institution and describe how they support both the University's strategic plan and the system-wide strategic plan of the Arizona Board of Regents.

### Statutory/Policy Requirements

ABOR Policy 2-223.A – The Academic Strategic Plan

### Strategic Implications

The Academic Strategic Plan serves as a primary mechanism by which the Board provides oversight and direction for the academic initiatives and academic mission of each university.

### Discussion

The 2013-2014 Academic Strategic Plan from Northern Arizona University includes a discussion of current initiatives to improve student learning and educational attainment, and requests for new academic programs.

### Outline of Academic Strategic Plan

The Academic Strategic Plan for NAU includes the following requests and information:

#### Part I. Narrative Overview

- Overview of Initiatives to Improve Learning and Educational Attainment
- Academic Programs and Organizational Unit Overview
- Academic Programs that will require program fees

#### Part II. Academic Programs

- New Academic Programs
- Changes in Academic Programs

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Part III. Academic Units – none submitted at this time

- Academic Units may be modified on an addendum to the Academic Strategic Plan at a subsequent Academic Affairs Committee meeting.
- Upon approval by the Committee, most proposals listed on the Plan may be implemented without further review or action.
- Academic programs that will be funded with additional state funds or programs fees require additional approval by the Academic Affairs Committee before they may be implemented or enroll new students. Requests may be submitted either concurrently with the Academic Strategic Plan or at a subsequent meeting. Approval of the program by the AAC does not constitute approval of program fees; that occurs during the Board's regular fee setting process.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Academic Affairs Committee review and approve the 2013-2014 Academic Strategic Plan for Northern Arizona University.

**Northern Arizona University  
Academic Strategic Plan 2013-2014**

**Narrative Overview**

**Part I: Narrative Overview**

**A. Overview of Initiatives to Improve Learning and Educational Attainment**

- i. In 2010-2011, Northern Arizona University launched a comprehensive curricular reform initiative to streamline and simplify student pathways to completion: numerous deletions of degrees, minors, and emphases within degree programs were achieved through this initiative to reshape NAU's program portfolio to align with strategic goals and fiscal constraints. Reductions and streamlining of course requirements within some majors were also accomplished. The university continues to pursue opportunities for the simplification of curricula as a rigorous framework of intentional curricular design, and mapping is pursued (including university-wide commitment to the description and assessment of learning outcomes at course, program and university levels).
- ii. Also in 2010-11, the university launched an effort in redesigning key "gatekeeper" courses and tracking student success in those courses. The First Year Learning Initiative (FYLI) focuses on explicit design of 100-level courses to structure student activities, timing of assessments, and other best-practice course design elements to improve student learning and success. The program has achieved significant improvement in student success for many key courses, and is being expanded to 200-level courses in the near future. The focus on student success has expanded more recently to include both the President's Technology Initiative and the establishment of the University College (see below).
- iii. President's Technology Initiative: We are now in our third round of competitive proposals being sought from departments seeking to redesign large-enrollment, multi-section courses to incorporate the use of innovative technologies for improving student learning and reducing instructional costs. The program aims to increase our capacity to accommodate growing enrollments and to increase student learning (and builds upon more than 5 years of previous experience in using technology to increase student learning in selected courses). To date 9 courses have been selected for investment, and the first cohort of courses has been piloted and is currently under revision for continued improvement. The Lumberjack Mathematics Center continues to add key mathematics courses to its portfolio and to refine the design and implementation of adaptive, assessment based models for lower-division mathematics courses that have been identified as important elements of student success.

- iv. ePlanning: Academic Affairs has collaborated with Information Technology Services to develop a web-based planning and advising framework built upon our PeopleSoft student information system. The system continues to be refined and improved as we adapt best practices in advising and communication to NAU's students and their patterns of preparation and decision-making.
- v. University College: The University College officially began operations in summer 2012. UC faculty and staff promote achievement through a full range of services and programs to enhance undergraduate education on the Flagstaff campus, with an emphasis on the first-year of college as a foundation for student achievement and successful degree completion. UC programs include academic transition programs, success coaching, academic advising and career services at multiple levels, course linked academic support and First Year Seminars. UC also supports civic engagement, the university's Liberal Studies program, and the Bachelor of University Studies.
- vi. Extended Campuses
  - a. Extended Campuses' Personalized Learning (PL) effort was established in 2012 to use cutting edge technology and new pedagogies to increase the number of students earning degrees and to maximize their learning as they progress toward graduation. The results of intensive assessment of learning outcomes are reported to faculty and students in near real time; faculty then revise materials to further augment student learning. PL degrees will be launched in Spring 2013 pending HLC approval.
  - b. Extended Campuses has reorganized student services and advising to improve student's interactions with their community campuses and faculty.

## **B. Academic Programs and Organization Unit Overview**

- i. On the Flagstaff campus we are proposing a new degree program in the College of Health and Human Services, the M.S. in Athletic Training. This program recognizes that Athletic Training as a discipline increasingly requires a master's degree as an entry-level credential. The university's successful track record in recruiting students to (and graduating students from) the existing baccalaureate program provides the foundation for a master's level degree. The university proposes to eliminate the B.S. in Athletic Training as current students complete their degrees, in order to move to the new M.S. A program fee has been requested for the new program, to cover the expense of expanded research opportunities and clinical experience for students at the master's level. Cohort size will be increased for this program (from 24 to 30) with the move to the master's level.
- ii. Extended Campuses has been changing its reliance on the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies to other, more easily recognized, kinds of bachelor's degrees. Community college partners have informed NAU that students prefer



traditional bachelor's degrees to degrees in interdisciplinary studies with attendant specializations. EC advisors confirm this information.

Extended Campuses has offered degrees in public administration for many years. To help students earn the degrees that work best for them, the public administration major will be offered as a BA and a BS. EC has also added a BA and BS in justice studies; the new justice studies major offers more theory than that in public administration. Students who are interested in working for public and non-profit agencies will continue to choose public administration; those who are more interested in working in corrections and in attending graduate or law school will choose justice studies. Students are offered the option of either a BA or a BS in order to maximize their use of transfer credit. Offering these options is expected to increase enrollment and degree attainment.

Psychology and Sociology are attractive majors to many students. EC students need majors that dovetail with community college requirements; the new psychological sciences and sociology studies majors are built using courses with pre-requisites found at Arizona community colleges. The degree titles (Bachelor Degrees in Psychological Sciences and in Sociology Studies) have been selected to clearly differentiate between Flagstaff campus degrees and Extended Campus degrees, to minimize student confusion. Rather than offering BA and BS alternatives, the Bachelor degrees will offer two tracks allowing students to maximize their transfer credits - one with a modern language requirement and the other with a science requirement. The new majors in psychological sciences and sociological studies are specifically designed to work seamlessly with community colleges' course offerings so that students may graduate with as close to 120 credit hours as possible. Offering these majors as bachelor's degrees will increase student degree attainment.

NAU-Yuma is adding two new education majors in secondary education, one in biology and the other in physical science, because NAU-Yuma has been unable to meet recent demands for teachers in these important areas through existing offerings. The majors will create secondary teachers in biology, chemistry, math and science. Only the BS is being offered for these majors to maximize the number of science credits that these students take during their undergraduate careers. The new secondary education degrees developed and delivered at NAU-Yuma will increase the number of STEM teachers produced in Yuma, with the objective of thereby increasing, over time, the number of high school students attending institutions of higher education.

EC originally submitted three degrees from Personalized Learning (PL) with the addendum to the NAU 2012-2013 Academic Strategic Plan presented July 30, 2012. At that time, EC requested BBA's in computer information technology and small business administration. It turned out that offering BBA's in these disciplines would be detrimental to the BBA program and its degrees due to external accreditation policies. Consequently, EC determined that offering these

majors as BA's and BS's was the more prudent option. In addition to the previously approved BA in liberal arts, PL is adding a BS. In order to maximize transfer credits for students entering PL, EC has decided to offer students both degrees so students with the required amount of language can choose the BA and those with the required amount of science can choose the BS.

**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
Athletic Training, MS	College of Health and Human Services	Yes	No	The NAU Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training is a very successful degree. However the profession is moving toward entry-level at the master's degree. The new master's degree in Athletic Training will continue to prepare students to take the National Board of Certification exam for Athletic Training and therefore continue to fill the need in Arizona for Athletic Trainers. The graduate program will offer a much greater emphasis in research and clinical practice.	60 Fall 2014
Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science -Public Administration	NAU Extended Campuses	No	No	This new plan meets student demand, and has been created in response to feedback from our community college partners. The community colleges indicated that their students prefer the BA/BS degrees in comparison to our existing BIS standard transfer degree. We have been asked by our community college partners to offer a BA/BS degree in Public Administration so they can market this degree to their students. This new plan will extend and enhance NAU's statewide presence	125 Fall 2013
Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science -Justice Studies	NAU Extended Campuses	No	No	The need for the plan was determined by seeking feedback from law enforcement agencies in the valley, the military, community colleges throughout the state, areas coordinators, and prospective students. These stakeholders advised that criminal justice organizations are looking for employees with specific skills: leadership, ethics, communications, cultural diversity, an understanding of the court system and laws, research methods, an knowledge of justice theories, and laws governing juvenile offenders	200 Fall 2013

Bachelor of Psychological Sciences	NAU Extended Campuses	No	No	<p>Psychology is one of the most popular degrees offered at any institution of higher education. It is also one of the most flexible in terms of both course offerings and potential job opportunities. The degree is valued both because of the specific nature of the courses core to the discipline and because it offers a well-rounded liberal studies foundation.</p> <p>Off-campus students need courses offered via the web, on weekends, evening and in short time blocks. Offering a degree that offers 100 percent of the courses needed for graduation in all of the available modalities is a plus.</p>	230 Fall 2013
Bachelor of Sociological Studies	NAU Extended Campuses	No	No	<p>This plan is proposed as part of the four-year experience by building on the partnership with community colleges in the Lower Colorado River region. It extends and enhances NAU's statewide presence. The proposed major has been developed in a logical progression from emphasis to specialization to major. This plan meets student demand in the wake of elimination of the previously offered emphasis.</p> <p>Additionally, as the Yuma Branch Campus prepares to meet the growing professional needs of its demographic region it is essential that it continue to develop its own programs of delivery.</p>	175 Fall 2013
Bachelor of Science in Education – Secondary Education -Biology NAU-Yuma	NAU Extended Campuses	No	No	<p>NAU-Yuma has been unable to meet the demands for Biology teachers in the Yuma County schools. Yuma residents interested in pursuing a career as Biology teachers have been thwarted without the bachelor program offered locally. Offering this program in Yuma contributes to the vitality and growth of our community.</p> <p>This program has been designed with intent to submit an Application for Independent Program Approval Status to the Arizona Department of Education which, if approved, will allow the NAU-Yuma Education Department to issue its own Institutional Recommendation for Teacher Certification.</p>	45 Fall 2013



<p>Bachelor of Science in Education – Secondary Education - Physical Science – NAU-Yuma</p>	<p>NAU Extended Campuses</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>NAU-Yuma has been unable to meet the demands for chemistry, math and sciences teachers in the Yuma County schools. Yuma residents interested in pursuing a career as science teachers have been thwarted without the bachelor program offered locally. Offering this program in Yuma contributes to the vitality and growth of our community.</p> <p>This program has been designed with intent to submit an Application for Independent Program Approval Status to the Arizona Department of Education which, if approved, will allow the NAU-Yuma Education Department to issue its own Institutional Recommendation for Teacher Certification.</p>	<p>45 Fall 2013</p>
<p>Bachelor of Arts                  Bachelor of Science in                  Computer Information                  Technology</p>	<p>NAU Extended Campuses</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>This degree will help to fill the current IT skills gap. Combining the latest technology and pedagogy, the major in Computer Information Technology gives students an in-depth education that is built around work place competencies. This major will provide students with sufficient knowledge to begin careers or advance current careers in the areas of Business Analyst, Programmer, Systems Administrator, Database Administrator, and Web Developer of Project Manage. The program is designed to provide the foundational skills for continuous learning. Students will also augment their IT skills with the social, verbal and intercultural business skills demanded by today's work environments. This degree is part of the Personalized Learning program previously presented and approved. The degrees will be delivered completely online.</p>	<p>450 May 2013</p>

<p>Bachelor of Arts                  Bachelor of Science in Small Business Administration</p>	<p>NAU Extended Campuses</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>NAU-funded research shows that the Phoenix metropolitan area has need of skilled professional in business-related fields. On-line degrees in business are those highest in demand by students. The major in Small Business Administration gives student a broad general education that is built around competencies entrepreneurs and those who work with them most need. SBA students will participate in internships and mentoring programs. Capstone experience includes the completion of a business plan. This major fulfills Extended Campuses' Work Force and Access missions. This degree is part of the Personalized Learning program previously presented and approved. The degrees will be delivered completely online.</p>	<p>500                  May 2013</p>
<p>Bachelor of Arts                  Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts</p>	<p>NAU Extended Campuses</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The major in Liberal Arts gives students a broad general education that is built around work place competencies. A student majoring in Liberal Arts through the Personal Learning Division will study broadly from history, philosophy, literature and the arts. The student will learn how to analyze, interpret and evaluate important cultural artifacts of diverse cultures. The program is competency based with the core competencies chosen from the qualities that employers say they value most, including communicating well with diverse populations, solving complex problems, analyzing complicated materials and writing and presenting well that analysis. This degree is part of the Personalized Learning program previously presented and approved. The degree will be delivered completely online.</p>	<p>300                  May 2013</p>

**Table 2 - High Demand Programs Proposed for Elimination**

Unit	Requested Action	Justification/Brief Description of the proposed action (max 100 words)	Impact on Current Students (max 50 words)	Expected fiscal impact
College of Health and Human Services	Eliminate BS in Athletic Training	The profession is moving towards entry-level preparation being at the master's degree level. Rather than wait until this is mandated, we are proposing the creation of the master's program and the elimination of the bachelor's program. The current bachelor's degree program will be phased out with one year of overlap with the first master's degree class.	There is no foreseeable impact on any other programs at NAU. We will require the same pre-requisite courses for application to the master's degree that we currently require as part of our bachelor's degree, with the addition of a statistics course. Thus, the impact on other courses/programs should be minimal.	None

