

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST



August 9, 2022 (revised list of Academic Leaders, 8/10/22)

Dear Faculty,

Mid-summer greetings! Along with teaching, scholarship and creative endeavors, and (for many areas) ongoing efforts to hire faculty, I hope you have had or will have opportunity for rest and rejuvenation. Special thanks to those of you who are engaged in faculty or other searches that either extended into or were initiated over the summer.

As we transition to the new academic year, I want to inform you about new leadership for academic units, support for teaching larger course sections, the implementation of the General Studies program, and highlights of Global Affairs efforts. As we get closer to the start of the Fall term, I will communicate further about academic affairs activities in support of the [Elevating Excellence](#) plan.

Welcoming New Academic Leaders

I welcome and introduce you to our new academic leaders—associate deans, chairs and directors.

College of Arts and Letters

Alexandra Carpino, Interim Associate Dean
Astrid Klocke, Interim Director, School of Art
Luke Maring, Chair, Philosophy
Angie Hansen, Chair, English

College of the Environment, Forestry and Natural Sciences

Clare Aslan, Director, School of Earth and Sustainability
Tinna Traustadottir, Chair, Biological Sciences

College of Engineering, Informatics and Applied Sciences

Viacheslav “Slava” Fofanov, School of Informatics, Computing and Cyber Systems

College of Health and Human Services

Laura Umphrey, Associate Dean
Oaklee Rogers, Assistant Dean
Alison Essary, Chair, Physician Assistant Studies
Amy Armstrong-Heimsoth, Occupational Therapy
Matthew Ford, Chair, Physical Therapy & Athletic Training

College of Education

Donelle Ruwe, Associate Dean

Franke College of Business

Eric Yordy, Chair, Econ, ACC, Fin Mgt

Gavin Zhang, Chair, Marketing, ISM, Management

Graduate College

Laura Bounds, Associate Dean

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

T. Mark Montoya, Associate Dean

Meredith Heller, Assistant Dean

Christopher Jocks, Chair, Applied Indigenous Studies

Ann Huffman, Chair, Psychological Sciences

Jose Moreno, Interim Director, Ethnic Studies

Jerry Thull, Interim Director, School of Communication

Army ROTC

Lt Col James Battle

Air Force ROTC

Lt Col Matthew Stampher

Announcing the Enrollment-based Class Support program

Funded through the Office of the Provost and aimed to provide additional support to academic units, the Enrollment-based Class Support (EBCS) program for academic year 2022-2023 will help ensure that faculty are better able to implement best-practices that foster student learning and success in classes with high enrollment.

All classes with an enrollment cap of 60 or higher with a Liberal Studies designation are eligible for support under the EBCS program—there's no need to apply or request support under this program. By dean request to the Vice Provost for Academic Operations, classes that are below but near the enrollment threshold may also be eligible for support.

The EBCS program will fund student hourly wages to support faculty needs (e.g., assignment grading, class logistics, in-class activities). Eligible classes receive a base level of support of approximately 75 hours with an additional 30 hours of support for each full increment of 60 above the base eligibility cap.

Classes receiving EBCS support are expected to deploy the following best-practices in fostering student engagement and learning:

- Collecting attendance during each class session and using attendance information to inform and shape student outreach through F2S (<https://in.nau.edu/f2s-outreach/>);
- Submitting midterm class grades prior to the midterm grade submission deadline, as published by the Office of the Registrar;
- Maintaining an accessible and up-to-date gradebook on BbLearn that students are able to use to continually assess their class performance;

- Using the course syllabus to communicate relevant resources from the Guide to Student Resources (<https://in.nau.edu/office-of-student-affairs/guide-to-student-resources/>) and lay out clear expectations for the investment of time necessary for students to be successful in the class;
- Incentivizing co- and extra-curricular activities relevant to the class content (e.g., student club, department, and community events);
- Integrating student prior-knowledge assessments for courses that have prerequisites; and,
- Leveraging low/no-stakes assessments to maintain student engagement and provide opportunities for formative feedback (e.g., assigned reading quizzes, learning journals, discussion board posts).

The Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Operations will make arrangements on logistics with academic deans, with academic units leading efforts to screen and identify qualified student employees as part of this program.

NAU's General Studies Curriculum Implementation

As we redouble our efforts to ensure that NAU is truly an engine of opportunity for all, powering the postgraduate success of our students through impactful academic programs and robust student support, I am pleased to share program information and an update on the work we are doing to implement the **General Studies program**. General Studies will be central to the academic excellence of the undergraduate experience at NAU.

NAU's new General Studies program was designed by our faculty following a review of the Liberal Studies program. General Studies is a distinctive NAU curriculum, which aligns with ABOR policy on general education. Our program was approved by the Board of Regents in Fall 2021. Following ABOR's approval we have moved into the extensive process of setting the foundation for implementation of the program in Fall 2024. This is a broad based, collaborative effort of faculty, staff and academic leaders. Emily Manone serves as Director of the General Studies program. The General Studies and Diversity Curriculum Committees are working behind the scenes to support development and approval of courses.

At its core, the new General Studies program ensures that all NAU undergraduates will have a depth and breadth of essential skills and habits of the mind crucial to lifelong personal and professional success, such as communication, quantitative reasoning, civics knowledge, problem solving, teamwork, intercultural competencies, and the application of diverse ideas and perspectives to real-world situations. The program builds on design elements in the current Liberal Studies program to provide a distinctive, articulated learning experience that prepares students to engage with the contemporary world as professionals and citizens.

Program Overview:

Broadly speaking, the General Studies program at NAU is structured as follows:

- **34 units of required coursework** Students will choose 11 courses from a large selection in the following areas:
 - **Foundations**, consisting of Mathematics and English
 - **Knowledge Areas**, consisting of American Institutions, Social and Political Worlds, Scientific Literacy and Scientific Methods, and Arts and Humanities

- **Diversity Perspectives** (embedded into the knowledge areas), consisting of Global Diversity, Indigenous Peoples, Intersectional Identities, and U.S. Ethnic Diversity

Importantly, the General Studies requirements complement and enhance the students' major area of study, to develop essential skills, such as application of knowledge; civil discourse through writing, speaking, and collaboration; and discipline-focused ethics. Up to 9 units of knowledge areas can overlap with a student's major, supporting streamlined course selection while also ensuring a breadth of knowledge areas and perspectives outside of the major. Similarly, the four Diversity Perspectives are designed not to be standalone courses, but rather be integrated perspectives that are linked to knowledge areas, such as Arts and Humanities courses with Indigenous Peoples perspectives. The inclusion of Diversity Perspectives is closely aligned with the overall goal of the General Studies to prepare students for the complexities of the 21st century by equipping students with a broad understanding of peoples and cultures throughout the U.S. and around the world.

Finally, reflecting the wide range of disciplinary backgrounds and scholarly interest of NAU's faculty, we will have a broad course catalog for students to choose from in meeting these requirements, so that each student's experience is individualized while achieving the overall learning outcomes of the General Studies program. We expect and encourage students to engage with challenging topics and a wide range of perspectives through this coursework. Over the last year we have recruited many new faculty who will be contributing to the General Studies program and other learning opportunities for our students. I am excited to see how we will build on the strong foundation of NAU's current Liberal Studies core requirements and implement an enhanced General Studies program aligned with our educational mission, vision, and goals.

In the coming months implementation of the General Studies program:

- Review of courses submitted for program requirement designations to be completed by January 2023.
- Continue to build capacity through faculty development, alignment of hiring priorities, course design and course schedule planning.
- Implementation for new students is slated for Fall 2024.

Thank you to the faculty leaders, curriculum and assessment staff, and academic leaders for their concerted efforts to ensure that the rollout of the General Studies program is successful. Please look for more information about support for and implementation of the program in the near future.

Global Affairs Highlights

Dr. Yimin Wang joined NAU as the Vice Provost for Global Affairs in July. During her first month with NAU, she has been making the rounds with Deans and working closely with her team in the Center for International Education (CIE) to build on NAU's legacy of strong international engagement. Look for communication (or an invitation to collaborate) from Dr. Wang in the Fall term. In the meantime, we share some highlights:

1. In Fall 2022, NAU will welcome new international students from at least 37 countries.
2. NAU established a 4+0 Joint Institute with Shanghai Normal University Tianhua College. 200 students in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education are preparing to

start this dual-degree program Fall 2022 in Shanghai with selected courses taught by NAU faculty.

3. NAU is currently #10 in the nation for long term study abroad (Source: [Open Doors Data](#)).
4. NAU recently received a [U.S. Department of State IDEAS \(Increase and Diversify Education Abroad for U.S. Students\)](#) grant to support student accessibility to study in our inaugural [South America NAU](#) Spring 2023 program.

Prestigious National Awards for NAU Students

Our National & International Scholarships & Fellowships program in the Honors College announced the following prestigious awards to NAU students:

- Fulbright US Student Program, Study/Research in Linguistics – Marcella Caprario, NAU PhD student in Linguistics
- Udall Undergraduate Scholarship, Native American Health – Beyonce Bahe, NAU Honors and the Interdisciplinary Global Program (IGP) student in Biomedical Science/Comparative Cultural Studies and Japanese
- Cobell Undergraduate Scholarship – Olivia Konig, NAU Honors student in International Affairs and Japanese
- North American Language and Culture Assistants Program (NALCAP), English Teaching Assistantship – Lauren Jurschak, NAU Honors Alumna May 2022, BAs in Psychological Sciences/Spanish and minor in Social Work

Achievements like these are representative of the many accomplishments of our students, who are mentored and supported by devoted faculty and staff. My appreciation goes to all who invest in the learning and development of students for a wide range of accomplishments.

Best,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Karen".