



Strategic Priorities – Feedback Sessions – Comments

Executive Summary

Providing an opportunity to discuss university's strategic priorities for fiscal year 2009, the Strategic Planning Council facilitated nine in-person forums in February and March, 2008. In addition, an opportunity to review the priorities and to submit comments online was available as well. Participating students, faculty, and staff expressed appreciation for inclusion in the planning process.

All five priorities—faculty and staff salaries, facilities, health care education, distance learning initiatives, and education in the STEM fields—were recognized by the participants as relevant and important.

Two of these priorities—faculty and staff salaries and Flagstaff campus facilities—generated most comments. In addition to the expected salary-related concerns, such as the implications of high cost of living and below the market salary levels, a few notable issues have appeared:

- Internal equity concerns for existing senior staff members as a result of hiring new employees at salaries closer to the market level.
- Inability to offer higher salaries to fill soft-money-funded and therefore less secure positions to avoid equity issues with existing state lines.
- Different nature of recruiting issues to fill statewide positions in rural and urban areas—while the urban campuses struggle with hiring new employees because of uncompetitive salaries, for the rural sites, the challenge lies in locally available shrinking pool of qualified candidates.

The comments related to facilities reiterated some of the well-known challenges and interests, including inadequate instructional and office spaces and an interest in faculty/staff housing and an on-campus child care center.

Interestingly, the students brought up three of the four priorities identified at the recent leadership day: library acquisitions, graduate student waivers, and improvements of the campus facilities.

Some of the participants recommended that private-public partnerships are explored as a means to diversify university's funding, to pursue projects that are unlikely to be funded by state, and to provide more internship opportunities for students.

Overall, the discussions were very lively and constructive. However, the communication efforts promoting the sessions should be reviewed. Base on the last two years of the Council's outreach efforts, the communication coming from the VPs to their relevant constituents appears to be most effective.

Individual comments (E-mail/online):

- I am on sabbatical and won't be in the US to attend any of the strategic planning sessions. Overall, the goals seem good, but I wonder whether we should make some point about fostering connections with the local community. Growing to 35 k students by 2020 is a big change, and will have quite an impact on the Flagstaff community (even if some of the growth occurs away from the Mountain Campus). We will want to make sure that the average Flagstaffian benefits from this, or we may be setting up some nasty town-gown problems for us in the future.
- I understand that the strategy is only for the big-money initiatives. Still, I wonder if there is some tiny indication of "benign intent/willingness to cooperate" we can put in the strategy and requests for funds, though, so that no one in Flagstaff starts a movement against NAU growing and changing. I guess what I am worried about is a misconception that NAU will run roughshod over the city - I have heard this from non-NAU 'townies' before, and it has happened at other universities, and I would hate for it to become some issue at the state level. An apparent division would be a catastrophe for us moving forward. Heck, there are things I don't like about the changes NAU is making, but I also recognize that they are on the whole good (and no one has ever elected me emperor!).
- I read the article in InsideNAU about priorities and it gave your name for suggestions. Although my kids are past the age where it would matter, I really think NAU should have an on-campus daycare center for pre-school age kids. There have been a number of attempts over the 10 years I've worked here to get something going, but they always fall short. It would be great for the morale of all NAU staff, student and faculty parents of young children. It would solve the staffing problems that occur when NAU and FUSD schedules don't align. It would get people to work faster and reduce stress levels for parents when kids get sick during the day. It would also be a powerful recruiting tool when other incentives are not possible. There are some great model programs...for example, University of California, Irvine has an excellent system in place. This can only happen if the administrators consider it a priority.
- As a classified staff member, I would say that salaries should be an absolute priority. I am one who came to NAU for school, and continued to live in Flagstaff after graduating. The cost of living is so over the top here, that it would be almost impossible to live singly on the NAU salary I receive. Also, I was hired 8 days after the cutoff for the increase given in July 2007, and thus desperately need something to offset even the gas costs here in AZ. As an admissions counselor, I think the recruiting strategies we have in place are working. I think it would be wise to demonstrate commitment to the employees by giving them something to boost their morale.
- The strategic priorities document makes an excellent case for addressing faculty and staff salary equity issues. Despite strong efforts to bring salaries up, NAU still ranks depressingly low compared to our peer institutions, especially given the high cost of living. This affects soft-money positions, and puts me in the position of having to

offer low, non-competitive salaries to people I fund from grants (i.e., not affected by state allocations), just because state lines are low. There should be a mechanism to keep our soft-money lines well paid, given that such jobs are less secure, and that they're not affected by state allocations. A separate salary scale for such jobs could address this issue.

- In the section about economic development, workforce education, and research, details were provided only about workforce education, emphasizing teacher training. We need more strategy here! Economic development and research should highlight our strengths in biotechnology and green technology (renewables), among many other things where NAU has strengths in research and economic development. Finally, I think these are really important issues, and I am glad the provost's office organized roundtable discussions to discuss them today. I don't know why I received an email invitation to these discussions after one of them - the one I could conceivably have fit into my schedule - had already occurred, and only 30 minutes before the other was to begin. This was a disappointing effort to solicit faculty input.
- I am new faculty in Chemistry, and my office and classrooms I teach in are in Building 20. I think we need to think seriously about upgrading facilities, especially in Building 20 and other buildings/wings of this age and condition. I've heard student complaints from my first day on campus about the sad state of our classrooms, the dearth of classroom technology, and the condition of our office space. In fact, a student this semester walked in to my neat, clean, but small, old and dingy office last month and said, "This is your office? They really need to be treating you guys better." This sentiment is going to be common with prospective and new students, who may decide not to come or stay at NAU because of the terrible state of our classrooms. In addition, I am enthusiastic about incorporating technology in the classroom (clickers, use of computer animations, and other items that require no more than a computer and digital projector), but the rooms I teach in are all but hostile to my efforts.
- The N.A.U. mountain campus is undergoing rapid development within its infrastructure, including new buildings, new pathways for transit and pedestrian access, and new learning spaces. N.A.U. has developed a reputation for building sustainably, and this is an open door to developing and building inclusively. Inclusive, human-centered design recognizes the diversity of users who will access our buildings and programs now and in the future. Inclusive design, sometimes known as universal design, focuses on equitable and flexible usability for students, staff, faculty, and all other members of the university community, to ensure that all have a meaningful and profitable experience, without feeling marginalized or discounted. I would like to see N.A.U. make an explicit commitment to this end.
- Item #3: Healthcare Education for Arizona. A minor change under "Strategies". "Rehabilitation Services" no longer exists. Two departments were created 7/1/08, 1)Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training and 2)Department of Communications Sciences and Disorders. Thank you,

- I have been hearing quite a bit about global engagement, but I didn't see much focused on those issues. Is there a particular reason?
- Yes, budgets are key. I think these 2009 Priorities make specific sense. Some general principles / values that I would promote while moving ahead:
 1. Not asking staff to do more with the same or less resources. For every new and/or additional project put upon staff, find some task or duty to reduce or eliminate.
 2. Put resources and emphases on quality of care - especially mental and physical health care of our staff, faculty, and students. In this post-Virginia Tech world, "security" is important, but actually providing the strong safety net of health services to help those in need will go much further.
 3. Enhancing inclusion and diversity. Our strength as a university, a community, and nation are directly tied to how we treat people. We need to build, teach, and behave inclusively - through the use of Universal Design principles, as well as policies and practices that promote inclusion.
- Thanks for INCLUDING our voices in this planning!
- NAU ranks 1st in the nation for graduating Native Americans with Masters' in Education. In accord with Goal 6 we need to support rural faculty lines, academic support and student services in rural Native American communities.

Student session – 2/20

- Housing issue
- Extension of the University Union – lost meeting and open space
- I love the CBA building
- Facilities are important, quality, mechanical issues—search private funding
- Parking on the north campus is problematic
- Limit traffic on campus
- Graduate assistantships—waivers; grad. Students have a great influence on the undergraduate teaching and learning
- Enable payroll deduction for graduate students
- More opportunities for internships
- Support library services
- Provide cheaper, healthier food
- The issue with the text books is ridiculous in the US
- Limited outdoor opportunities on the campus for basketball, beach volleyball

Roundtable – 2/26

- Does the deficit mean we are not going to invest in strategic initiatives?
- The enrollment growth presents challenge—operational, academic programming
- We need to keep momentum
- Endowment, planning—misleading like \$2.4

- Retention—underprepared;
- 2.4—innovation—Friedman—
- Diversifying revenue streams—too dependable on legislature, increased enrollment may not really mean more money
- Extremely important is economic development
- Service important—consulting, working with partners,
- Graduate educations
- Brain drain—not able to find jobs locally
- City of Flagstaff—need for technical education
- Publicize connection between NAU and public schools; science fairs
- Your educational and economic development partner—slogan
- What relationship does NAU have with secondary schools—many relationships, not really partnerships
- Partnerships, university as business, be responsible for our own fiscal well being.

Roundtables – 2/27

2:00pm – Economic Development/Research/STEM

- Student teaching—difficult to get through financially
- Because of the system a lot of students don't know what to do, don't have guidance
- Recruitment doesn't go to the underrepresented communities; they don't send people who can relate to the kids
- NAU—personal experience sold NAU to this Hispanic former student; 2004
- Trained teachers many times working as sales force trainers
- In Mexico: help teachers buy houses
- More partnerships for internships with the City, local businesses
- Actions NAU takes affects neighborhoods
- For example welcome week: big loud concert announced but not invited; location: impacted
- Teachers are prep-workers; they are no longer teaching, they are preparing for the tests
- Canada—competitive positions—teaching
- Freedom and structure
- Standardize curriculum at least in STEM fields;
- What schools are left behind when we recruit?
- Planning/zoning commission about the shelter: business owners said very bad things about the homeless people—
- Students from different backgrounds, population (Navajo) needs to be reached
- Show positive stories; better recognition
- Counting brown faces...not even support for minority students
- Support from NAU for minority events
- NAU needs to reach out in community
- Ethnic students tend to gather together to feel safe; how can we encourage people to mix

- Promote NAU Latino culture—early days athletes, faculty
- Chicano Studies—ASU is transforming the program; we should embrace the program and start it here at NAU
- Look at SBDC in Flagstaff; do something like that at NAU

3:30pm - Economic Development/Research/STEM

- Low level of support for public education: 39th in the nation
- Opportunities for STEM greater than before; not many think about entering teaching
- Differentiating pay: science and math to be paid more
- Secondary teachers: subject matters focused
- Very low numbers in math teachers graduation
- Challenge – high poverty areas
- Types of counseling and guidance are important: cc track, university
- Advisement is a big problem in high schools; teachers have greater impact on where the students go than advisors—reaching out to our teachers/alumni: leveraging the alumni pool who already have affinity to NAU
- Maricopa has 52 school districts, hard to reach by district by easy go to teachers...

2:00pm – Facilities

Participants had questions about

- Planning process
- Potential new buildings
- What would happen to buildings vacated by departments moving to new buildings i.e. counseling and testing, health center
- What happened to the monument planned for the entrance to campus
- Why is there a fence in front of the current signage on the off ramp to McConnell
- What happened to the faculty staff housing project

Comments

- Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to voice an opinion
- The facility that the police are currently in is awful they need a better and more visible space
- We need a child care facility
- Parking and traffic need more study and a better solution

3:30pm – Facilities

Questions

- Are computer labs considered part of facilities?
- What are the current building priorities
- Who is responsible for buildings example used was Rolle...how do you know if it is a state building or other wise
- Will the current band width be impacted by the new buildings going online
- Is there a possibility of getting chilled air in the DuBoise center

Comments

- It is important to involve the staff in this process sometimes I really feel out of the loop
- Need more communication to the campus community regarding all the construction projects

Faculty and Staff Salaries

- Staff raised the concern about salary compression and that it is unfair. The staff felt that years of service and internal equity of the other staff members should be considered when a new person is hired.
- Living expenses are increasing however due to state financial issues a raise is unlikely. Each year parking, health insurance, and retirement increases but the pay does not go up. The turnover because of this brings huge stress to others because departments are constantly under staffed.
- Recruiting diverse staff is very difficult because the salaries are often less than they are currently making. Cost of living compared to our salaries is unreasonable.
- There are more benefits to increasing salaries through reduced turnover and less burnout.
- The hours I am asked to work are unreasonable as an exempt employee.
- Recognition is not forthcoming. More recognition would help.
- Because my salary has not increased but my cost of living has I have had to get an additional job.
- Lecturers at ASU are making more than faculty at NAU.
- It is difficult to see so many buildings going up when salaries can't keep up.

Health Care for Arizona

- The commitment to the Health and Human Services college is great. NAU leadership is committed and on board with the college's vision. The new Dean is excellent.
- Maybe clinical lab science should be considered as a program offered by NAU because the state has such a shortage. ASU wants to give this program to NAU. The need five years down the road will not be for hospital based clinical lab scientists but places like T-Gen and Bioscience facilities will really need individuals with these skills.
- The allied health professions program with the UA effort in Phoenix is really positive.
- What more could we bring to Native Americans? American Indian federal funding for health care just increased. Could we talk with IHS to get more information? We certainly do a lot with nursing, dental hygiene, nutrition science.
- There may be additional opportunities for nutritional science.
- There is a need for public health programs at NAU. However, we may need to start with a few programs and do them very well.

YUMA Session -2/28

- Need help and support

- How greater enrollment will result in additional resources?
- Yuma needs enrollment growth while some Flagstaff's programs are running at maximum capacity
- Recruitment is a different animal in Yuma; a small group goes to ASU, UA but kids don't realize they need to go to college and not just to buy a new truck. Degrees will not rust like a truck would...we need to change cultural perception
- NAU doesn't go to high schools in Yuma—banners from other schools but not from NAU; there's not enough presence of NAU in Yuma
- Demands on faculty: recruitment job, advising job, teaching, special projects, logistics-clerical work...and faculty in Flagstaff can teach 3 classes and that's it
- We have to have collective vision for our campus surrounded around university's vision
- We have to be strategic about using and planning our resources
- When the status quo is stretched it's hard to be optimistic...
- Yuma's strategic planning process (handout)
- Important for Yuma: top3 - getting staff and faculty, assessment processes in place
- Maintain healthy relationship with AWC
- It's important that we are Hispanic serving institution
- We are Hispanic serving state;
- What is branch campus? We don't know...Where's the definition of a branch campus?
- Curricular autonomy
- What's transition from...to?
- NAU-Yuma will be at some point a stand alone entity...accredited by NCA
- The language 2+2 is not working. Students have to think from the very beginning thinking about being in a 4-year program
- Curricular autonomy—does this mean NAU wants to teach 200-level classes?
- It's important to develop programs that work from the student perspective. We are one community and have to work with AWC to better this community
- We don't have any staff; we need front line workers; we need this in Education Program; we have no stuff...
- Rural and urban definition. Rural has a negative connotation.
- Centrality of Native American population...We should focus in the university strategic plan on Hispanic population—it's becoming a majority in the state; we serve more Hispanic Students than Native American Students

Distance Learning Session – 3/5/2008

Faculty:

- Finding qualified people is the biggest struggle; people don't even ask about pay; people just want to teach; it's a status issue
- It's been 5 years since part-time faculty salaries were increased
- Credential issues hinder hiring not the salary being offered—in rural areas
- In urban areas pay is important here

- Community College pays \$800 per credit hour
- Review part-time instructor pay procedures (it's currently based on full-time instructor model and that's not what part-time system is...not a tenure system)
- Most faculty don't do it for money
- Training stipends would work, retraining is important
- Clearer path for the progression through the levels is needed (if the levels are kept)
- Online evaluation process: only loves or hate...skewed evaluations; delay in accessing evaluations
- Online evaluation—many times we get only extreme responses—either students love or hate their instructors; students are asked during the last class to go home and fill out evaluations
- Evaluations are looked at to move to different pay (faculty) levels
- Improve evaluation system—get more students involved
- Candidate pools have been good but we have lost a lot of people to ASU for higher salaries or less responsibilities
- Urban and rural areas: in rural areas no qualified people available; especially technology focused; a lot of training is involved; we need time to train people—connect them with a mentor; hands-on training important; shadowing
- A lot of re-openings, time consuming, low salaries...we are settling for less qualified personnel
- Staffing...part-time: time consuming, savings not always justified

Facility

- Carpet cleaning, furniture...all part of maintenance
- Appropriate budgeting process to care for statewide facilities...they are part of Capital Assets and part of the university
- Most of our facilities are leased but Kingman needs to be part of what capital assets take care of
- Important: signage

Health Care

- West Valley: Community College—speech therapy; it would be nice to have a 2+2 baccalaureate programs
- Many health care programs are master's level and doctoral level
- Program development: physicians assistant, occupational therapy...there will be search for this program...fall 2009 maybe first class, 2010 more realistic...based here in North Valley...recruiting will not be a problem—mostly out of state students; we must feed in Arizona students—to really address AZ's shortages
- Will we get priorities for in-state students?
- The programs will not be online; labs, clinical space not in North Valley
- A lot of new hospitals
- There's a waiting list to get to RN. Until medical profession turns around to require students to have BSN there's no incentive on the student side to earn a BS.

- Do we have a strong gerontology program? (Aging AZ population.) Geriatric nursing is a part of the nursing program...
- State should motivate students to go to the programs where the state has a shortage. Funding issue...incentives.
- Formats to accommodate people from rural areas (weekends...)
- Discussions with hospitals are important; government loans; loan forgiveness
- Rural areas: part time should be an option
- Window Rock: American Indian Nursing program—Indian Health Services scholarships—NAU Flagstaff advisors don't respond quickly probably because they are serving too many other students, but timing is extremely important especially for scholarship deadlines.
- Getting the students to think about BS as they enter RN...not at exiting the RN program
- In Kayenta, Page—no RN program; some support would be needed
- Delivery method: why RNs are reluctant to do online; hospital in Casa Grande are paying for their RNs to do the Grand Canyon University's on-site BSN
- Grand Canyon aggressive in the BSN programming.
- The university is not fast enough to respond to changing environment...privates are able to respond faster and offer solutions quickly.
- Funding from private sector is important to seek especially when the state support is not enough.
- We are just not fast enough in developing customized solutions that would work for the employers; usually we cannot promise anything on the spot and have to go through sometimes very complicated approval system
- ASU is progressing in special education

STEM

- It's important to increase retention
- Pay issue is a major problem for teachers...even if we graduate more students, they will not stay as a result of low pay
- State loan forgiveness program
- Federal Teacher loan forgiveness program: only in specific districts (economically disadvantaged?)
- CTEL—students have to go through districts first; district have to see a potential, hire the person, and then the students get into the program
- Getting academic departments to support the need we identified is sometimes difficult
- Teachers shortage comes down to salaries and support in classrooms
- Executives in a classroom: we should develop a short course in teaching methodology or a certificate
- Teach America—engineering students without a clear path--they may be able to go to schools, have mentors; bridging with professional development; high retention rate

Serving Rural Arizona

- Legislature start noticing that NAU is putting money into urban areas; they see it as less support is given to rural areas.

- If you get the right people say yes and have resources, you can do it. The right people are sometimes not talking. It's important to get authorized people talking. Community colleges have an agenda to get 4-year degrees and are reluctant to seek and pursue joint (university/cc) projects.
- If the ccs are successful at getting 4-year degrees or 3+1 programming is growing, how we are going to stay competitive and stay in business?
- 10-months long program from ASU in education...
- If we get state funding we need to address student support: 1 or 2 positions dedicated to students, tutoring—online or local
- Mohave: small numbers of students; need more receiving time (videoconferencing)—adding a second videoconferencing room may be an option (one time expense)
- In Globe, people are scared of the “online” learning environment. Working with instructors to incorporate online components would help; hybrids are the answers—they provide the flexibility and a sense of community.
- Some smaller sites have the lab in the ITV room, so the online (but on-site) learning is not always possible.
- In the DL divisional strategic plan we have to include promotion of hybrid classes. Hybrid programming may be our competitive advantage.
- The technology people have to be able to help students. More training is needed.
- CCs give high school students scholarships just to increase their FTEs (EAC).