Date: Thursday, July 1, 2010
To: Daniel J. Julius, Vice President for Academic Affairs
From: John Monahan, Director of Distance Education
RE: DE Legislative Audit Finding #2; Collaboration Incentive recommendations

On behalf of the DE Legislative Audit Collaboration Incentive committee¹, co-chairs Tom Miller and myself, we are pleased to present a draft recommendation that addresses the DE Legislative Audit Finding #2; Collaboration Incentives.

Acceptance and implementation of the following recommendations ensure students will see an increase in the availability of distance education and online teaching course offerings regardless of where the course is offered².

Background

The Statewide Collaboration Incentive Committee met regularly between January 21 to June 30, 2010. By identifying and examining many successful collaborations that currently operate across the UA system, the committee agreed on the following recommendations that support and increase collaboration efforts and break down barriers that have been identified as problematic in advancing collaboration.

The DE Legislative Audit highlighted that a primary concern of students is the challenge of taking and receiving credit for courses between campuses. Consequently, the committee focused on building collaborative capacity across the MAUs by supporting the strengths of the individual campuses, promoting across-campus procedures that create efficiencies by reducing course duplication, and enabling students to take advantage of a collaborative UA System.

Distance Education Collaboration Incentive Recommendations

The DE Collaboration model brings alignment between the four findings of the DE Legislative Audit, provides for coordination of initiatives across and within the MAUs, and building upon the work of previous reports and recommendations. The following model has an “Across” and “Within” MAU collaboration component, an Incentives

¹ Statewide Committee Members:
Tom Miller, UAA, co-chair, John Monahan, SW, co-chair
Paula Martin, UAA, Sally Mead, UAA,
Pete Pinney, UAF, Eric Madsen, UAF, Kevin Berry, UAF,
Cathy LeCompte, UAS, Larry Harris, UAS, Michelle Casey, UAS
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² DE Legislative Audit Response Plan Summary
component, an Outcomes and Measures component and an Equitable Fiscal Distribution component.

Across-MAU Collaboration

Through the Office of Academic Affairs, with support from SAC, the Director of Distance Education will work with the DE Collaboration Committee to immediately enact incentive grants and to recommend system-wide administrative procedures that support the following initiatives:

1. streamlining support mechanisms for students
2. joint academic program development
3. procedures that support collaboration

The DE Collaboration committee will work in cooperation with SAC to provide collaboration incentive grants that promote and are accountable for growth of system-wide initiatives.

1. Collaboration grants will be available that increase consistency and richness of student’s education experience through the following activities across-MAUs:
   a. assemble listing of online available program and course information from each institution and their equivalencies (avoidance of duplication)
   b. catalog all UA DE professional development opportunities available to faculty
   c. recommend a coordinated student DE and online course evaluation
   d. assist in identifying appropriate recourses and incentives that promote online instruction at a system wide level.

2. Collaboration grants will be made available to faculty workgroups and/or programs that are farther along with either DE or collaboration (or both) to move ahead. Grant applications would require the support of their Deans and Provosts to be eligible. Examples of across-MAU workgroups include:
   a. Special Education
   b. Computer Information and Office Systems
   c. Social Work
   d. Psychology

3. Collaboration grants will be available to assist across-MAU campuses with growing online infrastructure capacity by providing:
   a. specialized experts (internal UA and nationally recognized experts) in online instruction
   b. promulgate and model effective practices for infrastructure capacity for distance
c. visit distance-delivering campuses and analyze campus alignment with effective practices and document examples of best practice to share across-MAUs
d. determine campus gaps and identify resources necessary to bring the campus or distance program up to effective practices
e. identify opportunities for collaboration or centralization of distance infrastructure or distance services
f. recommend approaches and funding opportunities by which a campus could move to the next level of services.

Within-MAU Collaboration

The Provosts will initiate collaborative grants that support:
1. Growth of GRE Courses
2. Online Academic Program Development
3. Training Centers for Faculty
4. Individual Training

The Provosts will prioritize the initiatives to achieve maximum results.

1. Incentivize individuals in discipline areas to increase GER course offerings using online instructional strategies supportive of students learning styles and address:
   a. backlogged courses among GERs, particularly in discipline areas that could be relieved via collaborative DE approaches

2. Provide incentives to faculty workgroups/programs/disciplines that are not as far along with DE or collaboration to begin their own conversations, based on factors such as:
   a. faculty interest/potential for this work
   b. state workforce needs
   c. availability/readiness of partners or stakeholders (i.e., health, fisheries, engineering)

3. Provide incentives to promote consistency and richness of student’s education experience through the following activities at an MAU level:
   a. coordinate a plan for sequenced course offerings (distance and face to face) that is based on expected enrollments, students’ status, and resources available to enable students to progress through programs more effectively
   b. coordinate course content and outcomes that correspond with a course description and numbering system.

4. Provide incentives to faculty training centers that respond to:
a. increase faculty online use and DE instructional strategies
b. share instructional delivery strategies across MAUs

DE Collaboration Model Incentives

Collaboration Grants can incorporate incentives in the form of:

a. workload release or overloads
b. specialized experts that inspire and motivate a shared vision
c. mentoring experiences
d. travel stipends
a. site visits
b. team conference participation
e. enhance training opportunities to increase online instruction use
a. specialized online training
b. department online training support
f. inclusion of promotion and tenure (language like will work with governance to provide recognition in promotion and tenure)

DE Collaboration Model Outcomes and Measures

The goals of the DE Collaboration Model is to increase DE course offerings. Outcomes will be measured by the following:

a. increased program completion rates
b. increased faculty participation in online course development
c. increased number of collaborative working groups with multiple campus programs and degrees (i.e., ITS, ECE, Allied Health offerings)
d. number of faculty trained in DE and online instructional methods
e. growth in the three categories of DE courses
f. increased number of online/distance course offerings
g. increased use of online instructional methods; and
h. increased number of courses using standardized quality assessment tool.

Equitable Fiscal Distribution

The current fiscal model appropriately rewards growth in online course offerings at the campus and MAU level. When redistribution or reimbursement of finances is required the details are worked out at a programatic level that are based upon factors that are relevant to the discipline and delivery style of the content. After careful review, this individualized approach offers a much more equitable solution then would a formulaic approach that would inadvertently generate unintended inequitable situations. An appeal process for review of equitable distribution of funds will be available for SAC to review.