Associated Students of The University of Arizona

UA Transformation Process

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Introduction: In an uncertain time at The University of Arizona, the students of this great institution recognize the importance of the UA Transformation Process. Students, faculty, administration and staff are now being provided with the opportunity to move The University of Arizona to the next level in ensuring that our students receive a World Class educational experience.

The ideas expressed in this white paper have been formulated based on student feedback and consultation.

University Cuts:

- **Electricity** – An analysis needs to be conducted in order to determine the actual energy needs of all buildings on campus. If buildings are not in use during specific portions of the day, the University should minimize energy usage during those times.
  - EX: After 8pm on Mon. – Fri. electricity is shut off to Buildings x,y & z.
  - The university should consider investing in technology that will ensure our buildings are sustainable and cost-efficient. Ex. Light censors.

- **Seasonal Hiring** – During peak seasons at the university, hiring and job classification should be directly correlated to the traffic related to the position.
  - EX: Office of the Registrar has significantly higher traffic at the start of each semester as opposed to during the semester.

- **Auxiliary Funding** – Any auxiliary that does not fall in line with the university’s mission to support the success of students should not be funded by the State.
  - EX: While the service that UA Presents provides to the university and the community is greatly appreciated – it does not support students in their path to graduation and should not be receiving state support.

University Re-Organization:

- **University College Transformation** – The University College provides incredibly valuable resources to undecided students, students in transition and both interdisciplinary students and pre-professional students. It is vital that these students continue to be supported, but that support does not need to come at the cost of an entire college. The University College could be transformed from a college and into a Student Support Center that provides the same services to students with less administrative expense and an increased focus on the needs of the entire student body.

- **General Education Re-Structure** – At any premier state university, a strong general education program is vital for a well-rounded education. However, instead of focusing on the creation of unique Tier I and Tier II courses, the
University of Arizona should utilize the strong courses that are currently offered within the colleges. General education courses should be re-aligned with the degree based 100 and 200 level courses that would be made available to all students.

The general education structure will still require students to take courses across the university and allow students an increased variety and decreased restriction in the type of courses that are available. In addition, there will be a significant increase in the amount of courses available to improve student efficiency on the track to graduation.

- **Increase Summer School Options** – One of the best opportunities for individual colleges to support students track to graduation and bring in additional revenue is to provide summer and winter session options. These options should be increased dramatically across the university both in quantity and variety.

**New Ideas for The University:**

- **On-Line Classes/Degree Program** – The University of Arizona has an incredibly strong presence not only in Tucson and the State of Arizona but also across the southwest and the country. Especially in the universities areas of expertise offering either on-line courses or even on-line degree programs would provide a new opportunity for current and potential students to take advantage of the vast knowledge and experience that the university has to offer.
  - EX: The College of Optical Sciences is the top program of its kind in the country, in order to broaden the reach of the program and take advantage of the revenue opportunities UA should offer courses related to Optical Sciences on-line for both current students, new students, members of the community, alumni and others with a general interest.

- **Evening/Weekend Courses** – In order to recognize and support our non-traditional students and prospective students the university should increase the availability of evening and weekend courses that are offered. These courses should be offered at a discounted rate to provide an incentive for enrollment. Increasing the availability of evening and weekend courses will not only move the university towards maximizing the use of resources (classrooms), but also provide an increased amount of opportunities for students to achieve a degree as well as the chance for the university to break into a new market to provide new revenue streams.

- **Summer ‘Minor’ Programs** – Going in line with the recommendation for increased summer school options, the university should capitalize on the incredible minor programs that are currently offered and create a summer
program version of those minors that could be created as a package. Creating an enticing package of a summer minor program will provide for an increased incentive for students to participate and in effect provide new opportunities for improved graduation rates and new revenue streams for the college providing the summer minor program.

- **Alternative Credit Offerings** – In this day in age students are no longer learning simply inside the classroom, it is a time where every element of a life experience could be considered a learning opportunity for our students. The university should provide course credit to students beyond the classroom far more than they currently do. Credit should be available through internships, service, experience, individual study projects and more. This could be built into the universities required curriculum to not only provide students with a unique out of the classroom dynamic learning opportunity, but also cuts back on the cost to operate a full classroom. These types of alternative credit offerings could even include students participating in projects that are both furthering their education and aiding the university in some way
  - EX – Media arts students piloting the on-line degree program and receiving class credit for working on that project.

- **Sustainability** – In a time of changing energy systems and needs it should be on the universities priority list to work towards a more sustainable institution. This could be effort ranging from solar power to water harvesting, all of which will work towards increasing the universities efficiencies and decrease energy costs.

**Student Priorities**

- **Transformation Transitions** – In the event that any degree program is cut from the university, a student that is declared in that major currently will be permitted to complete their area of study and graduate The University of Arizona with that specific degree program. This holds true for both the cutting of programs and the re-structuring of degree programs.

- **Academic Advising** – Not only should all academic advising be held harmless from cuts during the University Transformation Process, professional academic advising needs increased support in order to make this process work for students. It is vital to not only retain the current professional advisors at the university, but more are necessary in order to at a minimum meet the university required 1 advisor to every 400 student ratio. In addition to the increase in the number of advisors, there also needs to be an increase in the base salary of those advisors to make them, at a minimum, competitive in the state.
At no point would replacing professional academic advisors with faculty advisors be acceptable. These are two very different roles and it is vital for student’s success and graduation to have a professional advisor they can access. Faculty advising should not be disregarded, but is more of a mentorship type of program rather than a professional advising type of program. Students need both; specifically during a transition like this the professional advising is absolutely vital to ensuring their retention and graduation.

- **Faculty** – Students of The University of Arizona would not be here with out the incredible faculty. It is imperative for the success of students that the faculty we have are retained and their wages are competitive. In the event that the department in which a faculty member is housed is either cut or re-organized every effort possible should be made by the university to retain that faculty member in some other capacity. Recruiting and retaining the best faculty also plays a huge role in the universities ability to offer classes and meet the class availability demands that a state university has.

- **Graduate Assistants** – Undergraduate students cannot operate in large lecture halls without the presence of a Graduate Assistant and on the other side a Graduate Assistant sometimes cannot afford to attend the university without their opportunities to serve in a Graduate Assistant capacity. Support for the current Graduate Assistant structure must be maintained throughout this transition and those students serving in these roles must be supported and compensated accordingly based on their responsibilities.

- **Student Support Services** – There will never have been amore important time in the universities history than now to ensure the best student support services possible. These student support services include but are not limited to: tutoring, counseling, mentorship and much more. It is absolutely vital that these services are held in the highest regard when determining the university transformation process, as they will be one of the key elements to student success, retention and graduation at The University of Arizona.