Name: University College (No name change is recommended).

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The reorganization and consolidation in this paper focuses on University College.
“State and land-grant institutions must again become the transformational institutions they were intended to be.”

KELLOGG COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF STATE AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES

University College is the academic home for "undecided" or "exploratory" students as well as all Pre-Nursing, Pre-Pharmacy, and Interdisciplinary Studies majors at the University of Arizona. We provide academic advising services as well as help and resources for students exploring majors. We want all students to clearly identify their own interests, values and skills and use that knowledge to make informed decisions when choosing or changing a major.

This proposal recommends the enhancement and enrichment of many of the programs and services already provided by University College. In partnership with units such as the Main Library and the Integrated Learning Center, University College will engage in research on teaching, learning, advising, and undergraduate teaching for students who are undecided or exploratory regarding a major or majors at The University of Arizona. The research component includes an on-going assessment that will inform and guide our planning in providing students with the support and services they need to succeed academically at the university. The number of students who enter the university without declaring a major continues to grow. **According to fall 2008 enrollment figures, 20.7% of first year students reside in University College, making us one of the largest colleges on campus.**

The reorganization and, in some cases, the expansion of the scope of services we are proposing will lead to greater efficiency and productivity, more integration, less overlap, better quality of services and programs, will continue to increase the satisfaction level of the student we serve, and lead to higher morale among those associated with University College. **In essence the proposed transformations maximize existing resources and do not require new or additional funding or other kinds of resources.**

**Transformation 1 (supports Strategic Direction 1 and 4).**

Academic Advising and Major Exploration are fundamental to University College. 4163 students were enrolled in the college during 2007 and approximately 15,000 in-person advising contacts were recorded. **It is important to note that over 45% of the contacts were with students from other colleges** who want to explore alternate majors, are interested in Pre-Health or Pre-Law, or have been excluded from their major of choice in another college and must choose a different major.
We also serve and advise two additional groups of students at University College: students excluded from future enrollment in their present college because they do not qualify for advanced standing and are undecided about their academic choices, and students disqualified from their college who want to discuss their academic options.

University College began a significant transformation of its advising structure for freshmen in the fall of 2005 by implementing cohort management through a 1 unit success course that enrolled over 1000 students. This more intensive and intrusive contact between student and advisor/instructor resulted in a 9% higher retention rate and 6% lower probation rate than those who were not enrolled in the course. This pattern continued with the fall 2006 freshman cohort, which enrolled approximately 1100 students. The success and momentum of this program was seriously disrupted by an unsuccessful effort to reorganize University College by Enrollment Management in 2007. Under a newly appointed Dean, that mistake has been corrected, and University College is back on the transformation track begun in 2005 by offering a 1 unit graded course in fall 2008 that has 1120 first year student enrolled. One way to assure that this successful and proven program continues is to provide University College with the kind of stability and leadership that a full time dean does. Doing so will assure the kind of transformation that the current administration is attempting to achieve.

The next phase of the advising transformation to be implemented over the next eighteen months will focus on the University College Undecided students’ first three semesters, with more focus on students achieving increased academic success and on decision-making that encourages earlier movement into a major or majors by students.

Transformation 2 (Strategic Direction 2).

University College has provided leadership in both the curriculum and instructional technology development of online learning, particularly in courses designed to increase student academic success. We propose greater collaboration with the Learning Technology Center (LTC) and the Integrated Learning Center (ILC) in further developing courses by University College (UNVR courses). The goals are to:

1. Link the 1 unit UNVR course to Gen Ed courses, thereby increasing the gen ed units from 3 to 4 units, using the success course or consider a Supplemental Instruction (SI) model for “tutoring” to generate the additional unit;
2. Collaborate with the Main Library to develop a series of courses focused on library research and information literacy;
3. Develop a strategic plan to generate revenue for UNVR online courses offered during Winter/Summer Sessions.
University College has had great success in offering our courses using a variety of venues, platforms and models. The proposed 3-hours course that will be developed and offered in conjunction with The University of Arizona Main Library will be offered online and can serve a large number of students in a cost effective and efficient way. This course can be offered as one more option to meet Tier One requirements, or it can be modified into a one unit course that can be added to existing Tier One English Courses to make them a four hour course. Not only will the skills learned in such courses be of continuing value to students, it will also generate additional gen ed credits without increasing the workload of English faculty and GATs, or requiring additional space.

Another possibility is to use components of this course or course(s) to offer certificates in the area of professional development to members of the broader community. This will generate revenue that can help defray the cost of operations or the compensation of staff/faculty offering these courses on-line.

**Transformation 3 (Strategic Direction 2 and 4).**

Grow the Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) major and thematic minors. The proposed *International School* by the Liberal Arts work group is recommending a similar approach. One of their goals is to “integrate and synthesize knowledge” from a wide range of disciplines. They also seek to “educate and prepare the next generation of leaders.” This emphasis in interdisciplinary studies is already one of University College’s fortres. We are already experienced and successful in developing and offering IDS programs and degrees, and can therefore bring our expertise to bear on this process. In fact we are considering offering minors/study areas in Sustainability, Health Perspectives, Nursing Career Path, Nutritional Studies, Cultural Studies, General Business, Crime Scene Management, Information Knowledge or Literacy, and Intercultural Health.

Our goals also include further developing support for biomedical needs through proposed Post Baccalaureate Certificate, and expansion of the Clinical Rotation Internship and the Odyssey Hospice Internship sponsored by Pre-Health Professions Advising Center in University College.

As stated above, the mission of University College is to provide valuable information to incoming “undecided” UA students that will augment the orientation process by early exposure to UA resources, as well as introduction to major exploration. Since over half of incoming freshmen will reside in University College, it would be a proactive measure to facilitate a preparatory and enrichment program prior to their arrival in the fall. Orientation can often be overwhelming for many freshmen. It is during this time when valuable information may be and is lost due to a variety of reasons. An early enrichment program, via online or similar to that of the “Academic Tour”, may help ease the student’s anxiety and overall transition.
With the SIGNIFICANT increasing enrollment trends, University College plays a central and important role in the orientation process. Its highly trained and qualified academic advisors see thousands of “undecided” students over the course of 3 short months. Developing a supplemental component that is unique to our “exploratory” students may ease transition, facilitate and accelerate the major declaration process, and increase retention. University College, with its developmental advising approach, is the best facilitator for an enhancement program for “undecided” students.

The programs, activities, and proposals delineated above are just some of the thinking that has gone into the transformation process. University College is central to the land grant mission of serving the people (students) of Arizona, and of providing quality and needed services to one of our most vulnerable student populations. University College provides important and needed services in a central location for students to receive academic advising, mentoring support, and education. The services and support we provide to our students is both cost effective, and successful in meeting the wide range of needs of a very diverse student population.

University College fulfills the land grant mission by putting students first, by creating genuine learning communities that support and inspire all types of learners, and we remain first and foremost student centered by providing a welcoming and healthy learning and advising environment for all students.

According to the Kellogg Commission: “(W)e must maintain strong advising structures for all students, including appropriate counseling and support for non-traditional students and for students transferring among institutions or changing academic majors . . .” That is what University College does and will continue to do.

Kellogg Commission, Returning to Our Roots: The Student Experience.

Budget: Still under review to look for efficiencies and consider cost-saving measures.