Provost’s Message

As we move through spring quarter, I want to brief you on a number of important matters affecting Academic Affairs.

First, I am pleased to summarize some news concerning the budget for 2011-13.

• The original Governor’s budget called for cuts of nearly $6 million to the campus, $3.5 million of which was allocated to Academic Affairs. Initial work on this figure led to cuts of more than $2.5 million for the colleges and library. By working with the President and VP for Business and Finance, we have reduced the cuts to the colleges and library to about $620,000. This dramatic shift has been achieved with strong support from Dr. Arévalo and represents our ongoing commitment to maintaining academic excellence and instructional support.

• In addition, we have established a central pool in Academic Affairs to fund promotions. This $150,000 pool will provide centralized support for promotions and alleviate the financial burden from the colleges and library. This change will enable colleges to use base resources to support their mission, without the need for internal reallocation to support faculty promotions.

• In addition, we are exploring ways to expand support and services in the Writers’ Center and the PLUS program to improve student success.

The net effect of these decisions is that Academic Affairs will continue to have the resources to support our core mission. As of this week, we now have the Governor’s budget and the budget proposals from both houses. As these proposals are reconciled, we will have more information that could affect our planning.

Regarding Q2S, I ask you to consider the transition to semesters and work with the various governance groups to ensure that we identify the many issues that we need to consider. Toward this end, Doris Munson and I will be hosting a series of round-table discussions with chairs of key councils (CPAC, FPAC, Faculty Values, General Education, GAC, Library, and UAC). My hope is that this group can serve as a quasi-steering committee to identify issues that will need to be addressed as we consider the transition.

Faculty Merit Awards

Beginning in academic year 2006–07, an expanded Merit Award program has been used to recognize and reward outstanding contributions made by Eastern Washington University faculty in teaching, scholarship, creative endeavors, and service. Nominated by their respective college personnel committees, faculty candidates are selected as Merit Award winners by the Research, Service, and Scholarship Committee, composed of faculty representatives throughout Eastern’s academic areas and JFK Library. Names of the winners follow.
Outstanding Faculty Awards

In Teaching -
Damon Aiken, Management
Prakash Bhuta, Biology
Kevin Decker, Philosophy
Kayleen Islam-Zwart, Psychology
Samuel Ligon, English/Creative Writing
Mimi Marinucci, Women’s and Gender Studies and Philosophy
Harm-Jan Steenhuis, Management
Beth Torgerson, English
Ann Wetmore, Dental Hygiene
Bill Williams, Psychology

In Scholarship/Creative Activity -
Vandana Asthana, Government
Christian Hansen, Mathematics
Christopher Howell, English/Creative Writing
Jonathan Johnson, English/Creative Writing
Igor Klyukanov, Communication Studies
Larry Luton, Urban and Regional Planning, Public and Health Administration
Mimi Marinucci, Women’s and Gender Studies and Philosophy
Harm-Jan Steenhuis, Management
Kurt Stellwagen, Psychology
Ann Wetmore, Dental Hygiene

In Service -
Rebecca Brown, Biology
Awlad Hossain, Engineering and Design
Kayleen Islam-Zwart, Psychology
Mimi Marinucci, Women’s and Gender Studies and Philosophy
Jonathan Middleton, Music
LaVona Reeves, English
Susan Ruby, Psychology
Marty Slyter, C.E.D. Psychology
Harm-Jan Steenhuis, Management
Dick Winchell, Urban and Regional Planning, Public and Health Administration

Distinguished Faculty Awards
In Teaching – Prakash Bhuta, Biology
In Scholarship/Creative Activity – Vandana Asthana, Government
In Service – LaVona Reeves, English

Professors of the Year
Kayleen Islam-Zwart, Social and Behavioral Sciences and Social Work
Mimi Marinucci, Arts, Letters and Education and Social and Behavioral Sciences and Social Work
Harm-Jan Steenhuis, Business and Public Administration
Ann Wetmore, Science, Health and Engineering

President’s Award
Mimi Marinucci, Women’s and Gender Studies and Philosophy

Congratulations to this year’s Merit Award winners, whose work within their academic disciplines and with Eastern’s students makes a vital contribution to academic rigor and excellence at EWU.
Academic Integrity Policy Review

In response to a request from the Undergraduate Affairs Council, the university’s Academic Integrity Oversight Board has begun the process of reviewing the 2000 academic integrity policy with an eye to revising as needed.

Faculty input about the policy and their experiences with academic integrity violations was solicited through an online survey. Dr. Joanna Matos, assistant professor of biology, reported that 197 faculty responded.

Regarding possible academic integrity violations, 127 faculty indicated suspecting at least one undergraduate violation per quarter, and 35 indicated suspecting at least one graduate violation per quarter. Sixty-three percent of responders indicated that they would resolve violations according to provisions in their course syllabi. Eighty percent of faculty who had initiated formal charges of academic integrity violations reported being satisfied with the academic integrity hearing process. Dr. Matos will bring proposed policy changes to the Undergraduate Affairs Council in spring quarter.

Grants

I am pleased to report that we continue to have success in securing external funding. To date EWU has received approximately $9,000,000, which is on track with previous years.

Cumulative Dollar Awards Grant & Research Development

In our constrained resource environment, it is imperative that we all explore ways to augment our activities in teaching, scholarly/creative activities and service with external funds. If you have not done so, having a member of Ruth Galm’s staff join your department for a discussion is a worthwhile step.
Advance Grant

More than two years of planning have resulted in a study of institutional gender inequities in its STEM disciplines. Principal Investigator Dr. Kayleen Islam-Zwart, professor of psychology, and Co-Principal Investigators Dr. Andrea Castillo, assistant professor of biology, Dr. Judd Case, dean of the College of Science, Health and Engineering, and Dr. Vickie Shields, dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Social Work, have secured an ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Catalyst grant in support of this effort. Eastern is the first regional comprehensive university the state to receive ADVANCE support.

Generation of data began with two town-hall meetings in January to introduce the project, followed by a survey of faculty work-life. Results are expected to significantly increase the understanding of factors that support female STEM faculty, initiating transformation within our institution, the region, state, and beyond.

Priority Spokane

An EWU proposal to create, implement, and analyze the findings of a middle-school, student-support survey has been accepted by Priority Spokane. Dr. Arévalo is a founding board member of Priority Spokane, a collaboration of community leaders dedicated to supporting activities that “create a vibrant future for Spokane County.” Dr. Sue Marie Wright, professor of Sociology and Justice Studies and director of Eastern’s Children’s Studies program, with Dr. Colin Ormsby, director of Eastern’s Office of Institutional Research and Demography, developed the proposal.

The EWU survey, launched online during the week of March 7, has gone out to 180 community organizations providing youth support services and programs. Results will include a portrait of youth service organizations, findings that highlight schools and clients served, best practices, risk factors, efficacy, and recommendations for providing student support in the Spokane Public Schools.

Priority Spokane has identified educational attainment as a top priority. The primary goal is to increase Spokane public schools’ high-school graduation numbers; a 2010 study by Gonzaga University suggested that the enhancement of middle schools’ early warning systems, academic expectations, and student support networks would have a positive impact on high-schoolers’ experiences and graduation rates.

Campus Climate Survey

Ms. Gayla Wright, director of equal opportunity and diversity, and Dr. Colin Ormsby of OIRDA recently launched the Noel-Levitz (specializing in campus climate and retention) online campus-climate survey for students and staff. The survey results will be used to begin a dialogue across campus regarding perceptions of how well EWU serves its students. Data from the survey and a series of town hall meetings to be conducted by Wright and Ormsby in the spring will be used to inform a report on campus climate for President Arévalo and his leadership council and eventually will be presented to the Board of Trustees with recommendations for next steps.

Both Wright and Ormsby have indicated the survey is not merely to find deficiencies but also to show those areas in which EWU shines. “This is not a gotcha survey, we are not looking to find fault,” said Ormsby. “It is about finding those things we do well and celebrating those successes as well as honestly facing those things we may need to improve.”

The Noel-Levitz faculty survey will be launched in mid April. Please look for an e-mail from Dr. Ormsby inviting you to participate in the survey.
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

EWU has submitted its Year One report to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. This report represents the university's response to the most recent on-site visit and is the first in a series of reports that will be produced in the coming years:

- Year One Report was due March 1, 2011. This report addresses Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations and establishes the foundation for all subsequent reports and evaluations within the accreditation cycle. The report is evaluated by a panel of peer evaluators.
- Year Three Report (expands the Year One Report to include Standard Two: Resources and Capacity) is due spring 2012 with an associated visit.
- Year Five Report (expands the Year Three Report to include Standard Three: Planning and Standard Four: Implementation and Effectiveness and Improvement) is due spring 2014. The report is evaluated by a panel of peer evaluators.
- Year Seven Report (expands the Year Five Report to include Standard Five: Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability) is due spring 2015 with an associated visit.

NWCCU Liaison Ron Dalla is leading this effort with a coordinating committee that includes Larry Briggs, Denise Campitelli, Toni Habegger, Linda Kieffer, David May, Julie Miller, Beth Murff, Stacy Olson, Colin Ormsby, Gina Petrie, Byron Russell, and Melanie Thomas. The March report and brief overview of the process can be found at http://access.ewu.edu/institutional-research/assessment-committee.xml.

Commencement

Please make your plans to attend commencement on June 11th. I know from personal experience that our graduates appreciate seeing faculty on this important day. The faculty at Eastern have a time-honored tradition of congratulating each graduate, and it makes a lasting impression on them.

Toward this end, the process to rent regalia is different from prior years. This year, faculty who rent their graduation regalia should do so online through Jostens:

http://college.jostens.com/jostens/index.jsp?affiliateId=1119012

Clicking “Graduation Caps and Gowns” on Josten’s homepage begins a user-friendly ordering process. Online payment for the rental is required, and regalia will be available for pick up at EWU’s bookstore. The Bookstore will be open from 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM on commencement day for returning the regalia.

Please note that robes will be guaranteed for delivery only if ordered by April 26th.

I look forward to seeing a record turnout from faculty this year!

In Closing …

Despite our fiscal challenges, Academic Affairs is finding ways to sustain our commitment to academic excellence. I hope you have a very successful spring term, and I look forward to working with you to further our goals.

Best wishes,