Administrative Council Meeting
May 11, 2010

Members Present: Executive Vice President Dever, Vice President Gabriel, Vice President Garcia, Vice President Gary, Dr. Hill, Dr. Maphumulo, Vice President Sachs, Ms. Samuels, Dr. Saperstone, and President Templin.

Dr. Hinton participated by phone.

Guests:
David Mastropaolo, Associate Director for Professional Development
Dr. Elizabeth Harper, Associate Vice President, Student Services and Enrollment Management
Ms. Joan Zanders, Director, Financial Aid
Ms. Frances Villagran-Glover, Acting Dean of Students, Alexandria Campus
Ms. Elizabeth Sears, Counselor, Manassas Campus
Dr. Marilyn Deppe, Coordinator of Student Services, Annandale Campus

Student Access:
- Summer Session
  - The Daily Enrollment Report for Summer 2010, as of May 11, shows an increase in FTES of 14.5% over the comparable date for Summer 2009.
  - Dr. Gabriel advised that FTES data for Signal Hill (Loudoun Campus) will be added to the Daily Enrollment Report beginning in the fall semester. Data for the Arlington Center will be discussed at that time.
  - In regard to calls from transient students received by the College Call Center, Dr. Gabriel noted that these have been informational and not reflective of problems encountered by these students.

- SENSE (Survey of Entering Student Engagement)
  - NOVA recently participated in SENSE, an annual nation-wide survey conducted by the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE). NOVA previously participated in three cycles of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) from the same organization. Dr. Gabriel presented the SENSE survey results for NOVA.
  - This survey focuses on collegiate experiences and assesses student engagement for first time students in the early weeks of college life. SENSE was administered to NOVA students in specific classes selected by CCCSE, during the fourth and fifth weeks of the Fall 2009 semester. The classes surveyed are chosen by CCCSE.
  - SENSE data assist institutions in identifying early obstacles to student progress. Once these obstacles are identified, modifications in practices and procedures can be implemented to help students make a smooth transition into college and effectively engage in the learning process.
  - Six Benchmarks of Effective Practice with Entering Students have been identified:
    - Early Connections
    - High Expectations and Aspirations
    - Clear Academic Plan and Pathway
    - Effective Track to College Readiness
Engaged Learning
Academic and Social Support Network
  - The national average for each benchmark is 50%.
  - NOVA was above 50% only on the benchmark of Effective Track to College Readiness.
  - NOVA’s lowest ratings were in the areas of Early Connections (39.3%) and Clear Academic Plan and Pathway (38.9%). It was noted that these data clearly validate the recent selection of Enhanced Academic Advising as the college’s QEP.
  - Dr. Gabriel advised that the college will participate in SENSE again this fall.
  - In addition to being used for AtD planning, this information will also be shared with the Instructional and Student Services Committee, Academic Deans Council, Deans Working Group, and the QEP committee.

Financial Aid Restructuring Initiative Report:

- Dr. Harper stated that the need to restructure financial aid became evident in Fall 2009 when, as a result of an unprecedented increase in the demand for financial aid, the processes in place broke down.
- In December, a task force was charged with reviewing and making recommendations for the restructuring of processes associated with Student Financial Aid at NOVA. This was one of several restructuring projects approved by the Administrative Council.
- Members of the task force included a cross-section of NOVA faculty and staff and a VCCS representative. As the focus of the initiative was to enhance outcomes, productivity, and quality, customers were involved in the analysis and assessment. The analysis and decision making processes were data driven and included:
  - Outcome performance measures
  - Customer service indicators
  - Benchmarking against “best in class”
- Among the issues identified were:
  - Number of verifications
  - Document handling
  - Customer service
  - Staff training
  - Accountability
  - Student communication
  - Duplication of effort
  - Technology
- Benchmarking was a critical part of the review and assessment process. Ten institutions of higher learning, both two-year and four-year, were selected as the best of the best. Interviews were conducted with staff at these institutions on such topics as organization, processes, technology, and communication. Some members of the task force then visited the Financial Aid Offices at Montgomery College and the University of Michigan.
- Ms. Zanders stated that, prior to this review, some changes had been made to the financial aid structure with the addition of several new staff members. Among the taskforce recommendations that are already in progress are the purchase of Financial Aid TV, contracting
for external verification of files during peak periods, and purchase of additional scanners for staff use. A major change in document processing is also underway as only complete packets are now being accepted instead of the piecemeal process of the past. This allows students to know that their files are complete as well as reduces the volume of linking operations.

- Among the recommendations included in the report are:
  - Recommendations for Process
    - Optimize the use of technology—both that which is presently being used and the identification of other technologies that could maximize efficiency. Embedded links for electronic forms is one area under consideration.
    - Development of a process for sharing information between the CFAO and Student Services through existing technologies so that students will need to turn in a document only once.
    - Development of a common schedule for all campus financial aid offices.
  - Recommendations for Training
    - High-quality customer service training.
    - Allow campus financial aid offices to close for a half day twice a month to attend mandatory college-wide staff meetings and ongoing training.
    - Ensure the currency of the financial aid policies and procedures manual.
    - Completion of a basic financial aid certification process for new employees as well as periodic recertification for more experienced staff.
    - Provide financial aid training for designated staff in other units that interface with financial aid.
    - Offer annual training on the Federal Work Study Program to students and supervisors.
    - Establish a financial aid professional development budget to meet the needs of all financial aid staff.
  - Recommendations for Communication
    - Outsource the financial call center to handle calls coming into both the campus and central financial aid offices. Due to the volume of financial aid calls received, it is highly problematic to staff up to meet this demand.
    - Increase automated communication.
    - Utilize social media and digital communication.
    - Continue to review print and web communications
    - Provide faculty/staff training and resources to enable them to answer basic questions on this topic.
  - Recommendations for Staffing
    - Additional staffing is needed to handle the tremendous increase in demand for financial aid.
    - Some reorganizing and restructuring should be considered to improve efficiency and service to students.

- Council members were also provided with data showing the continuing increase in demand for financial aid. Ms. Zanders noted that progress is being made and that 2000 award letters have already been sent for Fall 2010. In the past, it has been June before this process was underway.
- The Administrative Council thanked the taskforce for its thorough and thoughtful report. The Council will further consider the recommendations and budget at an upcoming meeting.
Faculty Tuition Assistance Policy Recommendation:

- Mr. Mastropaolo stated that, as requested by the Administrative Council, definitions of faculty categories have been added to the Faculty Tuition Assistance Policy and Procedures. These personnel categories are in line with VCCS policies.
- Two revisions to the policy and procedures are recommended:
  - For tuition assistance, increase the number of credits that can be approved from nine (9) per fiscal year to a total of six (6) credit hours per semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer).
    - Although this is an increase in credit hours from 9 per fiscal year to 6 per semester, the limit of $1900 per year has not changed.
  - While nine-month and twelve-month teaching faculty may apply for tuition assistance and free NOVA tuition after completing one semester of teaching at NOVA, this waiting period will be waived for faculty members who have already taught fifteen or more credit hours at NOVA.
- Mr. Mastropaolo noted that Administrative and Professional faculty may apply for tuition assistance and free NOVA tuition after six months of employment at NOVA, and that adjunct faculty who are under a current teaching contract may apply for free NOVA tuition after teaching for two semesters at NOVA.
- The Administrative Council approved in concept the recommendations as presented.

Tutoring Project:

- NOVA has been funding its tutoring program with Perkins funds for the last six years. College designated M&O funds have supplemented these funds for the last three years.
- In 2008, the Administrative Council tasked the AtD team with implementing a college-wide tutoring and learning program. This program provided both embedded and center tutoring on the campuses.
- Dr. Gabriel presented a summary assessment of the tutoring program.
  - A college-wide taskforce and project coordinator were appointed in January 2009 to review the existing tutoring program and consider the development of a future college-wide program. Based on 18 months of intensive work by the task force, a college-wide coordinator for tutoring, and much empirical data, it appears that this project has had limited impact on student success such as retention and course completion.
    - While the qualitative data show positive reactions to the programs from students and faculty and program participation and access to tutors remain high, meaningful data defining the specific activities of the tutors and the faculty involved could not be collected.
  - Major internal and procedural enhancements are needed to make the program workable and effective. At present, there is no effective process in place for handling the administrative activities and reporting requirements.
- Perkins guidelines expect a program to transition to college funding in four or five years. As a grant-funded project with strict usage and reporting requirements, the Perkins Grant Project should be updated to reflect the college’s current needs.
- Funds have been allocated from Perkins until the end of fiscal year 2009-10. The Perkins application for 2010-2011 is due to the VCCS in June.
- Dr. Gabriel provided the following recommendations for 2010-2011:
• Submit a Perkins application that includes only 50% of the allocation to be directed to the tutoring program. The remaining 50% would be directed toward activities related to the NCAT initiative focusing on developmental mathematics. All college matching funds would be used for the NCAT initiative.

• He presented the following proposal for 2011-2012:
  o No Perkins funds would be used for tutoring. While tutoring needs to continue, a new financial and organizational structure is needed.
  o Goals, expected outcomes, and funds usage would be determined by specific campus stakeholders as part of the annual planning cycle.
  o Campuses requesting funds will complete proposals as to how they will spend the funds. If funds are secured, detailed reports must be provided to the provost and the Administrative Council evaluating the campus tutoring initiative.

• Dr. Gabriel acknowledged the outstanding efforts of the taskforce and the project coordinator.
• Dr. Dever noted that this topic encompasses more than just tutoring. It includes various types of learning assistance that students expect and need to have available to help them master basic skills or to assist them if they are having difficulty. Providing such assistance is critical for an open door institution like NOVA.
• Dr. Sachs discussed ELI’s use of “SMARTHINKING,” the on-line tutoring service. He will provide more information as to how this could be utilized college-wide.
• The Administrative Council will revisit this issue at its next meeting and will focus on the following:
  o What needs to be done about both Perkins and supplemental funding and what would be the impact on the campuses of these recommendations.
  o How to approach the need for learning assistance for next year.
  o Based on feedback from the provosts, Dr. Gabriel will make final recommendations on funding for tutoring.
  o How the college can best use “SMARTHINKING” Tutoring Project:

The next meeting of the Administrative Council is Tuesday, May 18, at 9:30 a.m. in the Large Board Room at Brault.

Tracking:
• WD/CE Third Quarter Report & FY11 Budget Proposal – May 18
• Faculty Handbook—May 18
• Recommendations of the Task Force on Honors & Academic Challenge – May 18
• Call Center Assessment – May 25
• Report of the Presidential Commission on College Safety & Security
• NCAT Redesign Initiative Approval Strategy
• Ad Hoc Budget Crisis Committee Recommendations
• FY 2011 Budget Planning
• Six-Year Capital Outlay Plan