

APPENDIX A

University Studies Review

- Memo from Chancellor – University Studies Assessment (Nov. 16, 2009) – outlining the process for responding to the results of the University Studies external review
- Memo from Chancellor – University Studies Realignment (May 13, 2010) – announcing dissolution of University Studies administrative structure, re-assignment of University Studies faculty to existing academic departments, and establishment of task force to assess academic matters related to University Studies



North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

TO: North Carolina A&T State University Family

FROM: Chancellor Harold L. Martin, Sr.

DATE: November 16, 2009

RE: University Studies Assessment

As you are aware, University Studies (UNST) is the interdisciplinary general education curriculum of North Carolina A&T State University and provides the intellectual foundation for the University's degree-granting programs. The goal of these core requirements is to provide our students with an educational framework for critical inquiry that serves to stimulate continuing academic development and a commitment to life-long learning.

In September 2009, many of you participated in the comprehensive assessment of the University Studies (UNST) Program which was led by *Scholars for Educational Excellence and Diversity, Inc.* This external review team was asked to review the following UNST Program components:

- curriculum requirements,
- co-curricular program,
- student learning outcomes and assessment of those outcomes,
- transfer of credit and other policies,
- faculty qualifications and credentialing,

- administrative structure and managerial operations,
- budget,
- website, annual reports, and
- overall institutional satisfaction.

Scholars for Educational Excellence and Diversity, Inc. was also asked to benchmark best practices of university studies programs and provide recommendations for program improvement.

We thank the students, faculty, staff, and administrators who made time to share their views and perspectives with the external review team. We have received the assessment report and copies have been shared with the Chancellor's Cabinet, Academic Deans, UNST administration and faculty, and the Faculty Senate. It will also be shared with the University's Board of Trustees at its November 20th regular meeting. Other University administrators, faculty, and staff may request a copy of the assessment report by contacting the Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Alton Thompson at altont@ncat.edu, or the Dean of your school or college.

After much discussion with the Cabinet, we have finalized a process for managing how we will move forward with our response to the report. First, I have commissioned a *University Studies Review Task Force* (Task Force #1), led by Provost Thompson, to address findings and recommendations regarding UNST's *Administrative Structure and Managerial Operations*. Specifically, I am requesting that Task Force #1 review the recommendations from the assessment report and propose "the best administrative structure" through which our general education requirements should be delivered. I have asked Task Force #1 to submit their recommendations to me no later than February 15, 2010. These recommendations will be evaluated by the Academic Deans, the Cabinet, and the Faculty Senate before I finalize the revised UNST administrative structure. A revised administrative structure will be put in place on or before July 1, 2010, along with any adjustments in personnel.

Second, in the early Fall of 2010, I will appoint an additional *University Studies Review Task Force* (Task Force #2) to assess *non-administrative* matters related to UNST. Specifically, Task Force #2 will be charged with conducting a comprehensive review of our general education requirements, including the mission, goals, and objectives, and the core course requirements for meeting the general education core. Task Force #2 will include in its work the UNST findings and recommendations of the assessment team regarding the academic program, i.e., foundation courses, cluster courses, capstone courses and service learning. We will ensure that the work of Task Force #2 will be fully vetted by the Faculty Senate, Academic Deans, Faculty Forum and Cabinet. It is anticipated that Task Force #2 may take much of the 2010-11 academic year to complete its work, including the campus-wide discussions. Hence, based on the collective wisdom of all constituent groups, we should hopefully be ready for implementation of revised general education requirements by Fall 2011.

Thanks again for your continued support and cooperation with this important review as we continue to take steps to enhance the competitiveness of our graduates through the implementation of quality general education requirements.

I will be more than happy to respond to any of your questions.

CC: Board of Trustees
Cabinet
Deans
President of the Faculty Senate



North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

TO: University Community

FROM: Chancellor Harold L. Martin, Sr.

DATE: May 13, 2010

RE: **University Studies - Realignment**

The *University Studies Review Task Force* was charged to review the recommendations from the external assessment report conducted by the Scholars for Educational Excellence and Diversity, Inc.

Following open and candid discussions with the University Studies faculty, I have carefully reviewed and vetted the recommendations from the aforementioned task force with the senior leadership team of the University. Effective July 1, 2010, the Division of University Studies (UNST) will be phased out and the UNST faculty, a well-credentialed and competent group of professionals, will be assigned to the academic departments that match their academic qualifications and their scholarly and research interests.

Currently, the Dean of University Studies and the deans of the schools and colleges have overlapping and competing spheres of influence and authority in decision making about general education matters. This realignment will encourage more efficient and effective communication between and among academic deans, and facilitate collegial cooperation between and among faculty responsible for teaching all courses in the general education core.

As I indicated to you in my November 15, 2009 memorandum, I will appoint an additional *University Studies Review Task Force* in the early fall of 2010 to assess *non-administrative* matters related to UNST. Specifically, this task force will be charged with conducting a comprehensive review of our general education requirements, including the mission, goals, and objectives, and the core course requirements for meeting the general education core. The task force will include in its work the UNST findings and recommendations of the assessment team regarding the academic program, i.e., foundation courses, cluster courses, capstone courses and service learning. I believe this review and possible realignment will result in a more robust, intentional, and well-

understood general education program - one that is purposeful in design and implementation, integrative and ambitious in its mission, innovative and creative in its pedagogical and assessment practices, and focused on improving student learning outcomes. Building and maintaining a strong general education core curriculum, taught by the university's very best faculty, is critical to raising the quality of all our graduates, regardless of major, and undergirding a planned expansion of graduate programs.

Finally, until I receive the recommendations from the aforementioned task force, the general education (UNST) curriculum will remain unchanged at this time.

Should you have any questions, or need further clarification or elaboration on any aspect of this realignment, feel free to contact Dr. Alton Thompson, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Thank you for your continuing support of these important discussions.