

# Indiana State University

2005 - 2006 Administrative Annual Report

College of Arts and Sciences

## Year in Review

### Achievements

**As you have heard, increasing public awareness of Indiana State University's accomplishments is crucial to building student enrollment, influencing policy makers, and developing a place of pre-eminence in the Midwest. What do you consider to be your department's accomplishments for the 2006-07 year that will contribute to this effort? (Please list in priority order and limit to no more than 8.)**

Seven graduating seniors from our pre-med program have been accepted to medical school for next year, including three African Americans. A senior theater major wrote a play that was produced at ISU, invited to be performed at the Midwest Regional Competition of the American College Theater Festival in Normal, Illinois, and won the Playwriting Competition of the Association for Theater in Higher Education. A faculty member in History published a scholarly university-press book that has been nominated for the Bancroft Prize, the most prestigious award given annually to a book in any field of American history; normally thirty books worldwide are nominated in a given year. Another faculty member's collection of short stories has been nominated for Mexico's prestigious Sor Juana Prize—an annual award of \$10,000—for the best work of fiction in Spanish by a woman writer. Three faculty in the Department of Chemistry have substantial extramural grants from the Research Corporation to support research with undergraduate students. In addition, one of these faculty received an R21 grant of \$175,000 from the National Institutes of Health; an R21, if successful, is often preliminary to an R1 award, which would mean substantial, multi-year funding for basic research. During 2005-06, in Arts and Sciences, nineteen faculty were named Promising Scholars, three received President's Medals, one received the Caleb Mills Distinguish Teaching Award, two the Theodore Dreiser Research/Creativity Award, and two the Faculty Distinguished Service Award. In addition, two students received the President's Award for Community Engagement and Civic Leadership; one of the students also received the 2006 John W. Moore Award as the Outstanding President's Scholar. The Dean's Office organized a two-day conference in September 2005 as part of ISU's participation in Project LEAP—Liberal Education and America's Promise—and brought the President of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, Dr. Carol Geary Schneider, to campus to deliver the keynote address and meet with faculty and community leaders. AAC&U subsequently featured materials from our conference on its website as models for other campuses to emulate.

### Enrollment

**What steps did you take this year to aid ISU in overcoming enrollment challenges?**

The Dean's Office in the College of Arts and Sciences identified student success as a priority issue for the 2005-2006 year. The priority was articulated during the fall College convocation and special sessions of the Council of Chairpersons and the Council of Academic Advisors focused on describing and understanding enrollment patterns, identifying enrollment challenges and determining areas to address, in priority order. Our first goal was to increase the persistence of students from fall 2005 to spring 2006, which we achieved. In October, we shifted our focus to recruitment with strategic emphasis on scholarships as recruitment tools and on developing a communication plan at each level of interaction with students. While we never ceased examining persistence, we significantly enhanced the work of departments in targeted recruitment actions. We

emphasized with our departments the need for strategic, scheduled, multiple and targeted contact with diverse student cohorts. With our Council of Academic Advisors, we stressed student success outcomes as we aimed to fully implement the concept of advising as teaching and to more fully appreciate the need for the relational dimension of advising to be the initial responsibility of the advisor. This work resulted in a draft of learning outcomes for academic advising and a substantial survey of best practices in advising. Our actions fundamentally reflect the research finding that enrollment success--from recruitment to degree attainment--is grounded in relationships between faculty, staff, and students. We were pleased with the increase in fall to spring persistence, and we hope that our efforts will yield an increased spring to fall persistence rate this coming fall. We trust that our attention to specific communication strategies to enhance recruitment contributed to the significant increase in the number of new freshmen majors in Arts and Sciences who participated in June 2006 Sycamore Advantage (an increase of about 140 students).

### Action Steps

#### **Do you have any further progress you would like to report?**

Given the departure of the former dean and the developments in the budget situation, the current interim administration in the College did not pursue holdover action steps from two years ago.

### Assessment

#### **What are two ways in which you evaluated the quality or effectiveness in your area last year? What changes did you make based on those assessments?**

“Assessment” has come to have a specific meaning in our unit: student outcomes assessment. All student outcomes assessment activities are in the academic departments and programs of the College; the primary role that the College plays in student outcomes assessment is monitoring the progress of individual departments and programs in developing and implementing their assessment programs, and reminding departments that our next NCA accreditation visit will require concrete evidence of programmatic decisions based on the analysis of information gained from an established assessment program. As happened with NCATE, it may take action by NCA to make believers of everyone. For specific information on the progress our academic units are making with student outcomes assessment, please see the individual departmental reports. If this section uses “assessment” more broadly, I can give one example of a change we made in our own office to become more effective. For as long as anyone can remember, the College has assigned the oversight of semester class schedules to the “curriculum” area of the Dean’s Office. Effective this summer, we have moved the responsibility for that oversight to the “student academic affairs area.” The reason we did this is to create more efficient class schedules. Our analysis of past practice told us that we and department chairs needed to pay greater attention on the front end to efficiency matters involving the course schedule, and that we can better do this by having departments consider the course schedule in terms of actual student demand and need. We will assess this shift of responsibility over the next two years to determine if we are accomplishing our goal.

### Budget

#### **As you know, ISU is facing significant budget challenges. Finding ways to overcome these while increasing efficiency requires innovation. How are you overcoming your budget challenges this year?**

We addressed the reduction to our base operating budget by analyzing the distribution of support staff positions throughout the College and then cutting 2.5 positions and reassigning other positions to cover the duties of the cut positions. By far the much larger challenge for innovation to increase efficiency is related to our instructional budget. The number of tenure-track faculty continues to

decline, as does the funding available for temporary instruction. Last year, we reduced the overall number of sections and the number of low-enrolled sections because we had \$400,000 less for temporary instruction than we had had the year before. For next year, we will have an additional \$500,000 less, for a total reduction of \$900,000 over two years, and this on top of a decline in the number of continuing tenure-track faculty. We continue to focus on reducing the overall number of sections and the number of low-enrolled sections, and now we are working to reduce the number of vacant seats in General Education sections. We are also putting some courses on multi-year rotation and coordinating courses among similar departments in order to reduce competition that leads to vacant seats and therefore unnecessary sections to serve student demand. In three cases, departments have been able to use “subvention” or “buyout” or “Foundation” funds—all from extramural sources—to pay for temporary instruction that otherwise would be have covered by the operating budget. In individual cases, some faculty have been assigned an additional section, but this is not a widespread practice. The College does not want to jeopardize its longstanding commitment to supporting time for faculty to conduct and publish the results of their research or disseminate the products of their artistic endeavors.

### **Strategic Initiatives**

#### Development Activities

#### **What role might your unit play during the silent phase of the comprehensive fundraising campaign?**

The College of Arts and Sciences has been actively working to increase its donor base by discovering and qualifying 150 additional campaign prospects through making discovery/cold calls to alumni, friends, parents, and current and retired faculty and staff for the campaign. This fall we will be drafting the College’s Campaign Council job descriptions/and responsibilities and will recruit volunteers to serve on our College-wide campaign council. These individuals will serve as leaders for our unit both in terms of their own personal giving, and in terms of identification and solicitation of peers. As soon as we have the text of the University’s case statement, we will begin drafting our own statement for support within our specific campaign priorities. The Dean will participate in the development training sessions with Campbell and Company as soon as they begin, and we will schedule fundraising training for our department chairs as soon as Campbell and Company are ready to provide it. The new Director of Development (once appointed) will actively work the “Top 200” prospect list created by the ISU Foundation to continue cultivation of those donors who have already been qualified and engage the Interim Dean in visits when feasible and appropriate. Our goal is to secure 40% of our unit’s campaign goal during the silent phase of the campaign and to increase the College’s volunteer structure both at the College level and within individual departments.

### **Future Goals**

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#### **Have you considered any action steps your department could make to enhance Indiana State University’s reputation as a University of choice? If so, please indicate what you are planning to do and tell us which area of planning your steps fall under.**

In the coming year, we must reorganize the administrative structure of the College which will include merging some departments; make progress in the silent phase of the capital campaign; align our academic programs with the harsh reality of diminishing faculty resources; continue to develop our ability to meld experiential learning and liberal learning into a cohesive academic experience for our students; increase our success at attracting extramural grant and contract funds for basic and applied research, and thereby diversify sources of financial support for graduate students; improve the persistence and graduation rates in our academic programs; and generally maintain the same

level of success by our faculty and students that we achieved in 2005-06. I'm exhausted just from typing this list, but I am also excited by the coming year's challenges will provide. After all, necessity is the mother of invention. And if a critical mass of inventors is not a trait of a University of choice, woe betide American higher education.

Feedback

**This box is to allow you to share any ideas you have on enhancing enrollment, dealing with budget, challenges facing the administration, etc.**

No additional information beyond that submitted above.