University of Arizona
Office of University Outreach

2007 Annual Report

I. Executive Summary

The Office of the Vice President for Academic Outreach ("Outreach") is a central administrative function dedicated to facilitating the efforts of our faculty in advancing and integrating the teaching, research and service missions of the University of Arizona. Our efforts are explicitly directed toward making knowledge generated at the University more accessible to Arizona’s citizens and to our international partners. Outreach does not exist as an independent administrative function: it exists solely to serve the efforts of our faculty in the departments and colleges.

Structurally, Outreach consists of one academic unit (UA South), and two distinct support units (Arizona Outreach College and International Affairs). In addition, Arizona Cooperative Extension is a hybrid support/academic unit which reports dually to Outreach and to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

In addition to these four formal structural unit reports, Outreach is also heavily if somewhat informally engaged in three additional academic support activities. First, we are actively involved in helping define the University of Arizona’s strategic directions, particularly with respect to assuring that the University and Regents’ strategic plans recognize and accommodate student access, dissemination of research to the public, and University service benefitting the state of Arizona. Second, Outreach provides an active interface with governmental and education officials throughout the state and abroad interested in advancing educational opportunities for citizens of their respective regions in collaboration with the University of Arizona. Third, Outreach is exploring how to support and market in a more consistent fashion some of the distributed outreach programs independently generated and sustained by faculty across the University of Arizona campus, historically with minimal central administrative support. Many of these programs are in fact the face of the University of Arizona across the state and the institution must support them accordingly.

In short, Outreach serves as the primary administrative expression of the University of Arizona’s land-grant mission. Outreach, through its efforts directly tying core academic products of University of Arizona faculty to learners in Arizona and abroad, whether via courses or research content, stands as a model for integrating teaching, research and service in a way that is meaningful to the citizens of Arizona.

This report will not serve as the annual report for each support unit reporting to Outreach, but rather a summary of individual annual reports submitted by those units.
UA South is submitting its own comprehensive annual report to the Provost, and Cooperative Extension is reporting through the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, although we will draw from those reports here as well.

II. Outreach Relationship to the Strategic Plan.

In the last year, several Outreach units have been reframed to closely align with the priorities of the University of Arizona’s Strategic Plan: academic excellence, access and success, and quality of life and societal impact. In fact, our primary mission to align academic expertise of our faculty with opportunities to serve Arizona manifests a practical and effective integration of these Plan elements. In addition, Outreach serves as one of the primary venues for bringing University of Arizona knowledge to the citizens of Arizona beyond processes traditionally measured in degree production or research dollars. A few critical examples of these activities follow.

Strategic Direction One: Prepare Arizona’s Youth and Ensure Access and Opportunity.

As mentioned earlier, Outreach leadership has been actively involved in helping define the University of Arizona’s strategic direction as reflected here and in the Regents 2020 Strategic Plan. In short, as the University determines how it will accommodate approximately 10,000 new students by 2020, Outreach is expected to support approximately half of that growth through UA South and the Arizona Outreach College (“AOC”).

Specifically, in the last year Outreach has received funding for three academic outreach coordinators, two of whom have been hired in Yuma and Nogales, with a third search pending in Casa Grande. These individuals will help establish 2+2 programs with their local community colleges, as well as build additional academic relationships integrating as appropriate UA South, AOC and University of Arizona main campus content. While these coordinators have not been in place long enough to show enrollment increases, discussions underway related to local program development are quite promising. In short, we are finding a positive response to the University of Arizona’s new efforts to partner with communities in providing local “learning centers” allowing access for time-bound and place-bound students, and in assuring that these accessible programs meet the traditional high standards of academic quality demanded by University of Arizona faculty.

With respect to particular metrics, Outreach’s contribution to University of Arizona total enrollment is significant and increasing. Specifically, credit programs offered through the Arizona Outreach College (including correspondence, credit outreach, distance learning, evening/weekend, and the Eller Executive MBA) generated total student credit hours (“SCH”) of 26,964 for the Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 semesters combined. This is compared to 21,600 SCH generated in Fall 2006/Spring 2007, and 18,499 SCH generated in Fall 2005/Spring 2006. Summer program student credit hours
are also climbing, but we have not included those figures since they are not yet available for Summer 2008.

In short, SCH production through AOC alone has increased by 16.7% and 24.8% over the last two academic years, respectively. Given additional recent changes, including new incentives for encouraging faculty to offer courses through AOC, a significant streamlining of AOC in the last two years (from 50 employees to 29), and a more rigorous set of standards in determining which courses we should offer, AOC expects continued and significant annual growth in the coming years.

Keep in mind that these credit course offerings are examples of the University of Arizona at its most accessible, flexible and relevant, expressly designed to provide enhanced student access to academic excellence. Indeed, AOC and its growing role in Outreach reflect a critical alignment of all four strategic directions of the University’s new Strategic Plan.

**Strategic Direction Two: Engage and Graduate Students Who Can Contribute to the State, Nation, and World.**

One of the primary measures of engaged learning reflected in recent standards promulgated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and by the NASULGC Council on Engagement and Outreach (CEO), relate to the strength of a university’s international affairs program. While we have not yet fully recovered from the loss of international students following 2001, our International Affairs program is robust and growing.

For example, last year our International Visitors Fund provided $4,754 in funding to 12 U. of A. departments to host 16 outstanding international scholars for lectures and research collaborations at the University of Arizona. We also hosted in excess of 200 international visitors to campus from 34 countries. The Office also negotiated 37 new international memoranda of agreement with peer institutions in 20 countries. Our International Affairs Foreign Travel Grant program awarded $74,809 to 109 faculty members for presentation of invited and refereed papers at international conferences, representing 66 U. of A. departments and 41 country destinations. These engagements clearly manifest the contributions of our faculty to international academic dialogue, benefitting our students as well as those enrolled at host institutions abroad. Participation of our faculty abroad and of visiting scholars here is critical to advancing the U. of A.’s position as a premier international university.

These activities are significant in their own right, but they also serve as platforms for measuring engagement as dictated in the Strategic Plan. In particular, the Plan suggests measuring the number of students involved in study abroad or exchange programs. While total U. of A. international student enrollment continues to decline since pre-2001 highs, the rate of decline has slowed, and participation in exchange and study abroad is growing. Although total international student enrollment declined from 2,297 students in 2006 to 2,261 in 2007 (a decline of 36 students), the number of
undergraduate students within that total increased from 784 to 805. Importantly, among those undergraduate students the number of sponsored undergraduate students has increased steadily from 70 in 2005 to 107 in 2006 and 157 in 2007, and the number of exchange students has increased steadily from 58 in 2005 to 84 in 2007.

Despite challenges in successfully recruiting international students to attend the University of Arizona, U. of A. student participation in study abroad programs has increased dramatically since 2000, when 1,214 students participated in study abroad. After a decrease from 1,591 students to 1,462 in 2004, numbers have increased steadily, with 1,611 participants in 2005/2006 and 1,817 participants in 2006/2007, a net increase approaching 50% since 2000/2001.

By the measure identified in the Strategic Plan (participation in study abroad), Outreach is making an increasingly significant contribution. Yet much work remains to be done in advancing our international efforts both on campus and abroad. This remains a critical focus of Outreach leadership in the coming year.

**Strategic Direction Three: Provide World-Class Research That Improves the Human Condition in Arizona and Beyond.**

While the specific metrics set forth in this strategic direction are not readily applicable to the Outreach administrative function, Outreach will be in a position over the longer term to contribute significantly to several of these metrics. For example, AOC currently offers a distributed Masters in Engineering, as well as a distance Masters in Optical Sciences, and could ultimately contribute to the number of doctoral degrees granted by the University of Arizona in appropriate disciplines. In addition, while the Outreach administrative unit does not support the College of Nursing online doctoral degree in nursing, the fact that such programs exist reflects the potential for online contribution, at least in part, to the number of doctoral degrees granted.

Just as important, Cooperative Extension, a program with a dual report to Outreach, serves as a direct venue for disseminating extremely relevant University of Arizona research findings. Specific Cooperative Extension accomplishments are reflected in the annual report of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and will not be recited here, but a simple example may be instructive. Through application and dissemination of research related to integrated pest management, Arizona Cooperative Extension scientists have saved the Arizona cotton industry in excess of $300 million annually through the significant reduction of pesticide and herbicide application and additional crop losses caused by pests.

Additional examples abound, but again the metrics reflected in this particular strategic direction do not address the dissemination mechanisms accomplished through the active service endeavors of University of Arizona faculty. Keep in mind that service by our faculty, whether it occurs through Outreach administrative units or through independent outreach activities of those faculty, is often the most rapid and relevant mechanism for dissemination of critical research to Arizona’s citizens, and may in fact
have a more significant impact on Arizona’s economy than any single research measure reflected in University of Arizona’s Strategic Plan.

**Strategic Direction Four: Partner with and Serve the People of Arizona.**

The Outreach unit itself is a direct manifestation of this Strategic Direction. Among several readily applicable metrics, the numbers of individuals served is most easily measured. Total numbers of individuals served by Cooperative Extension is reflected in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences annual report. Remaining Outreach units, however, serve significant numbers of individuals across the state and around the world.

In particular, the credit outreach components of the Arizona Outreach College served 5,518 students (unduplicated head count) in Fall 2007/Spring 2008, compared with 5,050 students in Fall 2006/Spring 2007, up from 4,513 students in Fall 2005/Spring 2006. In other words, nearly 500 more Arizona students have been directly served through AOC offerings every year since 2005. Similarly, the number of sections offered by AOC has increased steadily, from 572 unique sections in 2006/2007 to 698 individual sections in 2007/2008. These sections and enrollments reflect student participation in five evening and weekend degrees, five distance learning certificates or degrees, and four additional certificates or degrees offered through credit outreach.

Non-credit participation is not included in these figures. Accordingly, in addition to the numbers reflected above, AOC served 1,478 enrollments through its Center for Computer and Professional Education, 348 enrollments through Arizona Youth University, 667 enrollments through Elderhostel, and 569 students through high school correspondence, in addition to nearly 700 additional participants in other non-credit programs served through this administrative unit. In short, the Outreach functions within AOC alone directly engaged 3,762 Arizona learners in non-credit offerings. Note that these numbers do not include campus-wide participation in numerous outreach activities hosted by individual faculty in departments across campus not affiliated with Outreach administrative units.

As an aside, our credit and non-credit AOC offerings also make a significant contribution to the University of Arizona’s financial bottom line. In 2006/2007, AOC’s gross revenue was $5.7 million, with expenses of $2.7 million. Of the remaining $3 million in revenue, over $2.7 million was transferred to main campus academic departments served by Arizona Outreach College ($1.8 million of that return revenue, however, went to Eller College in relation to its accelerated MBA, with nearly $900,000 being returned to other departments). All this was accomplished on a total state investment of three FTE lines, since remaining positions are covered by AOC revenue. If partner/learner investment in Outreach and returns to faculty on those investments are relevant measures, the growth of AOC in particular is a critical strategic opportunity for the U. of A., both in terms of the Plan and the Regents’ 2020 focus on efficiency.
III. Challenges and Strategies

Our challenges are critical, and fall into two primary categories: culture and resources. Each of the units reporting to Outreach, with the possible exception of Cooperative Extension, is involved in a process of significant organizational change. We will review these change processes in turn.

Over recent years, UA South experienced dramatic and consistent enrollment drops arising primarily from changes in schedule related to frequent faculty departures among other issues. Further, UA South administration had to some extent developed an “us against them” mentality regarding main campus, and as a result had isolated UA South not only from the benefits of deeper main campus relationships but also from the academic content that might otherwise have been available to broaden the UA South student experience. Changes in administrative structure made in the last 14 months are only now beginning to stabilize the organization. Despite this significant contraction in enrollment and lack of stable content relationships, UA South is also being asked to assume significant leadership in the creation and expansion of possible U. of A. Learning Centers in Nogales and Pinal County. This work will require a critical focus on needs assessments, efficient use of resources, alignment and collaboration with main campus programs, leadership and faculty development, brand reconstruction and execution.

Notwithstanding these significant challenges, UA South was provided an additional $1.2 million in permanent, continuing legislative appropriation last year. UA South has moved aggressively to stabilize its faculty, including hiring new faculty into programs approved by the Board of Regents in 2006 related to primary education, secondary education and commerce. Main campus faculty now sit on all UA South academic searches. These programs, particularly commerce, are poised for significant enrollment growth, and for providing a broader range of options for talented students entering the University of Arizona.

Our primary UA South challenges remain faculty capacity, the ability to execute related to enrollment growth opportunities, and continuous improvement in the UA South/U. of A. main campus relationship and resulting collaboration opportunities. Our primary strategies to address these challenges are to focus on filling current UA South faculty gaps, and to connect entrepreneurial UA South and main campus faculty directly or through AOC around the student-driven delivery of accessible education to target audiences.

Our primary, immediate challenge within Arizona Outreach College is a remnant of a less than fully effective business history. Formerly Extended University and later the Office of Continuing Education and Academic Outreach, the organization lacked a coherent business model, and had evolved into a cost-center auxiliary, rather than a unit responsible for delivering critical academic content to essential audiences. Our primary strategies for overcoming this business model challenge are to focus on customer service (both internal and external), efficient delivery of existing academic programs, and creating incentives for additional main campus utilization of AOC capacity. We also
intend to jointly market Arizona Outreach College and UA South or other main campus programs as appropriate. We are also developing program-specific growth plans in target disciplines. As these programs are growing, we require additional administrative and student affairs support, and have accordingly requested a more significant central administrative investment in AOC and Outreach.

We are also conducting an in-depth review of the University’s international activities. These activities are currently disbursed across the University, including International Affairs, headed by Kirk Simmons and reporting to Outreach; the Office of Hemispheric Programs, reporting to the Office of External Relations; the Center for English as a Second Language, reporting to the College of Humanities; and additional activities undertaken by the Office of Admissions and the Graduate College. These administrative functions are disbursed and coordination varies. Somewhat separate from these functions, but served by them to varying degrees, are the numerous international activities undertaken by our faculty in the form of research programs or education activities abroad.

We are mapping the interrelationship of these programs to identify administrative support gaps, duplication, challenges or opportunities. We intend through this process to significantly improve coordination of those support units reporting to the Provost’s Office, the President’s Office and various college-level functions. We intend to consolidate central administrative functions around a streamlined asset map, and to develop specific geographic strategies aimed at target academic relationships and critical geographies. As with AOC and the remainder of Outreach, these functions will be aligned to most effectively serve U. of A. students and faculty and their partners here and abroad. We will require additional administrative support, as reflected in our budget request to effectuate these strategies.

Perhaps most significantly, Outreach is challenged by a lack of central financial support for the Outreach function. For example, the core strategic team leading assessment and consolidation of the Outreach functions described herein is made up of four individuals simultaneously holding senior leadership positions in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. That College is subsidizing the activities of that “loaned” team to a significant degree. Specifically, several CALS-based associate vice presidents for Outreach are currently overseeing functions related to finance, International Affairs and AOC, and are spending significant amounts of time (and in at least one instance a majority of their time) on Outreach functions. With success, the administrative burdens on those offices are escalating dramatically. While shared administration is critical given the locus of Cooperative Extension and the presence of CALS in every county in the state, the University must commit additional leadership salary support, support personnel and faculty incentive resources to this enterprise. These critical goals have been identified by the Outreach leadership team and are reflected in our budget request.
IV. Conclusion

A special and more general challenge relates to overcoming the cultural impact, both on campus and off, of the University’s historic lack of support for learning and service activities off-campus and abroad. Thankfully, the University’s current and incoming leadership recognize the import and impact of Land Grant work in practical, economic and political terms. Just as fortunately, many of our University’s best and brightest faculty have found ways to continue this work, sometimes underground, sometimes behind the scenes, but usually cobbled together from a variety of resources, and nearly always to the critical acclaim of the communities they serve. Despite these challenges, these faculty have remained engaged in the service of our State, and have influenced the current Strategic Plan in a manner that reflects a reaffirmation of our Land Grant roots. Our challenge is to honor and support these faculty and the principles they serve, and to assure that the U. of A.’s and Regents’ planning processes and funding mechanisms facilitate what is, to many at least, the clearest expression of the University of Arizona at its most relevant.

Appendices

A) 2007 salary equity analysis and description of the implemented strategies for addressing salary equity at the local level – n/a

B) 2007 report on faculty and appointed professional recruitments, outlining the number of searches, and how the search process and its conclusion advanced our institutional diversity goals – see attached

C) 2007 executive summary of the highlights for the research/outreach centers and institutes housed within your college – n/a
APPENDIX B:

2007 report on faculty and appointed professional recruitments, outlining the number of searches the unit conducted, the number of successfully concluded searches, and how the search process and its conclusion advanced our institutional diversity goals.

The Office of University Outreach recruited for two appointed professional positions in 2007:

- Coordinator, Academic Outreach Programs for Yuma
- Coordinator, Academic Outreach Programs for Nogales

Both searches were successful. The Yuma position was filled by a white female and the Nogales position was filled by a white male. In both cases the search committee was diverse, and in the Nogales search the pool was exceptionally diverse. Both coordinators will be working extensively with underserved audiences, and will engage diverse community leadership in advancing our local learning center program.

Recruitment information for UA South and Cooperative Extension can be found in the UA South Annual Report and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Annual Report, respectively.