To: Department Chairs

From: Margaret Madden, VPAA

Subject: Austen Report Update

Date: 28 March 2015

Dear Chairs,

Thank you for participating in the meetings with Mike Williams last week on the Austen Report. I want to follow up on some revisions we are making to the report and provide some guidance for the next steps in the program analysis.

Based on your suggestions during the discussions, Austen is making two major revisions to the report:

1. Education will be treated as a major, since it is functionally equivalent. Like all students with two or three majors, education students will be counted in both majors for the purposes of enumerating the number of majors and related statistics.
2. Courses in one major that carry college core designations and are required by a different major will be identified and the enrollees who are in the other major will be counted towards the major rather than towards general education. We will need your help to make this change.

You will shortly be getting a request from Lee Allard asking you indicate courses in your major that are required by another major (including as prerequisite or auxiliary courses) that also have core designators. Lee will then be able to identify students in those courses who are in the major or in the other majors for which they are required and determine what proportion of students (in other majors) are taking them for core credit. (For example, biology students are required to take some chemistry courses. For the purposes of this report, both chemistry and biology majors will be counted towards the chemistry major calculations and students in other majors will count towards general education.) Please respond promptly to Lee’s inquiry so the report can be revised in time for your departmental report.

I also want to clarify one other matter. There were some questions about how release time for grant work was counted. Mike reviewed the data file and reports that grant work was not included in the cost calculations of departments. In other words, if a faculty member received a 3-credit course release to work on a grant, then only three-quarters of the salary cost was attributed to that department. I have the list showing how specific individuals were coded and can share those in your department if you wish.

**May 1 Report**

For the report I am requesting in May, I would like you to do the following.

1. Meet with your department and go over the findings of the Austen report and your department data profile. (The revisions above will not affect many departments significantly, so you can use the current version to begin these discussions.)
2. Discuss the implications of the analysis with attention to the three summary categories: Demand, Cost, and Yield.
3. Use your department data to identify factors that would seem to contribute to the results and begin the discussion of actions you might take to assist in the College’s goal to reduce instructional cost and increase enrollments.

Please be reminded that every department can contribute to meeting these goals. Departments with strong yield and low cost might consider how they can grow even further. This might include a request for additional resources in some cases. On the other hand departments with high cost and low demand or yield might focus on reducing cost. Recall that Mike Williams pointed out that the largest driver of cost is class size and high cost departments may be able to create efficiencies by offering fewer upper level electives.

1. Write a brief description that includes the Austen report findings about the department and the preliminary conclusions regarding how the department may respond to those findings. Send your report to your dean and to me.

The goal of the May report is to assure that departments begin discussing these reports before the summer so that you will explore possibilities before next fall when a final report will be due.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions. Thanks again for your participation in this process.