Campus Planning Committee Report on DRU Comprehensive Status Change

The Faculty Senate, at its November 8th meeting, passed a motion charging the Campus Planning committee with investigating issues and needs related to a possible move of Appalachian State University from its current Master's/L designation to a Doctoral/Research Universities, or DRU, designation, with Comprehensive Doctorates/No Medical or Veterinary School, or CompDoc/NMedVet, as its Graduate Institutional classification. The Campus Planning Committee prepared the following report for review by the Faculty Senate.

Background and Justification

The Strategic Plan for 2008 – 2012 provides clear indicators that Appalachian State University seeks to increase its presence as a research institution. Within the discussion of Priority Two, it is stated that,

A fundamental responsibility of a university is the advancement of knowledge through research and creative activities, and great universities are recognized for the scholarly accomplishments of their faculty. To become a nationally recognized university and engage the best students, Appalachian must significantly advance its overall research profile and achieve prominence in selected areas. (p. 10)

Initiatives supporting Priority Two include improving resources and funding to support sponsored programs, including increasing academic support per student FTE to the 80th percentile for Doctoral/Research Universities and increasing funding for graduate research assistantships by 15%. A vision for nationally competitive research programs in targeted areas is also provided; areas targeted for enhanced resources are health-related fields and research in energy, the environment, and economics. Priority Four provides additional direction for engaging in research that is particularly supportive of the northwestern region of the state, including achieving a Carnegie Engaged University designation.
This report examines the likelihood and implications of an ascension to the Carnegie Rating from Master’s/L to DRU classification. Based on our current and projected growth in terminal degrees granted, including doctorates, ASU will automatically qualify to receive a designation of DRU by or around the year 2020. **ASU does not want to transition from being among the highest levels of master’s institutions to among the lowest levels of DRU universities.** This report documents potential peer institutions and preliminary assessment of issues/barriers that could impact ASU’s quality as a DRU institution. It is the hope of the Campus Planning Committee that this report will inform decisions related to the DRU ascension and the next Strategic Plan so that the move, if and when it occurs, is made with deliberate attention to enhancing current strengths of the university while retaining the best of its character.

In 2009-2010, ASU produced 3,000 bachelor’s degrees and 876 master's degrees. The College of Education currently produces about ten Doctorate of Education degrees per year. With the addition of the Rural Clinical Psychology program at the doctorate level, ASU will approach graduating twenty doctoral or terminal degrees per year, which is the qualification for achieving the DRU classification.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching provides classifications for institutions of higher learning for the benefit of those conducting research on higher education. The familiar structure, which included R1 and R2 and Doc 1 and Doc 2 designations for doctorate-granting institutions was last used in 1994 and has been replaced by a more finely-grained system of classifications that include: 1) Basic Classification, 2) Size and Setting, 3) Undergraduate Profile, 4) Enrollment Profile, 5) Graduate Instructional Program, and 6) Undergraduate Instructional Profile. The most recent classifications were released in 2005 and were based on single year snapshot of data unless requested to do otherwise by an institution.
Currently, Appalachian State University is classified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Classification</th>
<th>Master’s L: Master's Colleges and Universities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Size and Setting</td>
<td>L4/R: Large four-year, primarily residential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Profile</td>
<td>FT4/MS/HTI: Full-time four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Profile</td>
<td>VHU: Very high undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Instruction Program</td>
<td>S-Doc/Ed: Single doctoral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Instruction Program</td>
<td>Prof+A&amp;S/SGC: Professions plus arts &amp; sciences, some graduate coexistence</td>
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A change to the DRU status would trigger a change of the Basic Classification and of the Graduate Instructional Program. The current designation, Master’s L, identifies ASU as having awarded at least fifty master’s degrees in 2003-2004 but fewer than twenty doctorates. Graduating more than twenty doctorates per year would place ASU into the DRU category. Additional qualities and characteristics are then used to determine the Graduate Instruction Program Classification, which include Comprehensive doctoral with medical/veterinary, Comprehensive doctoral with no medical/veterinary, Doctoral, humanities/social sciences dominant, Doctoral STEM dominant, and Doctoral, professions dominant.

**Who Appalachian Might Look Like**

As of February 2, 2011, Carnegie recognizes 89 institutions in the DRU classification.

Among these, eight institutions possess the CompDoc/NMedVet and DRU classification:

American University, Clark Atlanta University, DePaul University, Middle Tennessee State University, Texas Christian University, Texas Woman’s University, University of Northern Colorado, and University of Tulsa. Thus, in terms of the Basic and Graduate Instructional
Program Classifications, these eight institutions have similar profiles to the one ASU would have after moving up to the DRU status. None of these eight institutions are currently among those listed on ASU’s recognized peers list.

ASU has three recognized aspirational peer institutions in the Graduate Instructional Program “CompDoc/NMedVet” classification, namely Bowling Green State University, Miami University of Ohio, and George Mason University. The Basic Classification of these three is that of Research University, or RU/H, with high research activity.

**Documented Concerns**

If we are to be successful, increasing Appalachian’s presence as a research institution and ascension to a DRU Carnegie Classification must occur with planning, change, and increased resources for both faculty research and our graduate programs.

Because Appalachian State University values shared governance and challenges itself to implement policies that represent best practices in supporting faculty and staff performance, analyzing issues and needs faculty may have in the event of a move to DRU status is warranted. For instance, a classification move would likely impact faculty time and resources as well as administrative structures and processes. If Appalachian becomes recognized as producing both graduate students and faculty research at a level that is comparable with the eight institutions listed earlier, and if we aspire to increase faculty research even to the level of Bowling Green State University, Miami University of Ohio, and George Mason University, then our policies and resources will have to undergo modification. This report is an initial investigation by faculty representatives into where some of these issues regarding resources, faculty time, policies, and administrative structures are likely to arise.
In this regard, our report reflects the issues expressed in the *ASU 2006 Graduate Education Task Force Report*, which is readily available at the site for the [Cratis D. Williams Graduate School](http://example.com) and in the reports by subcommittees of the [Strategic Planning Commission](http://example.com).

The 2006 report features the results of a thorough evaluation of graduate programs, faculty, and students and resulted in a set of ten recommendations to the University community. The report from the Task Force, which informed the development of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan, shares the perspective that resources for supporting graduate education are inadequate. Deans explained during a round-table discussion that external research funding and support for graduate students’ scholarships and out-of-state tuition waivers are needed. Comments also pointed to low-enrollment programs as a potential for reallocating resources to other programs.

Similarly, the subcommittees of the Strategic Planning Commission prepared and submitted reports in May of 2007 that provided specific goals supportive of the overall Strategic Plan. These subcommittees, particularly those of Faculty Evaluation and Development, Targeted Research, Resources, and Graduate Programs, addressed many of the issues that would arise in association with a classification move.

**Recommendations**

Considering documented needs in supporting graduate education and ongoing faculty conversations regarding issues such as time and support for scholarly activity, it is imperative that Appalachian State University administrators and faculty address and correct potential barriers to its successful ascension to the next Carnegie classification. Therefore, the Campus Planning Committee provides the following list of issues to which attention should be paid in preparing ASU for success at the next DRU classification.
1) New strategic plan
   a) The administration should report to faculty on status of current strategic plan and accomplishment of goals.
   b) The new strategic plan should include less ambiguity regarding attaining the research profile and addressing mechanisms for reaching a scholarship/teaching balance.

2) Successful Provost search
   a) Clarity and vision will be necessary characteristics for the new Provost.
   b) The new Provost must be able to recognize how to productively balance visions for ASU’s “brand” with regard to its past history vs. its planned future, as outlined in the current and new strategic plan.

3) Increase direct support for research productivity
   a) OCSAs must be provided equitably, not either/or with regard to other opportunities, such as Fulbright. Research-oriented faculty need to be able to count on receiving OCSAs at least every six years. The question of pre-tenure OCSAs must also be addressed.
   b) Increased lab and office space for faculty and for graduate students are necessary for increasing scholarship productivity.
   c) Workload adjustments must support increasing scholarship productivity. (see #4)
   d) The university must make a long-term commitment to the hard costs of research centers, such as infrastructure and administrative and analytical staff.

4) Adjust faculty workload
   a) Workload demands should be similar to future peers’ levels, e.g. 6/9 or 9/6 hours per semester.
b) Workloads must be equitable across colleges and departments. ANY research-oriented faculty who is productive, regardless of whether or not his or her department actually has a doctoral program, should be provided resources appropriate for faculty at a DRU institution.

c) Options for different workloads for research-oriented and non-research-oriented tenure-line faculty may be offered so that existing tenure-line faculty do not feel strong-armed into becoming something they are not and were not expected to be at the time of hire. (Perhaps 6/9 hours/semester for TT faculty who are active scholars; 12/9 for TT faculty who are not active scholars.)

d) Provision of earned hours in schedule for theses, products, dissertations, etc., which is already promised in the Faculty Handbook, should be enforced.

e) Faculty teaching large lecture sections (larger than 75? 90? 120?) should have those sections count in their workloads as two courses, not just one.

5) Adjust promotion and tenure review

   a) Clearly defined requirements for P&T with more parity across colleges and departments must be established.

   b) To be similar to peers, the makeup of Department Personnel Committees, such as only tenure-track members of faculty on the DPC or something similar to craft model, should be reexamined.

   c) Because college-wide promotion and tenure committees represent the norm at other DRU institutions, the university should examine the feasibility of such committees.

   d) Post-tenure review should be well-defined.
6) Adjust grant and fellowship acquisition and support
   a) Efficient, useful support from Graduate School staff will support faculty in increasing productivity.
   b) A goal must be fairly applied and equitable policies regarding grants and fellowships that are representative of best practices in respective disciplines.

7) Increase graduate student support
   a) Although graduate student stipends at ASU are competitive with similar master's granting institutions, ascension to the DRU status would require increasing funding in order to draw quality graduate students.
   b) Supporting the Graduate School in its expanded mission will require increased foundation monies.
   c) Increases in the number of graduate students and in their engagement in teaching and research call for improved infrastructure, including office space, technology, and appropriate lab space.

8) Maintain highest quality in undergraduate and graduate teaching
   a) ASU should protect its reputation of quality teaching by maintaining current figure of 99% teaching faculty with terminal degree
   b) The university should strive to maintain or improve lower current teacher-student ratio of 17:1.

9) In accordance with the University NTT Committee report (2006), the university should avoid overdependence on NTT faculty. Courses taught by NTT faculty should not exceed 15% of total university instructional time or 25% of any individual departmental instructional time.
10) Strategic recruiting for increased faculty expertise
   a) The university should make focused and/or “cluster” hires to invest in the potential of departments.

11) New peer selection (see section “Who Appalachian Might Look Like, above)
   a) New peers must be selected to represent new Carnegie classification.
   b) Current list of aspirational peers should be reevaluated.

Conclusion
In light of the current budget situation, it might seem counter-intuitive to map out recommendations that in many cases may have budget-related solutions or implications and/or that will require increased, rather than reduced funds and resources. However, we believe that the potential DRU move of ASU should be accomplished deliberately rather than haphazardly. Therefore, there is no time like the present to dream and plan for a better day. Budget cuts, resource adjustments, and organizational changes must be made with a clear eye toward the future, so that Appalachian does not make changes for immediate gain that will have negative and long-term implications for its dreams and plans. Furthermore, while the current budget constrictions create painful change, ASU might use DRU peers as a guide for how to direct some of these changes. Thus, we should view the budget crisis as an opportunity to “get our house in order,” to become more efficient, to decide upon our strategic priorities for the future, and to plan to meet them.

   “Appalachian aspires to be a model 21st-century, nationally recognized university combining the best characteristics of liberal arts and research institutions by resourcefully blending teaching and scholarship” (Opening line of the 2008-2012 ASU Strategic Plan). The faculty of ASU have a deep desire to maintain the quality of students’ education along with ASU’s reputation as a liberal arts institution while improving its research profile.
Accession to DRU status will likely increase scholarly prestige, increase grant and other external funding revenue, increase recruiting and retention of the top candidates for tenure-track faculty, and increase recruiting of students who would like to work with those faculty, among other benefits. At the same time, we must not forget our history and commitment to liberal arts. Appalachian should carefully balance both short and long-term budget considerations so that our future efforts in pursuit of scholarly excellence and potential DRU accession will also serve to continue our proud history of teaching excellence & liberal arts education.