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IMPORTANT COLLEGE POLICY MEMORANDUM

TO: College Department Chairs:
Dr. Ron Nowaczyk, Department of Psychology

FROM: Keats Sparrow *Keats*
Dean

DATE: January 27, 2000

SUBJECT: College Operations/Activities and the Productivity Index

With the advent of Doctoral University status, East Carolina University is experiencing many changes, among them the way in which decisions are made for allocating state resources—e.g., faculty and staff positions, graduate assistantships, operating budgets, and funds for equipment purchases. Together with other decision-making touchstones such as the University's strategic plan and service records, the Academic Affairs Productivity Index (PI) is now being used as one of the decision-making tools for resource allocations. (Please note carefully that the PI is not a "funding formula"; instead, it is just one of several touchstones used to make budget decisions.) In view of the new ways decisions are being made about budgets, we in the College need to conduct a timely and careful review of our operations/activities to make sure they are responsive to the budget-decision criteria. The purpose of this memo is to ask that you conduct a thorough and careful review of your department's operations/activities to determine whether they are producing high PI ratings for you.

Conversely, it's imperative that we also identify our operations/activities that do not contribute to high PI ratings—e.g., academic support operations, non-credit offerings, funded advising, and outreach activities--and seriously question whether we can afford to continue supporting them. Because many of our departments currently support so many operations that are "nonproductive" according to the PI, these departments are not functioning as responsively as they could be to the administration's method for determining their state support. To garner our share of the University's resources and prosper, we must act promptly and decisively to ensure that our objectives, operations, and products are aligned with the resource-yielding criteria.

As set forth in the "Sample Formula Explanation: Resource/Productivity Index" (see Attachment A), the index reveals the ratio between resources consumed versus scholarly activities generated. On the one hand, its "General Resource Index" takes into account the resources used to support an operation while, on the other hand, its "Scholarly Activities Index" takes into account the numbers of Student Credit Hours (SCHs) generated (weighted @ 60 percent) plus publications/artistic productions and grants generated by the operation (weighted @ 40 percent). As you can see, while the index takes into account the *resources* consumed by activities such as student development, non-credit offerings, academic support, outreach, and funded advising, it does not credit the *activities* supported by these resources. In essence, then, it does not recognize these activities as creditable

College "products." The consequence is that, as far as the PI is concerned, we have a high number of resources consumed as opposed to a low number of products rendered. Those activities that consume resources but don't produce creditable outcomes count against us.

Such activities are now costing the College and its departments considerably more than the actual investment in those activities. The reason is that the "non-productivity" of our many resource-consuming operations significantly lowers the College's ratios on the PI.

The PI thus makes it necessary for the College and its departments to re-examine and amend our mission and objectives so we can more efficiently render the tacitly mandated "products"—a sensible action for us to take anyway in view of our new Doctoral classification. As explained above, the mandated products identified by the index are large numbers of (1) SCHs, (2) publications/creative performances, and (3) external grants. But nowhere does the PI take into account *funded* advising, outreach programs, and the like. Accordingly, the PI effectively narrows the scope of our mission to the three creditable products.

In limiting the products we're expected to render to these three, the index calls into question numerous products consuming our resources but earning us no credit—products that are thus, in effect, penalizing us in resource allocations. In addition, the PI points up that we're producing many products at our expense that, while lowering our own productivity ratios, actually increase the productivity ratios of other university agencies (e.g., student development services, special advising). The PI dictates that, if we're to prosper under its aegis, we must narrow our objectives by focusing our resources and energies on the three creditable products, all of which are appropriate for a Doctoral University.

Accordingly, I ask you to take the following actions:

First, proceed at once, with the assistance of your executive or advisory committee if appropriate, in identifying all service, academic support, non-credit, advising, and outreach operations/activities in your department that consume state resources but do not *directly* yield SCHs, publications or performances, or external grants. If your department is committing faculty or staff FTE to support a student development operation or student advising, carefully evaluate whether doing so is "productive." I've attached to this memo an early 1999 list of operations in your department that would appear not to help with your PI ratio (Attachment B), but by now the list may be outdated or incomplete.

Second, perhaps at a faculty meeting, (A) hold a discussion with your colleagues about the ramifications of expending resources for activities that the PI does not recognize as creditable products; and (B) seriously consider possible operational changes that'll make your department more responsive to the PI. For example, you may wish to consider reducing or eliminating resource support for your "non-productive" operations/activities or even closing them down.

With the PI now in effect to help determine your department's resource base, you'll need a strong justification to continue supporting a non-productive operation. But even if you justify continuing support for it, you must understand that the department will have to support it with resources generated by its PI-credited "products." In other words, because

Sample - Formula Explanation
Resource/Productivity Analysis

Teaching Index (SCH and Degrees Awarded)		Teaching Totals/General Resource Index * 10
Teaching Index (Weighted at 60% for calculation of total productivity Index)		Teaching Index *.6

Number of Grant Proposal Submissions (Using Office of Sponsored Programs' Data)	Actual	Actual/Units' Total
Number of Grants Received (Using Office of Sponsored Programs' Data)	Actual	Actual/Units' Total
Dollar Amount of Grants Received (Using Office of Sponsored Programs' Data)	Actual	Actual/Units' Total
Gifts	Actual	Actual/Units' Total
Subtotal Scholarly Index		$(\text{Submissions} * 2) + (\text{Number of Grants Received} + \text{Dollar Amounts Received} + \text{Gift Amount Received}) / 5$
Publications/Artworks/Exhibitions (Using Publications Database Maintained by the Division of Research and Graduate Studies)	Actual	Actual/Units' Total
Scholarly Totals		$((\text{Scholarly Index Subtotal} + (\text{Publications} * 2)) / 3 * 100)$

a non-productive operation will not generate its own resources, you'll have to support it by taking resources from other programs and activities and dedicating them to your non-productive operation. You may wish to continue providing support for a few key non-productive operations, but supporting several will likely damage the health and integrity of your productive programs and activities.

You have my permission to provide copies of this memorandum and its attachments to your colleagues at the opening of your discussion.

After concluding our reviews of the responsiveness of our operations/activities to the PI, we'll need to turn our attention, of course, to our responsiveness to other criteria being used to make decisions about resource allocations, including the Strategic Plan. But let's first take a look at how we can best prosper under the auspices of the PI.

Attachments: 2

Sample - Formula Explanation
Resource/Productivity Analysis

	Actual	Relative
State Budget (Operating Only)	Actual State Operating Budget for a Given Year	Actual/Units' Total
Number of Budgeted FTE Faculty (Including RAs and TAs)	Total State-Supported Faculty, RAs and TAs	Actual/Units' Total
Number of SPA Staff	Number of State-Supported SPA Staff Members	Actual/Units' Total
General Resource Index		Sum of all Above/3

Undergraduate Student Credit Hours	Undergraduate Student Credit Hours Converted to Number of Faculty (Using GA Formula)	Actual/Units' Total
Graduate Student Credit Hours	Graduate Student Credit Hours Converted to Number of Faculty (Using GA Formula)	Actual/Units' Total
Undergraduate Degrees Conferred (Using Data from Planning and Institutional Research)	Actual	Actual/Units' Total
Graduate Degrees Conferred (Using Data from Planning and Institutional Research)	Actual	Actual/Units' Total
Teaching Totals		Sum of all Above/4

Sample - Formula Explanation
Resource/Productivity Analysis

Scholarly Activities Index		(Scholarly Totals/General Resource Index)*10
Scholarly Activities Index (Weighted at 40% for total productivity index)		Scholarly Activities Index*.4
General Productivity Index		Weighted Teaching Index + Weighted Scholarly Index