

Recommendations of the Program Changes Review Committee *January 2012*

I. Introduction

The Program Changes Review Committee was convened by Provost John Nicklow in the Fall 2011 to develop a process and a set of metrics to examine programmatic offerings of the campus that might come under scrutiny pursuant to PA 97-0610. The Act requires all public universities to report annually to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) all programs that have been terminated, dissolved, reduced, or consolidated. In addition, the Act requires that each public university report to the Illinois General Assembly all programs that exhibit a trend of low performance in enrollment, degree completions, and/or high expense per degree.

The committee co-chaired by Todd Winters (Agricultural Sciences) and Allan Karnes (Business) consisted of faculty representatives from each of the Colleges, a representative from Faculty Senate, a representative from the Graduate Council, and four staff from the Provost/Chancellor's offices. Members of the committee and who they represented were: Jim Allen (Associate Provost for Academic Programs), Stephen Ebbs (Faculty Senate), Carol Henry (Budget Office), Frank Houdek (Law), Phil Howze (Library), Scott Ishman (Graduate Council), Jyotsna Kapur (Mass Communications and Media Arts), Gary Kinsel (Science), Judy Marshal (Administration and Finance), David NewMyer (Applied Sciences and Arts), Mark Peterson (Business), Dwight Sanders (Agricultural Sciences), Larry Schilling (Institutional Research and Studies), Jane Swanson (Liberal Arts), Spyros Tragoudas (Engineering), and Keith Waugh (Education and Human Services).

The committee met semi-weekly throughout the Fall 2011 semester to discuss metrics and other parameters to examine program performance and efficiencies. In mid-November, two subcommittees were formed:

Metrics Committee. Charged with drafting a document containing a set of metrics and guidelines to identify and evaluate low performing degree programs under the auspices of PA 97-0610, as well as guidelines to allow program to remediate and improve so they would meet the standards. Members of this subcommittee were: Winters (Chair), Ebbs, Swanson, and Tragoudas.

Complementary Practices Committee. Charged with drafting a document containing opportunities for administrative efficiencies that might produce additional funds for reinvestment in the academic enterprise. Members of that committee were: Karnes (Chair), Allen, Howze, and Kapur.

Recommendations from the Program Changes Review Committee are contained within this document. Those recommendations will be submitted to the Office of the Provost and then circulated through the appropriate constituency groups for review and comment prior to the adoption and/or implementation of the recommendations.

II. Primary Standards for Degree Program Performance

Enrollment, Graduation, and Program Cost will be the three standards initially used to determine satisfactory performance of both undergraduate and graduate degree programs at Southern Illinois

University Carbondale. A description of the proposed metric in each standard based on those anticipated from the IBHE is found below

- A. Enrollment Standard.** Associate's and Bachelor's degree programs with fewer than 25 majors, Master's degree programs with fewer than 10 majors, and Doctorate programs with fewer than 5 majors as determined from the Day 10 enrollment figures for the fall semester will be considered below the Enrollment Standard. Some programs, because of identical course offerings for Masters and PhD students, may require a combined graduate program majors count.
- B. Graduation Standard.** Associate's degree programs that fall below 12 degrees conferred, Bachelor's degree programs that fall below 6 degrees conferred, and Master's degree programs that fall below 5 degrees conferred in a given year will be considered to be below the Graduation Standard. These values were calculated assuming a graduation rate corresponding to a minimum of 25% of the corresponding enrollment standard for Bachelor's degree programs and 50% of the enrollment standard for Associate's and Master's degree programs. Doctorate programs will be expected to grant at least one degree per year to meet the Graduation Standard. This number is based on the uniqueness and large variability in Doctorate program expectations.
- C. Program Cost Standard.** Programs (undergraduate or graduate) that have an Instructional Cost Ratio (SIUC Program Cost/Credit Hour : State Normative Program Cost/Credit Hour) above 1.25 per year using the Big-Five as the Normative Model for Illinois will not meet the Program Cost Standard. An average of the *Lower* and *Upper Division Cost Ratios* will be used for Associate/Bachelor's degree programs. For Master's programs the *Grad-I Cost Ratio* will be used, and for Doctorate programs the *Grad-II Cost Ratio* will be used.

No degree program, which is less than five years from its establishment, or re-establishment will be immediately required to comply with the three standards. Such programs would be evaluated in the sixth year following establishment or re-establishment.

III. Remediation of Degree Programs not meeting Annual Enrollment, Graduation, and Cost Standards.

The current contract with the Faculty Association shall govern any program changes. Any program that does not meet a standard or standards in a given year will be notified by the Associate Provost for Academic Programs as to which standard(s) has/have not been met. Within 90 days of notice, a ***Plan for Improvement*** for that individual degree program will be submitted by the Department Chair or Director through the College's Dean to the Associate Provost for Academic Programs (APAP). The program may with the approval of the APAP be granted a 30-day extension to prepare its plan. The plan should include reasons why a program did not meet these standards and tangible strategies to bring the program into alignment with the relevant standard(s). This plan should provide an historical overview of the program and include strategies for improvement of recruitment and retention, efficiency measures to lower costs, and an evaluation of the internal and external demands for the degree program. The plan will be submitted to the APAP and Provost, who will forward a copy to the appropriate Review Committee. The Review Committee will be chaired by the APAP and consist of two members of the constituency group relevant to the program (Faculty Senate or Graduate Council), and a Dean and Department Chair not associated with the College with the program under examination.

The APAP, Provost, and the Review Committee shall determine whether the program can reasonably be rehabilitated, whether the data for that program for the standard(s) represent an anomaly in that given year, or whether the program should not be subject to further action. If rehabilitation is not deemed possible, the program shall be immediately evaluated for restructuring, consolidation, or sunset status as described in section IV below. If rehabilitation is deemed feasible, the program may still be recommended for restructuring or consolidation, or may be provided with a defined time frame in which to achieve remediation goals determined by the APAP, Provost, and the Review Committee. To account for possible anomalies in the data, five-year rolling averages for the relevant standard will be considered. If a program meets the standards based on the five-year rolling averages, the program may for that year be excluded from the list or may be recommended only for restructuring and consolidation. If no action is recommended for the given year, the program would still be subject to future consideration should it fail to meet one or more standards in subsequent years. Programs that do not meet one or more standards in a given year may voluntarily request that they be considered for restructuring, consolidation or sunset status without submitting a Plan for Improvement.

IV. Evaluation of Degree Programs for Restructuring, Consolidation or Sunset Status

In making recommendations involving the restructuring, consolidation, or sunset status for a particular program, the Review Committee shall also consider an array of factors relevant to the program under review. The primary factors to be considered are listed below. The Review Committee may also consider additional factors not listed here that are specific to the program under review.

- A. *Additional considerations relevant to IBHE standards.*** In addition to primary majors, secondary majors will be counted to include students who are working on double majors or second degrees. If a program falls below the enrollment and/or graduation standard, students enrolled in minors and/or certificate programs per year within a major will be considered.
- B. *Centrality of Mission.*** Degree programs that generate a sufficient number of credit hours and have more than 50% of their credit-hour generation from students outside the major would be considered central to the instructional mission of the University. However, such designation would only disqualify the program from sunset status. A recommendation could then be made to consider further program remediation, restructuring or consolidation to improve enrollment, cost, and graduation rates.
- C. *Demand.*** Internal and external reasons for the decrease in demand will be investigated. Internal explanations for low enrollment and degrees conferred will be studied. The external demand or importance of a specific degree program to workforce needs and other contributions to specific geographic areas or demographic groups will be considered. Uniqueness and/or duplication of this program within the state or region will also be considered. If a program is being considered for sunset status, the committee will explore whether the loss of the program would negatively impact the economy of the state and/or the region. Input from alumni, donors, and other constituency groups will also be contemplated.
- D. *Non-instructional Activity.*** The research, outreach, service, scholarly and/or creative activity of a degree program will also be considered. The Review

Committee will examine the impact of re-structuring, consolidation, and/or elimination on the generation of scholarly publications, research grants, performances, exhibitions, works of art, and services to specific demographics.

E. Reputation. National or international reputation of the program will be considered by the Review Committee. Quality of faculty or of the program through peer and/or student evaluation will also be criteria for evaluation.

F. Cost or Revenue Generation. Program cost will be evaluated in terms of student per faculty ratio, infrastructure requirements, and capital needs and investment. Non-tuition revenue generation may also be a consideration in terms of research, services, outreach, consulting, and/or products. Prior capital investments in the program will be taken into account by the Review Committee.

G. Underrepresented groups. If a degree program substantially serves one or more underrepresented groups, it should not be considered for sunset status. Such programs would be subject to further remediation, restructuring, or consolidation with another program to benefit these underrepresented groups.

The Review Committee shall make a written recommendation to the Provost within 90 days of being charged with evaluating a program. An additional 90 days for evaluation can be requested by the committee. The committee may recommend that no action be taken, or that the program should be subject to further remediation, restructuring, consolidation, or sunset status. Complimentary practices/academic efficiencies recommended in Section VI could be part of this recommendation. The Provost shall then submit the recommendation for review by the Faculty Senate and/or Graduate Council. The Review Committee's recommendation and any resolutions by the Faculty Senate or Graduate Council will be returned to the Provost who will take them into advisement for action.

V. Programs Designated for Sunset Status.

Degree programs that are designated for Sunset Status will undergo a "teach-out" period that balances the needs of the current students in the program with timely administrative closure. During the established period, no new or transfer students will be admitted to the program. Faculty and staff will be given the opportunity to request to join an academic unit of similar discipline according to established procedures. Salary lines, rank, status, and associated infrastructure will follow faculty members to the new academic units.

VI. Complimentary Practices and Academic Efficiencies

As a result of a decade of declining state support and the resulting budgetary reductions absorbed by colleges and academic programs, there are many high quality programs that are struggling to maintain or enhance their quality without additional budget allocations. Likewise there are other programs that are unable to meet student demand without additional budgetary allocations. The prospect of achieving significant funding increases from the state that can be allocated for enhancement is slight. In order to determine if significant funds for reinvestment in high quality programs or programs that offer the promise of significant growth can be identified, the Program Changes Review Committee recommends that all programs be subject to the following four inquiries to determine if there are opportunities for

administrative efficiencies that might produce additional funds for reinvestment in the academic enterprise.

All of these inquiries might be initially viewed as just another means to reduce departmental operating costs. In taking charge of the process at the program level, however, faculty, departments and colleges should give primacy to academic considerations. The process should be seen as an opportunity to make our programs more current and vibrant and enhance our teaching, research and service missions. “Turf” issues need to be overcome for the benefit of freeing up resources that can be used to increase the quality and size of the university’s offerings. In addition, programs that are able to free up resources under the four inquiries below may be able to retain those resources with a showing of how they plan to use those resources to enhance program quality or growth in a manner consistent with goals, objectives and strategies identified in the campus strategic planning process.

A. *Are there programs that could be combined administratively to eliminate redundancies?* The goal here is not to combine the programs, but to place them in one administrative unit to take advantage of similar components of the programs. For example, assume there are two programs in a college that require courses in Public Administration and Human Resources. Since the programs are in different departments, both programs have a Public Administration and Human Resources faculty member. By locating both programs in the same department, it might be possible to eventually have two faculty members instead of four, service the requirements for both programs. In addition, immediate administrative savings could be generated by eliminating one chair position, some support positions and OTS (copying contractual costs and the like). Another option would be the consolidation of the two programs into one with a new name (with the possibility of specializations to preserve the identity of the original programs for the purposes of recruitment and branding). Future savings -- and programmatic quality -- would then follow in subsequent years as the new unit selectively hires faculty who are better suited to the synergistic strengths of the reconfigured department.

B. *Are there programs that would be better suited in another college?* College location for the majority of programs is purposeful. A college sees demand for a specific degree that is related to its discipline(s) and it pursues and implements the program. There are a small number of other programs whose college locus might have been the result of negotiation or even happenstance. In addition, there may be a few programs that have over time evolved to meet the change in skills needed in the workplace the degree serves, and as a result of that evolution, might be better located within another college. A periodic examination of program location can lead to better program quality, research collaboration, growth and development. In addition there may be opportunities for administrative and instructional cost reductions through administrative combinations and/or cooperative use of faculty expertise.

A change in administrative locus should be recommended only if:

1. The program in question is dissimilar to most of the offerings in its current college--both in the educational and vocational objectives of its graduates;
2. The program in question is similar to most (or a significant sector) of the offerings in the destination college--both in terms of educational and vocational objectives of its graduates; and
3. It is likely the program in question would be strengthened through synergistic relationships that would develop within the destination college and through relationships with employers and alumni maintained by the destination college.

C. *Are there course redundancies that could be eliminated by requiring that course offerings be offered by the discipline department?* For various reasons, courses are offered by departments and colleges that are outside of their disciplines. In light of the current administrative practice of examining the generation of credit hours as one of the components of budget adjustments, there will be a temptation for departments and colleges to offer more out-of-discipline courses to capture additional credit hours. For example, nearly all colleges on campus offer statistics courses as part of their required courses. It is likely the math department could deliver these courses in a more efficient manner. This is just one example of many. In many cases, it is possible that the discipline department could teach the additional students with the addition of one (or even with no additional sections) section of an existing course, resulting in substantial savings over the course of a five-year period.

Following is a procedure for eliminating course redundancies:

1. Identify all out-of-discipline courses;
2. Determine if there is a course being taught by the discipline department that would satisfy the educational objectives of the out-of-discipline course, or if the discipline department is willing to tailor a course to meet the educational objectives of the out-of-discipline program; and
3. Require the out-of-discipline program to accept the discipline-based course as fulfilling its program requirements.

The above would not be applicable in the following circumstances:

1. The out-of-discipline program is able to demonstrate that the course is significantly different from the discipline department's course;
2. The discipline department is not willing to accept the additional out-of-discipline students or is unable to meet the additional demand without immediate additional resources; or
3. Continued accreditation of the out-of-discipline program is dependent upon the specific course that might otherwise be eliminated.

D. Does the degree program require more than 120 credit hours? Recent data show that 25% of the university's degree programs require more than 120 credit hours for an undergraduate degree, and close to 11% require more than 126 hours. For the FYs 2007-2009, 22.5% of programs had 150 or more actual average credit hours for its graduates in at least two of those three years. Of those programs averaging 150 actual credit hours per degree, 74% require more than 120 hours for the undergraduate degree. It is likely that one of the new Performance Funding metrics will be the number of degrees earned with less than 144 actual credit hours. Not all excess hours can be attributed to hours earned at the university. In some cases, students transfer in with many excess hours.

The university can take certain steps to cut down on excess hours. First, better academic and career advising early in a student's time at the university can help students earn degrees with fewer credit hours by limiting the number of changes in major or taking courses that are not required for the career track. Second, programs can enter into more capstone agreements with community colleges – better known as programmatic articulations -- that allow the receiving department to indicate which courses at the community college will be accepted for transfer credit and make it clear to students what prerequisite courses should be taken at the community college level. Third, the university default position can be that no more than 120 credit hours should be required for an undergraduate degree. Options one and three are within control of the university, subject to accreditation and certification requirements.

Following is a procedure for re-examining course requirements for all degree programs that require more than 120 credit hours:

1. Ask all colleges with undergraduate programs that require more than 120 credit hours to re-examine those programs with a goal of reducing the required credit hours to 120.
2. Require all programs that do not reduce their degree requirements to 120 credit hours to justify maintaining their requirements beyond 120 credit hours.
3. The Provost should meet with the Undergraduate Education Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate about a policy that all new program requests and RME's should come in at 120 credit hours unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as accreditation requirements, requiring more than 120 credit hours.

VII. Implementation of Complimentary Practices and Academic Efficiencies

A Complimentary Practices and Academic Efficiencies Taskforce will be formed by the Provost's office to explore and make recommendations on the efficiencies and/or complimentary practices described in Section VI. The taskforce will consist of a faculty representative from each College, and a faculty representative from the Faculty Senate and Graduate Council. The taskforce will also include a representative from Institutional Research and Studies and the Budget Office. The committee will be chaired by the APAP or his/her designate(s). The Taskforce will explore the recommended efficiencies and practices discussed in Section VI, as well as making suggestions on additional academic efficiencies and practices. Recommendations from the Taskforce will be submitted to the Provost. The Provost shall then submit the recommendation for review by the Dean's Council, Faculty Senate and/or Graduate

Council. The Taskforce's recommendation and any resolutions by the Dean's Council, Faculty Senate or Graduate Council will be returned to the Provost who will take them into advisement for action.