

Report of the Program Review Committee

For the Academic Year 2012-2013

The PRC appointed ten graduate faculty members to serve as the representatives of the Graduate Council, one in each of ten program review teams for this academic year, 2012-13. Among the programs reviewed were thirteen graduate degree programs and two centers of excellence, as follows:

Graduate Degree Programs:

- 1 In the **Department of Animal Science**, Food & Nutrition (review was combined with the BS): MS in Animal Science.
- 2 In the **Department of Forestry**: MS in Forestry.
- 3 In the **College of Education and Human Services**: Graduate Certificate in Gerontology.
- 4 In the **Department of Linguistics** (reviews were combined with BA in Linguistics): MA in Applied Linguistics;
- 5 MA in TESOL.
- 6 In the **Department of Plant, Soil and Agricultural Systems** (review was combined with BS): MS in Plant, Soil and Agriculture Systems Science
- 7 In the **Department of Psychology** (review was combined with BA): PhD in Psychology.
- 8 In the **Department of Philosophy** (reviews was combined with BA): MA in Philosophy;
- 9 PhD in Philosophy.
- 10 In the **College of Mass Communications**: PhD in Mass Com. and Media Arts;
- 11 Master of Fine Arts;
- 12 MA in Media Theory and Research;
- 13 MS in Professional Media and Media Management.

Centers of Excellence:

- 1 **Beef Evaluation Station**.
- 2 **Illinois Soybean Center**.

A few of the above reviews were combined with undergraduate degree programs as a result of the University's new program review format. The review teams for each program consisted of two external members, one SIU faculty appointed by the Senate, and another SIU faculty appointed by the Graduate Council through the PRC. The reports from the review teams contained no concerns regarding this new review format. Over all the reviews seem to have gone smoothly.

In order to help make the review criteria uniform amongst the different teams, the PRC distributed to its reviewers a copy of the publication by the Council of Graduate Schools titled: "Assessment and Review of Graduate Programs", which offers guidelines for program reviews.

A summary of comments based on nine of the team reports is given below (at the time this was written, the Committee had not received the report from the MCMA review team).

Strengths: Among the program strengths listed in the reports are the faculty and graduate student quality and dedication. In a few of these programs, the faculty scholarly record, the strength of the student body and the professional placement of students were mentioned especially.

Weaknesses/Concerns: Among the weaknesses or concerns raised in the reports are reduction of resources, inadequate space, need for updating labs, insufficient staffing, low faculty numbers, large graduate classes, and in some cases low faculty salaries and not enough faculty diversity (including discipline depth and age distribution). In some cases, the lack of permanent leadership or of a strategic direction for the program was a concern (e.g. no permanent chair, no clear commitment or strategic vision from the administration about the program).

Other concerns in some reports involved inadequate assessment of graduate student learning outcomes, the support offered by OSPA, and the overhead return policies. Finally, one report underlined the lack of progress since last program review and another declared a program as being in the survival mode.

Recommendations: Among the recommendations in the reports are developing stable leadership for the program, developing a strategic plan, improving communication with higher level administration, departmental autonomy for some programs, increasing the faculty numbers and the strategic hires, and increasing the resources provided to the program. Also two programs are encouraged to develop online MS degrees. Finally, a few of the reports strongly recommend of the program expanding research in the national level in order to increase research funding.