

Committee on Academic Planning

June 2003 Retreat

Summary Report

The Committee on Academic Planning met in retreat on June 6, 2003, at the Sienna Center in Racine, Wisconsin. All Committee members were present: Walter Feldt, Timothy Fossum, Michele Gee, Eugene Goodman, JoAnn Goodyear, David Holmes, and Gary Wood. Provost Rebecca Martin joined the meeting at its conclusion in the late afternoon.

Context

The purpose of the retreat was to consider the current array of academic programs and to determine ones that should receive further attention in regard to program viability.

Process

The Committee first considered a categorization of programs based on the “Stars, Dogs, Cash Cows and Problem Children” taxonomy developed by the Boston Consulting Group in the 1970s. As discussion evolved, the Committee settled on identifying programs that roughly matched the “Dogs” and “Problem Children” categories.

The Committee considered the following criteria as *negative* indicators of a program’s current and future success:

- Low enrollment
- Low number of majors/degrees granted
- Duplication with other high-cost programs elsewhere in the UW System
- Low occupational outlook indicators

The Committee considered the following criteria as *positive* indicators:

- Importance to the University Mission
- Size of service role
- Perceived external value
- High occupational outlook indicators

In addition to enrollment and major data, the Committee considered the following indicators of a program’s importance to the university:

- Relative proportion of service course enrollment to enrollment in courses for the major
- Responsiveness to evening and/or weekend audiences

The Committee chose to focus on majors and related programs instead of certificates and centers, since we believed that certificates and centers could be dealt with at a later time.

Recommendations

The Committee concluded that the following programs should be subject to substantial further scrutiny:

- Engineering
- Mathematics
- Modern Languages
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Teacher Education

For each of these programs, a possible action might be restructuring it (*e.g.*, redirecting its programmatic focus or combining it with another program), eliminating it, or phasing it out.

In addition, the Committee considered the following programs as potential resource sinks due primarily to high enrollment pressures:

- Communication
- Criminal Justice
- Health, Physical Education and Athletics

For each of these programs, a possible action might include limiting its growth.

Finally, the following programs were viewed as having minor issues (such as lack of programmatic focus or over-dependence on adjuncts) that may warrant future review:

- Chemistry
- Economics
- English
- History
- Political Science
- Psychology