

Memorandum

Date: August 20, 2008

To: Robert Shelton, President
Meredith Hay, Executive Vice President and Provost

From: Miranda Joseph on behalf of the Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee

Re: Academic Program Prioritization Guidelines

Earlier this summer, at the request of the Provost and working in conjunction with the Faculty Senate Budget and Strategic Planning Committee, SPBAC developed the following guidelines for the evaluation of Academic Programs. Their purpose is to assist in prioritizing academic programs for investment, maintenance or budget reduction in the context of current (FY09) cuts in state funding and, even more importantly, the process of selecting Academic Programs for elimination that the Provost has announced in preparation for anticipated FY10 budget constraints.

In developing these guidelines we sought to take into account the diversity of academic programs and their multifaceted contributions to the overall mission of the university. At the same time, we recognized the urgent need to use our limited resources in the most strategic and effective manner. Therefore, the particular criteria that we have identified are meant to be used in conjunction with each other: a high priority department would be highly rated on many of these dimensions, while a program considered for reduction would be performing poorly in many areas.

We very much hope that you will find these guidelines useful and would be very pleased if you would share our advice with the Deans at your earliest convenience.

University of Arizona Academic Program Prioritization Guidelines

Centrality to the UA Mission, Vision or Priorities

Contribution to core instructional, research and outreach missions of the university including: general education; degree production; contribution to priority research fields, especially those identified in the UA Strategic Plan 2009-2013; and contribution to our land-grant obligation to share knowledge with and provide services to the people of the state of Arizona.

External Demand

Extent to which programs meet present and future demands for knowledge and/or graduates and whose research and instructional expertise directly benefit Arizona stakeholders, including: programs that contribute to the economy of Arizona; programs that contribute to the public health of Arizona; programs that solve the environmental problems of Arizona; programs that foster K-12 education in Arizona; programs that enrich the quality of life in Arizona.

Internal Demand

Degree to which other units rely on this program for instruction or support, including courses required by majors in other units, general education offerings, and extent of research collaboration and interdisciplinarity as demonstrated by factors such as faculty participation in GIDPs and Centers/Institutes, faculty service as affiliates, in joint appointments or on graduate committees outside their home department.

Productivity

Number of graduates; number of graduates who are employed or accepted in graduate programs in a relevant field; number of publications (or creative works, as appropriate to field); grants and contracts compared to peers; quantity of translational knowledge produced as measured by patents, licenses, start-ups or other appropriate measures.

Quality

National and international rankings of program (where available); competitive faculty awards for teaching, research and service; competitive awards to students; research impact as measured by citations (or other measures appropriate to field).

Appropriate Size

Size relative to university goals and the demands of the discipline as compared to peers; "critical mass" needed to recruit and retain the best faculty and students.

Cost Effectiveness

Ratio of state funding to productivity, including: student credit hours, research expenditures, and revenue generation including private support; ratio of faculty to students compared to peers; ratio of administrative to total costs compared to peers.