

Missouri Department of Higher Education Statewide Review of Academic Programs

Midwestern Higher Education Compact
Executive Committee Meeting

June 9, 2011

CONTEXT

- Economic downturn
- Increased calls for greater accountability, efficiency, “return on investment”
- Governor’s Summit on Higher Education (August 2010)
 - Four objectives, including review of all academic programs to cull those that “are of low productivity, low priority or duplicative”
 - Report to governor by February 1, 2011

EXISTING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

- Current policy (1983)
 - Contribution to Institutional Mission
 - Statewide Needs
 - Access
 - Program Expenditures
- Reaffirmed in 1996
 - Centrality to mission.
 - Addresses or helps attain statewide needs and goals
 - Maintain a “critical mass” of majors and graduate annually
 - 10 majors at the associate or baccalaureate degree level
 - 5 majors at the master’s degree level
 - 3 majors at the doctoral degree level
 - **unless there is sufficient justification for exceptions,** particularly in the arts and sciences
 - Produce highly qualified graduates
- IHEs submit annual reports to MDHE, but practice had been suspended while policy underwent revision

CONSULTATION WITH CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

- MDHE staff and all CAOs meet to discuss process and methodology, and challenges
 - Four-digit or six-digit CIP code?
 - 10, 5, 3: Are these the right numbers?
 - How to count certificates?
 - Include other criteria (i.e., costs of instruction)?
 - Shared governance; faculty oversee curriculum
 - Public (general public and faculty) perceptions
 - “low producing”? “unproductive”?
 - “quantity” vs. “quality”?
 - “role of statewide politics”

METHODOLOGY

- MDHE confined by existing policy
 - Limited review, focused on productivity and “unnecessary duplication”
- First and foremost an “academic exercise”
 - Objectivity, integrity, transparency
 - Identify programs below productivity thresholds
 - Institutions provide justifications for retaining “low producing” programs

PROCESS

- Work with institutions to reconcile data; need complete and accurate program inventory
- Institutions submit documentation to support justifications; MDHE staff review materials
 - Accept institution's justification
 - Accept justification with follow-up review
 - Additional material needed to complete review
 - Reject justification and recommend deletion

JUSTIFYING “LOW PRODUCING” PROGRAMS

- ❑ **Provide appropriate documentation for all justifications**
- ❑ Program has been or will be voluntarily terminated
- ❑ MDHE data are inaccurate; program meets criteria/standards for productivity
- ❑ New program approved within the past five years; exempt from review
- ❑ Program is critical to mission and will be retained
- ❑ Program contains courses support general education or other programs
- ❑ Interdisciplinary program
- ❑ Program shares substantial number of courses/faculty with other programs
- ❑ Student or employer demand, or demand for intellectual property is high and external funding will be jeopardized by program closure
- ❑ Program provides unique access to an underserved population or geographical area
- ❑ Program meets a unique need in the region, state, or nation
- ❑ Joint/consortium program; combined graduates meets productivity standards
- ❑ **Other** (e.g., development plan; revenue-producing program; potential for collaborative program: moved to inactive status; master’s program in same discipline as a PhD with sufficient graduates, etc.)
- ❑ **Provide sufficient context and describe pertinent factors and other special considerations as needed to justify the proposed action. Use separate attachment if necessary.**

WHY IT WORKED—ONE CAO's PERSPECTIVE

- George Wilson, University of Central Missouri
 - The governor set the stage -- Higher Education Summit
 - The commissioner and MDHE staff involved the CAOs early in structuring the review and response process
 - The use of a simple criterion to identify programs for review
 - The relatively short time frame
 - The utility of external pressure

WHAT UCM ACHIEVED

- 34 programs reviewed; 12 programs deleted; 2 statewide collaboratives
- \$800,000+ in base budget savings
- Multi-university collaborative program initiatives
- Statewide course redesign project
- Relationship between MDHE and the CAOs

Table 1.3: Low-productivity in high-priority fields

Program area (Two-digit CIP)	Number of baccalaureate programs statewide below threshold
Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Services	10
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	8
Education	55
Engineering Technologies and Engineering-Related Fields	10
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	27
Mathematics	8
Physical Sciences	16
Health Professions and Related Programs	16

Table 1.4: Low-productivity in education programs

Program area (by four-digit CIP)	Number of baccalaureate programs in education statewide	Number of baccalaureate programs in education statewide below threshold	Percent of baccalaureate programs in education statewide below threshold
All baccalaureate programs in Education	103	55	53.4%
Programs in Teacher Education and Professional Development, specific levels and methods.	24	7	29.2%
Programs in Teacher Education and professional development, specific subject areas.	17	43	71.7%

RESULTS AND FINDINGS: FOUR-YEAR SECTOR

- 438 programs reviewed
 - 48 programs set aside
 - been approved within the past five years
 - data that had been misreported or miscoded.
 - 72 programs (18 %) deleted
 - Justifications for remaining programs accepted, but 158 undergo a **follow-up evaluation in three years**
 - **Some programs on the margins of efficient productivity**
 - **Assess effect of development plans to improve the recruitment, retention, and matriculation of students in a program**
 - In ten instances the institutions intend to propose a single new program that effectively replaces two or more deleted programs
 - 8 moved to inactive status

RESULTS AND FINDINGS: TWO-YEAR SECTOR

- 262 programs reviewed
 - 66 set aside
 - been approved within the past five years
 - data that had been misreported or miscoded
 - 46 programs (23.5 %) deleted
 - Justifications for remaining programs accepted, but 17 undergo a follow-up evaluation in three years
 - 16 moved to inactive status

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve the productivity of high-priority programs
2. **Strengthen policies for the review of new program proposals**
3. **Develop appropriate reforms in teacher education in collaboration with DESE**
4. Revise and update the policy for the regular review of existing academic programs
5. Develop a policy for the review of programs in the two-year sector
6. **Encourage collaboration for program delivery among institutions, especially in foreign languages**
7. Continue analysis of program duplication
8. Conduct follow-up reviews in three years

Lessons Learned

- Value of periodic, statewide program review
- **Value of transparent process**
- Importance of support and encouragement from highest levels of state government
- Virtue of collaboration; new opportunities resulted
- **Value of statewide perspective**
- Areas of strength and excellence identified
- **Limits of productivity as measure of efficiency and effectiveness**

Additional information

- Slide presentation available:
 - www.mdhe.mo.gov/
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