

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Program Sustainability

Executive Summary

The Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Program Sustainability conducted a review of 34 undergraduate, bachelor degree programs on three quantitative criteria (standards): number of majors (60), number of graduates per year (12), and credit hour production (FTES:FTEF 15:1). Using trend data, the committee found 10 programs meet or exceed all three quantitative standards; 5 programs do not meet these standards; and 11 programs either have high credit hour production and low numbers of majors/graduates, or low credit hour production and high numbers of majors/graduates. The committee identified 8 programs with incomplete trend data (due to recent restructuring or other identified reasons) and did not rank them. Resource issues, qualitative data, and other explanatory factors were considered and discussed.

Background

The Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Program Sustainability was charged by the Senior Vice President to conduct a review of undergraduate program data and respond to criteria and standards established by the SVP for this purpose. Based on the program data and established criteria, the Ad Hoc Committee was further charged to consider recommendations of: “Continue and Enhance”; “Combine, Collaborate, or Reconfigure”; “Phase Out”.

The Ad Hoc Committee included faculty representing the Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee and members of the Faculty Senate’s Standing Committee on University Budget and Planning. The Faculty Senate President served as facilitator; the Assessment Officer/Institutional Researcher served as recorder. The Ad Hoc Committee served to respond to the Senior Vice President’s request for review and recommendations and the process includes the input of other various groups as identified in the following table.

Date	Action	Outcomes	Comments
10/31/2008	Meeting of Ad Hoc committee	Respond to SVP Recommendations	Facilitated by Faculty Senate President.
Week of 11/10/2008	Dean’s Council review	Recommendations for discussion	Also sent to SGA for input
Week of 11/17/2008	College/school AAC review	Input and recommendations	Will likely be combined with the Dean’s review
Week of 11/24/2008	Consolidate input; Review by Ad Hoc Committee	Report	AO/IR
Week of 12/1/2008	Review by VPs	Recommendation to President	

Approach and Summary of Findings

The Ad Hoc Committee meeting focused on student demand, faculty complement, and physical facilities/technical support. A final thirty-minute session responded to initial recommendations. The following section presents the questions posed by the SVP in her memorandum of assignment and a summary of the Ad Hoc Committee's responses.

Response Item 1: Student Demand

Are there minimally enough declared majors or credential candidates and enough graduates to continue to offer the program as it currently exists? (Use as a basis the target number of 60 declared majors and 12 graduates per year.)

The Ad Hoc Committee's Response

Reviewing trend data (Fall 1999 through Fall 2007) the Ad Hoc Committee found: 11 of 26 programs meet or exceed the criteria for number of majors; and the same 11 of 26 programs meet or exceed the criteria for number of graduates.

Response Item 2: Faculty Complement

Are there minimally enough faculty with appropriate degrees and subject area backgrounds to support a quality program? What is the minimum full-time faculty head-count needed for a sustainable program? And/or a minimum FTEF?

The Ad Hoc Committee's Response

The Committee reviewed FTES:FTEF for FA03 through FA06. A standard of 15:1 was established from University of Guam data and peer list analysis. Using the 15:1 ratio, the Ad Hoc Committee found: 20 of 26 programs meet or exceed the established FTES:FTEF standard; 6 of 26 did not. The Committee did not have time to analyze the question of whether faculty have appropriate degrees and subject area backgrounds by program.

Response Item 3: Physical Facilities/Technology Support

Are there minimally sufficient physical facilities, labs, equipment, and technology to offer a quality program? (Use the qualitative information to consider this.)

The Ad Hoc Committee's Response

The committee did not have time to fully review and comment on sufficiency of physical facilities, labs, equipment, and technology by program during this session. The Ad Hoc Committee did comment on the overall state of need for sufficient facilities and equipment. Such comments are provided in *Concluding Comments*.

Response Item 4: Comment on the SVP's Initial Recommendations to:

- Continue the program with suggested enhancements or targets
- Change the program or support area by restructuring it, merge the program with another, reconfigure by combining programs to produce a new program, or phase-out the program.

The Ad Hoc Committee's Response

Given the criteria and standards for Response Items 1 and 2, the findings of the Ad Hoc Committee were matched to the SVP's action categories. Undergraduate programs

meeting the standards for Number of Majors/Number of Graduates, and Credit Hour Production were identified as High/High and could be classified in the identified action category, "Continue and Enhance". The Ad Hoc Committee's rankings would place 10 of 26 programs in this category. Undergraduate programs meeting either the standard of Number or Majors/Number of Graduates or the Credit Hour Production standard, but not both could be classified as High/Low or Low/High depending on which standard was met. Referencing the Ad Hoc Committee's rankings, the action category, "Combine, Collaborate, or Reconfigure" could be considered for 11 of 26 programs. Undergraduate programs not meeting the standards for Number of Majors/Number of Graduate and Credit Hour Production were identified as Low/Low and could be classified in the SVP's action category, "Phase Out". The Ad Hoc Committee identified 5 of 26 programs in the Low/Low category. The Ad Hoc Committee noted that some of these five undergraduate programs provide vital roles to the University's land grant and community service missions.

The Ad Hoc Committee did not evaluate or combined the evaluation of eight undergraduate programs. An explanation is provided below.

1. Computer Science and Computer Information Systems programs were combined and counted as one program.
2. Education - Second Language/Elementary Ed. and Secondary Education were combined with English as a Second Language Specialty were ranked as one program.
3. Education - Special Education has been recently revitalized and is showing signs of meeting the standards.
4. English and Secondary Education were combined and ranked as one.
5. Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences is a new program.
6. Japanese Studies had no quantitative charts.
7. Health Sciences is a new program.
8. Education - Elementary Education with Chamorro Language & Culture Teaching Specialty had consolidated data.

Concluding Comments

The Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Program Sustainability responded to its charge and in the process noted additional findings/insights that it shares with readers of this report.

On the number of majors. The Committee found that a working range of 55-60 majors was reasonably conservative for most programs. For others, particularly those with high credit hour production attributable to general education courses and/or cross-disciplinary

collaboration, the Committee considered the offering of a major in these circumstances as a relatively low-cost benefit to the University as the major attracts a quality teaching faculty to the University and sustains intellectual rigor for research, which benefits the general education curriculum.

On the number of graduates. The Committee found that 10-12 majors per year was reasonably appropriate for a 5 year graduation timeframe. However, the Committee noted that for some programs, especially programs in the sciences, students may take more than 5 years to complete their degrees. A general criterion of 5 years may neither be applicable to all programs nor to appropriate for subsets of student cohorts.

On the faculty complement. The Committee held as a given that programs have sufficiently qualified faculty with appropriate degrees. Further analysis, the Committee believed was a matter for administrative review. The Committee commented that the ratio of 15 students to 1 faculty seemed to be a functional standard for this review, and noted that a higher standard may not be practicable given resource limitations, particularly for programs requiring computer or laboratory facilities.

On the need for resources. The Committee identified overall problems with an aging technical infrastructure. Expressed comments included the need for better match of resources to programs, especially in times of budget cutbacks. Across the board cuts in technology budgets may harm some programs more than others.

On the designation of "Continue and Enhance". Ten programs met the criteria on all measures considered in this review: number of majors, graduates, and credit hour productivity. A recommendation to continue these programs is made clear by these standards. However, the Committee noted that there were signs that quality and program sustainability may be issues as low numbers of faculty were observed from the FTES:FTEF data for these high demand programs. The Committee suggested the need for criteria specification matched with budget allocations, to support effective program enhancement.

On the designation of "Combine, Collaborate, Restructure". Eleven programs were identified for this designation. The Committee recognized that further review of these programs would be necessary to determine appropriate approaches to address two different scenarios: low demand by majors and high demand by general education or cross-disciplinary support; or high demand by majors but low rates of graduation or credit hour production. The first seemed to the committee to be a matter of faculty allocation to meet general education demand. In these cases, combine, collaborate, restructure may be prudent. The second seemed to indicate high student interest matched by low faculty or other learning resources/facilities. In these cases, the committee identified an additional designation resource to the list of combine, collaborate, restructure, which may better serve the need of programs with high demand and limited resources. In the Committee's

view, if such programs were better resourced, those with high student demand (majors and graduates) might move to the “Continue and Enhance” category.

On the designation of “Phase Out”. Five programs were identified for “Phase Out” using the established criteria. Clearly, they did not have high numbers of majors, graduates, nor credit hour production. Yet, on further examination, the Committee recognized that some of these programs are important to the mission of the University of Guam. Some are directly linked to the University’s land grant mission —others to community need. The Committee recommended an option other than phase out for these programs: in some cases a designated teaching faculty is needed as the current faculty are primarily engaged in research. For others, the committee discussed the possibility of phasing the undergraduate degree program to a graduate degree program, which may yield higher student demand.

Other general comments. In the process of this review, the Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Program Sustainability noted the following general comments, which are offered here as additional insight to the process.

Students with double majors must continue to be counted in both programs. This is particularly important in the Secondary Education degree program.

A dedicated teaching faculty is needed to support the Agriculture Science program and the Consumer Family Science program, if they are to continue in their present form. There is demand for the major, not enough teaching faculty to support advisement and curriculum offerings.

Programs such as TESOL and others, which attend to local need, should have high student demand. The data show that there are few majors, few graduates, and low credit hour productivity. These programs need attention to recapture student interest and to meet demands by the school system for teachers with such skills. These programs and others often suffer when leading faculty leave the University or retire.

General education and graduate education issues need to be considered as contributing factors to the undergraduate curriculum.

There is a generally held assumption that students will complete their undergraduate degrees in four years; yet Committee members noted that students take many more years. Some of this is explained by student preference; others by the availability of course offerings. Higher education affordability may be a contributing factor. Students may take fewer courses, as tuition and course fees increase.

The University has not fully entered the computer age and more technology resources and support is needed for quality higher education. The University’s email system is

inadequate; faculty have missed important communications and notices of grant /publication submission deadlines.

Program faculty need to see response/results of their recommendations from the program review process. In addition, a process of sustainability review is an important one, as it offers a macro view of the University's allocation of resources in support of student learning at the undergraduate level.

Respectfully submitted,

For the Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Program Sustainability,
RMJones, Facilitator

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Attachment: Ad Hoc Committee Rankings on Quantitative Criteria

Undergraduate Program	Category		
	HIGH: Meets standard for #Majors & Grads (Completers) HIGH: Meets standard for FTEF:FTES ratio	HIGH / LOW or LOW / HIGH	LOW: Below standard for #Majors & Grads (Completers) LOW: Below standard for FTEF:FTES ratio
Accounting (<i>re-instated AY2006-2007, incorporated into Business Admin submission</i>)	1		
Tropical Agriculture			1
Anthropology		1	
Biology	1		
Business Admin	1		
Chemistry		1	
Communication		1	
Computer Science / Computer Information Systems		1	
Consumer & Family Science			1
Criminal Justice	1		
East Asian Studies			1
Education - Early Childhood / Elementary Education	1		
Education - Elementary Education	1		
Education - Second Language/Elementary Ed. & Secondary Ed. With English as a Second Language Speciality			1

Education - Secondary Ed.	1		
Education - Special Ed.	?	?	?
English	1		
Fine Arts		1	
Health Sciences (<i>new program</i>)			
History		1	
Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences no quantitative chart		?	?
Japanese Studies no quantitative chart		?	?
Math		1	
Nursing	1		
Philosophy		1	
Physical Education (HPERD)			
Political Science		1	
Psychology	1		
Public Admin		1	
Social Work			1
Sociology		1	
Count	10	11	5