Program Prioritization @ ISU

Academic Affairs Program Prioritization A2P2 @ WSU

It CAN be Done!

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Overview

- About the institutions
- Context for this session
- Process Drivers
- Process Overview and Principles – ISU
- Process Features, Flow, Framework - WSU
- Report, Implementation, Results – ISU
- Preliminary Outcomes - WSU
- Benefits and Impacts - ISU
- Lessons Learned - WSU
- Next Steps
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indiana State University</th>
<th>Washington State University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Terre Haute, Indiana</td>
<td>Pullman, Washington</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3 regional campuses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Large distance ed program</td>
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<td><strong>Enrollment</strong></td>
<td>8,823 FTE</td>
<td>22,333 FTE</td>
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<td><strong>Carnegie classification</strong></td>
<td>Doctoral/Research</td>
<td>Research/VH</td>
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<td>Curricular Engagement and Outreach &amp; Partnerships</td>
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<td><strong>Programs</strong></td>
<td>Arts, sciences, professional</td>
<td>Balanced arts, sciences, professional</td>
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<td>Land Grant</td>
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Context

- ISU one year ahead of WSU
- ISU work inspired WSU work
- ISU – quantitative approach
- WSU – qualitative approach
- Similar criteria
- Similar drivers
- Similar outcomes
Process Drivers – ISU

- Respond to the NCA - HLC’s 1980, 1990, & 2000 review
  - ISU must give the highest priority to the implementation of processes to redirect the use of resources allocated to low enrolled programs to support achievement of high priority goals.
  - “Too many programs for the size of the faculty and student body”
  - “Reduce allocation of resources to low enrollment activities”

- Respond to ICHE’s review of programs with few graduates and identified need to evaluate resources allocated to low enrolled programs
  - Contain costs
  - Increase productivity
  - Redirect resources to priority academic programs
Process Drivers – WSU

- New administration
- Need to invest in areas of excellence
- 10 year re-accreditation planning underway
- Limited resources
- Tradition of egalitarian budgetary behavior
- Poorly performing units
- Too many course offerings, majors
Additional Factors – Both Institutions

- Improve and Strengthen Reputation
- Improve Quality of Programs
- Increase Accountability
- Increase Revenue
- Bring Greater Focus and Clarity
Overview of Process – ISU

• Presented campus with “white paper” outlining need and process.

• Appointed Program Prioritization Task Force
  - Carefully selected, well respected faculty and administrators who represented all academic units, faculty governance, and administrative units.
  - Multi-year process. Task Force worked over a year.

• Task Force charged to rate and rank all academic programs, graduate and undergraduate
Principles – ISU

• Students will not be negatively impacted by any decision. All students will be permitted to complete their program or transfer to a related program.

• No tenure/tenure track faculty will be displaced as a result of any recommendation.

• All funds saved in this process will be reinvested in high-priority, academic programs.

• Task Force
  ▪ Fairness
  ▪ Reliability
  ▪ Openness
  ▪ Integrity
Fairness and Reliability

• Departments prepared reports for each program addressing criteria

• Criteria for Rating and Ranking
  ▪ Consistency with University mission
  ▪ Demand
  ▪ Quality
  ▪ Productivity, efficiency
  ▪ Potential
Openness and Reliability

- Independent rating and ranking by:
  1. College governance
  2. Dean
  3. Task force

- Task Force provided training on rating and ranking
- Used only information in reports and standard data
Openness

• More than 100 faculty involved
• Standing item for Faculty Senate committees
• Discussed in colleges and at Provost’s Advisory Committee
• Prioritization web site, global e-mail messages, articles in student and local newspapers
Integrity

- The Task Force evaluated each program individually with a view across the entire University
- Grouped programs in four categories
  - Not of immediate concern
  - Issues
  - Realignment, reorganization
  - Candidates for elimination
Process Features – WSU

• Executive sponsorship
• Transparent – communication plan
• Multi-phased
• Data-informed, not data-driven ("informed subjectivity")
• Tight timeline
• Not the same old faces
Communication Plan – WSU

- Frequent articles in bi-weekly university newspaper
- Articles in student newspaper
- All-day forum for all participants
- Full disclosure on provost’s web site [http://academic-prioritization.wsu.edu/](http://academic-prioritization.wsu.edu/)
- Discussions at deans’ meetings
- Information item at regents’ meetings
- Briefings with Faculty Senate executive committee
Overview Flow – WSU

• Multi-phased approach, two separate task forces
  ▪ First phase task force designs the review model, but DOES NOT participate in reviews or ratings
  ▪ Unit self-reviews provide input to second phase
  ▪ Second phase task force rates and recommends to provost

• Completed between October 2007 and May 2008
  ▪ Phase I task force: October – December
  ▪ Self-reviews: Mid-January – mid-March
  ▪ Phase II: Mid-March – mid April
  ▪ Provost decisions: Mid-May
Phase I

- Provost appoints task force with charge to propose prioritization process
- Task force sets criteria for self-reviews
- Task force develops rating framework and methodology
- Task force develops self-review process including communication and training plans
- President and provost review and approve task force recommended methodology and process
Phase I Task Force Membership

- **Co-chairs**
  - Vice Provost for Budget and Planning
  - Senior faculty member
- **Provost**
- **Three deans (two large colleges and Extension)**
- **Department chair**
- **Five faculty members**
- **Faculty senate representative**
- **Chancellor of regional campus**
- **Institutional Research and Budget Office staff**
- **Finance officer**
- **Vice Provost for Research**
- **Research Center Director**
Criteria

- Adapted from Dickeson (1999)
- Used depending on the mission area under review
- Definition based on application to mission area
- Meant to be general guidance, not strict measures (in most cases)
Criteria

• Centrality – advancement of university’s strategic goals
• Cost effectiveness – compared to peers, unit efficiency, investment in equipment and facilities, potential economies of scale, administrative costs, self-sustaining and revenue generating activity
• Internal and external demand – market, graduates, dependencies, ge offerings, collaborations
• Impact – positively influences behavior of stakeholders
• Productivity – quantitative measures of performance
• Quality – national and international reputation, faculty recognition, peer comparisons
• Size – critical mass of faculty, students, curricular offerings, research/scholarly activity
Framework

• Based on critical components of university mission
  ▪ Teaching and Learning
  ▪ Scholarship and Research
  ▪ Outreach and engagement

• Use of specific criteria for each mission component

• Continuum of ‘alternative futures’
  ▪ Invest
  ▪ Maintain
  ▪ Reduce, consolidate, reorganize
  ▪ Phase out
## Framework

### Academic Affairs Program Prioritization Evaluation Criteria

#### - Teaching and Learning -

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<tr>
<th>Alternative futures</th>
<th>Growth and investment</th>
<th>Maintenanc e</th>
<th>Reorganization, consolidation, reduction</th>
<th>Phase out</th>
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**Centrality** - Advancement of WSU’s vision, mission, and strategic goals; relationship to areas of academic excellence; a unit of this kind should be present in every land-grant university; necessity of unit based on statute, government regulation or other internal or external mandates; number of other units of the same or similar kinds in Washington or in the Pacific Northwest; potential impact on other WSU units.

- Program can demonstrate a direct link to advancing WSU’s vision, mission and strategic goals.
- Program can demonstrate some relation to or support of WSU’s vision, mission, and strategic goals.
- Program has little evidence of link to or advancement of WSU’s vision, mission or strategic goals.
- Program has no relation to WSU’s vision, mission or strategic goals.

- Program offers courses unique to its majors and provides service courses in support of numerous other academic units.
- Program provides instruction necessary for completion of several degree programs.
- Program provides instruction, but SCH are low, not required by more than one or two other programs, possibly duplicating instruction in other units.
- Program provides little instruction to either its own majors or those of other programs. Other units offer instruction needed for degree completion.
Self-Review Process Flow

- Provost sends framework and guidelines to deans and area administrators
- Deans and area administrators self-identify programs
- Deans and area administrators send guidelines to program heads
- Programs conduct self-reviews using framework and data provided and program-specific information
- Programs return self-reviews to deans and area administrators
- Deans and area administrators review, comment, summarize and prioritize
- Deans and area administrators submit review materials to provost
- Phase II Task Force begins
Phase II Task force

- Task force divided into 4 subcommittees
  - 3 subcommittees work with 3 colleges each
  - 4\textsuperscript{th} subcommittee works with all non-college units

- Phase II activities
  - Subcommittees read all review materials
  - Task force meets to compare observations/findings
  - Subcommittees meet with deans to review reports
  - Provost holds hearings to discuss, challenge, reconcile reviews
  - Deans and subcommittees meet as needed
  - Task force holds all-day meeting to craft recommendations
  - Task force meets with president and provost
• Synthesized rankings from faculty governance, deans, task force, and responses from programs and deans
• Spreadsheets with programs in priority order
• Description of the process and many recommendations
• Presented Final Report to Provost and campus community
After Task Force Final Report

- Provost held retreat with academic deans and other academic to discuss recommendations
- Report discussed in Faculty Senate committees
- Several months to discuss broadly across campus and gather input
Implementation – ISU

• After reflecting on all of the information, the Provost issued a report on his recommendations to the Board of Trustees
• Report included specific changes needed with timelines and responsible parties
• Associate Vice President charged to manage the process and maintain communications with academic units
Through program elimination, revisions, and mergers, the number of programs offered by ISU has been reduced from 214 to approximately 150-160. The final number cannot be determined until all curriculum revisions are completed.
Results – Academic Programs

• Several programs have removed tracks, created new core curricula, and eliminated and revised courses

• Reversed trend of adding new courses to inventory
  ▪ 185 courses eliminated or banked in AY08
  ▪ Only 63 new courses added
  ▪ A reduction of 122 courses this past year
Results – General Education

- Provost and Faculty Senate established GE Task Force that is charged with providing recommendations that:
  - Prepare students for 2010 and beyond
  - Promote coherence
  - Ease transfer
  - Support the reallocation of resources for strategic academic priorities
Results
Academic Reorganization

- 8 academic departments reorganized
- New college focused on health & human services formed by joining resources of two former colleges
Effect on Students

- All students provided opportunity to complete programs
- Few students affected (all programs eliminated had low enrollment) but still issues:
  - Clear communication to students and other members of community.
  - Manage advising and course offerings to enable students to complete discontinues or reorganized programs.
- Assure students that the focus is on quality and growth, not on retrenchment.
Effect on Faculty

- Recommendations are central to academic planning.
- Prioritization recommendations important in allocation of resources including faculty lines.
- Faculty and campus in general have became more knowledgeable about other departments through evaluating reports.
- No faculty have been dismissed from tenure or pre-tenure lines as a result of the process.
Preliminary Outcomes – WSU 120 + Decisions

- **General institutional decisions:**
  - Conduct course audit to effect 20% reduction in course offerings
  - Conduct degree audit to reduce majors, minors, options
  - Place a moratorium on new courses, new degrees pending audit outcomes
  - Create new governance and budget strategies for academic program development and delivery
  - Implement faculty hiring strategy to build critical mass in priority areas
  - Develop strategies to re-direct and/or re-train faculty for priority areas
Cross-college/cross-area decision

- Create new Social Science division within Liberal Arts
- Move departments from one college to another
- Consolidate several similar small units into a new unit
- Improve funding model, content, and administrative structure of the General Education program
- Create a new interdisciplinary focus on ‘water’
- Develop the Health Sciences through establishment of a cross-college division, consolidation of programs, and creation of links to health-related programs in other divisions
- Refocus the Interdisciplinary Design Institute through budgetary and administrative realignment
- Consolidate Statistics programs
Sample College Decisions

• Agriculture
  ▪ Phase out major in Forestry
  ▪ Consolidate elements of Horticulture, Landscape Architecture, Crop and Soil Sciences, Plant Pathology and Entomology to form interdisciplinary “Plant Sciences” programs

• Education
  ▪ Phase out several undersubscribed masters programs

• Liberal Arts
  ▪ Combine American Studies, Comparative Ethnic Studies, and Women’s Studies into a single unit

• Pharmacy
  ▪ Consolidate Dietetics, Exercise Metabolism and Nutrition
Sample Area Decisions

- Investigate potential duplicative advising, registration, and course development services offered by several units
- Close Pullman ‘branch’ libraries
- Refocus the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology to support undergraduate assessment activities
Benefits

• Change in campus culture – more accountability
• Promoted greater collaboration of faculty and administration
• Greater willingness to collaboratively examine what has been taken for granted or seen as too contentious to tackle (example, General Education)
• Departments and curriculum committees more aware of the need to:
  ▪ Manage curriculum to maintain a reasonable course inventory
  ▪ Offer a reasonable number of programs for our number of faculty and students
Additional Benefits

• Supported our Distinctive Program Initiative
  ▪ Campus has identified programs that have earned a national, regional, or state reputation of high quality or have been identified as a program of promise. $1.8 million invested in these programs to enhance quality.

• Overall strengthening of program quality and resulting enrollment growth.
Impact

- Significant interest in ISU approach
- Google search
  - #1, 2, and 7 of 10 results on first page are from ISU
- Assisted other universities including Washington State University and Humboldt State University
- 2 presentations at national conferences
Lessons Learned

• The executive level desire for and commitment to change driving the process engages the institution where previous efforts may have failed

• Continuity between task forces was key to Phase II work

• The mere suggestion that programs were going to be reviewed prompted behavioral and organizational changes

• Focusing subcommittees on specific areas created deep understanding of area issues and built trust between subcommittee chairs and the deans

• Transparency and communication were essential factors in successful completion
More Lessons….

• Short time line, while causing grumbling, kept things moving along
• A strict task master is needed to keep process on schedule
• Participation of faculty is critical
• Any change will generate complaints
• It is not possible to anticipate all the pitfalls in process and procedure in advance
Next Steps

• Process is never finished
• This is initial phase of a systematic process of program review and program planning
• Must annually review health and vitality of programs
• Must annually be strategic in the allocation of resources
Next Steps

• Conduct course audits
• Conduct degree audits
• Re-design general education program
• Create phased implementation plan for decisions
  ▪ Require plan from each college
• Focus funding decisions on priorities
• Conduct review of all administrative areas
• Conduct more thorough review of Centers, Institutes, and Laboratories
• Bring new Provost up to speed
For More Information


[http://www.indstate.edu/acad-aff/72.html](http://www.indstate.edu/acad-aff/72.html)
Want to Know More?

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