

# Complementary Practices and Academic Efficiencies Task Force Report

January 18, 2013

## Executive Summary

The 2012 Program Change Review Committee Report recommended the creation of a Task Force to propose complementary practices and academic efficiencies. The idea was to explore programmatic and administrative changes in order to promote innovative collaboration and cost savings in the medium to long term. The Task Force answered four questions:

- 1. Are there programs that could be combined administratively to eliminate redundancies?* Suggestions for program consolidation and merger were obtained through direct college representative feedback and compiled survey data. These re-arrangements would much more likely result from administrative re-organization both within colleges and outside of colleges. The suggestions, detailed on pages 6-8 of the present report, provide guidance for focused committee consideration in the next phase of program change review efforts.
- 2. Are there programs that would be better suited in another college?* Suggestions for program realignment were also obtained through direct college representative feedback and compiled survey data. The Task Force discussed the development of interdisciplinary programs shared across college boundaries whose potential enrollment could provide new revenues and reduce costs. These new programs, particularly at the undergraduate level, promise collaboration and innovation. The suggestions are included, as well, on pages 6-8 for further committee consideration.
- 3. Are there course redundancies that could be eliminated by requiring that course offerings be offered by the discipline department?* Assessment of the likelihood of course redundancies was established through a catalog search by key-words (e.g., CAD, communication, computer, design, finance, hydrology/water, management, marketing/merchandising, methods, research, and statistics) as addressed on page 8. The Task Force recommends that the Provost engage faculty teaching potentially redundant courses to review syllabi and to consider ways, such as cross-listing their offerings and other credit-hour sharing arrangements, to reduce these redundancies.
- 4. Do some degree program require more than 120 credit hours?* Yes, but the Provost and the Deans, especially in Education and Human Services and in Engineering, have already begun substantive discussions to reduce such tightly structured degree programs. It is expected that these programs will approach 120 hours, subject to accreditation and certification requirements, within the next year.

Proposing certain procedures and guidelines, the Task Force foresees the Provost and the Deans convening, even leading focused Task Groups of faculty to examine some of the ideas offered in this report for further study – or other ideas arising independently of the Task Force’s work – to re-structure colleges and departments, to create new interdisciplinary programs, and to find ways to reduce redundancies. Ideally, these Task Groups will then recommend specific changes for administrative leadership to implement, subject to university policy.

## **The Report**

In accordance with the Program Change Review Committee (PCRC) Report of 2012, Provost John Nicklow convened a Task Force to consider complementary practices and academic efficiencies (CPAE). Its work for the Fall semester began August 27, 2012, to undertake a sweeping review of academic units and programs.

The CPAE Task Force consists of faculty members from each instructional college unit on the Carbondale campus. Faculty Senate and Graduate Council each appointed a member. This group was joined by the Interim Director of Institutional Research and Studies (IRS) and by the Associate Director of Finance, both of them serving as resources for the Task Force’s work. The fourteen members are:

Jim Allen, *Chair*, Associate Provost for Academic Programs  
Nilanjana Bardhan, Speech Communication, Liberal Arts  
Katherine Frith, Journalism, Mass Communication and Media Arts  
Frank Houdek, Associate Dean, Law  
Karen Jones, Animal Science, Food, and Nutrition, Agricultural Sciences  
Allan Karnes, Associate Dean, Business  
Gary Kinsel, Chemistry, Science  
Judy Marshall, *Ex officio Member*, Executive Director for Finance, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance  
Dave NewMyer, Aviation Management and Flight, Applied Sciences and Arts  
Kathy Pericak-Spector, Mathematics, Faculty Senate  
Spyros Tragoudas, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Engineering  
George Vineyard, *Ex officio Member*, Interim Director, Institutional Research and Studies (IRS)  
Matt Whiles, Center for Ecology, Graduate Council  
Lyle White, Educational Psychology and Special Education, Education and Human Services

## **Mission and Procedures**

The Task Force’s mission was to examine the enhancement of quality, as well as the containment of costs, in the delivery of academic programs. It did so, first and foremost, by following the procedures set out by the PCRC Report, as reviewed by Faculty Senate and Graduate Council and as authorized by Chancellor Rita Cheng. In

its work on the report, the Task Force sought campus-wide input from a variety of faculty and staff constituencies (primarily through surveys and individual solicitations), and it investigated curricular practices and administrative efficiencies at comparable institutions.

In light of the IBHE's metrics for performance-based funding and productivity, the Task Force's principal goal was to promote innovation, collaboration, and savings across programmatic and administrative boundaries. The Task Force targeted interdisciplinary opportunities, curricular integration, and best practices in both instruction and research, not just administrative economies in the medium to long term (three years or more). In the process, however, the Task Force was mindful of unique educational objectives, faculty cultures, and programmatic integrity as defined by external accreditation, licensure, and/or certification standards.

Section VI of the PCRC Report posed four questions for the Task Force to address, even though the Task Force went far beyond its original mandate to suggest a lengthy list of ideas for exploration and further discussion:

- a. *Are there programs that could be combined administratively to eliminate redundancies?*
- b. *Are there programs that would be better suited in another college?*
- c. *Are there course redundancies that could be eliminated by requiring that course offerings be offered by the discipline department? and*
- d. *Does the degree program require more than 120 credit hours?*

Certain efficiency parameters provided context for the Task Force's deliberations. These included:

- a. *metrics mandated by the state's Performance-Based Funding initiative (viz., 120-hour undergraduate degrees) and by Illinois PA 97-0610 (i.e., enrollment, graduation, and costs per credit hour),*
- b. *supplemental data sets and considerations discussed in Section IV of the PCRC Report (data analysis, centrality, demand, non-instructional activity, reputation/accreditation, cost or revenue generation, and underrepresented groups), and*
- c. *efficiencies, such as (but not limited to) the 5/10/15 rule, the cost per FTE student, and the cost per FTE faculty member, in keeping with IBHE requirements.*

## **Caveats**

As it proceeded, the Task Force posited the following five stipulations:

1. The status quo is not an option. Like higher education generally, SIU is facing a long-term fiscal crisis. It has lost \$42 million (i.e., 17 percent) from its annual state appropriations since 2002. Students now pay more than 52 percent of the university's operating budget, yet there are 14 percent fewer

students today than there were in 2002. Larger enrollments have therefore become critically important to all degree programs.

In response to this situation and to recent state legislation on performance-based funding and accountability, the PCRC Report established procedures for reviewing degree programs with low enrollments and graduation rates and high costs. The PCRC also recommended the creation of the CPAE Task Force to help identify other programmatic ways to address these challenges facing the university.

2. All ideas are framed for further investigation and discussion. Because the Task Force felt neither empowered nor qualified to mandate sweeping administrative and curricular changes, it urges the Provost, Deans, constituency groups, faculty in their academic units, and specially convened Task Groups to continue the conversation. In many colleges, discussions have already started on what must be a sustained work in progress.

The underlying assumption here is that the wisest procedure for ensuring significant change requires engagement from faculty and staff with leadership from Deans and the Provost. The scholarly literature, such as Peter Eckel's study of consolidation and merger at Oregon State, Kent State, Rochester, and Maryland, indicates that the most successful efforts occur in substantive consultation with the affected programs.

3. Collaboration and efficiencies entail a logical and structured sequence of re-organization. The Task Force hopes that many course redundancies will be eliminated through administrative consolidation or programmatic mergers. However, the fiscal crisis that the university and the state of Illinois face requires that courses be offered in the most efficient manner possible.

Faculty members, working with administrative leaders, should address course redundancies now. IRS has generated sizeable spreadsheets of offerings identified by key-words (e.g., CAD, communication, computer, design, finance, hydrology/water, management, marketing/merchandising, methods, research, and statistics) that can be used as a starting point. Incentives to give up redundant courses might be utilized to soften the blow of lost credit hours.

4. The faculty should be provided incentives to drive innovation and collaboration across administrative and programmatic boundaries. The effective restructuring of programs, departments, and colleges will happen much more readily if there are rewards for colleagues to eliminate their redundant courses, to develop interdisciplinary programs, and to merge or consolidate academic units.

Faculty members work better with appropriate inducements, so long as these inducements lead to the changes likely to create better enrollments and cost-savings, such as what distance education has generated recently. Incentives need to be defined by Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) consistent with departmental and college operating papers, collective bargaining agreements, the new strategic plan, and university policy.

5. The discussion and action on 120-hour majors are already underway. This caveat is more than a matter of university policy; it is a concession to practical necessity. The Task Force realizes that the 120-hour major is being addressed by another process of faculty consultation.

The undergraduate degree programs requiring the most credit hours are in Teacher Education and the College of Engineering, mostly because of accreditation, certification, and licensure requirements. In collaboration with the Provost, the instructional faculty in these programs have made significant progress in downsizing their programs to 120 hours. The Task Force does not wish to interfere with that on-going process – or other efforts in the colleges to grow enrollments and to reduce costs.

### **Suggestions for Consideration**

To empower the faculty to consider the Task Force's suggestions, which are intended to stimulate a campus-wide conversation, the report organizes its ideas for further investigation into four sections:

1. *College and Program Re-organization,*
2. *Course Redundancy Review*
3. *Incentive Frameworks, and*
4. *Procedures and Guidelines.*

This presentation of ideas owes much to their complexity, but also to their sources. One helpful source was a survey of faculty and staff last October, which elicited a number of responses worth review. The Task Force members discussed and elaborated on these initial ideas with some of their own and/or from colleagues in their colleges. Given this starting point, the Task Force expects – and welcomes – still more ideas as colleagues across campus think about possibilities to innovate and to save thanks to administrative re-organization and interdisciplinary programs.

The following overview of the proposals, college by college, is far from exhaustive and, in some cases, contradictory or redundant. This is the result of a deliberate effort to respect multiple perspectives, not to set out definitive recommendations that would foreclose further discussion. In the spirit of the faculty and staff surveys, the lists below suggest a more open process to redefine the university's operations and programs.

Moreover, in Sections 3 and 4, this report proposes incentives and procedures to broaden the university community's engagement and to focus its efforts on a narrower range of ideas for re-structuring and programmatic change to address SIU's longstanding enrollment and budgetary crisis.

## **1. College and Program Re-organization**

### **a. College of Agricultural Sciences:**

Move Nutrition to the School of Allied Health  
Move Hospitality and Tourism to the College of Applied Sciences and Arts or the College of Business  
Move Plant Biology, Fisheries, and Wildlife to the College  
Create a new College of Life and Natural Sciences with four schools (with units also drawn from the College of Science):  
Agricultural and Biological Sciences  
Consumer Sciences  
Natural Resources  
Chemical, Computational, and Physical Sciences

### **b. College of Applied Sciences and Arts:**

Create a School of Informatics in the College by moving:  
Computer Science,  
Management Information Systems,  
Computer Engineering  
Information Systems and Applied Technologies  
Create a new College of Applied Technologies with five schools:  
Allied Health (with Health Education)  
Architecture and Design  
Information Systems and Applied Technologies  
Transportation  
Workforce Education and Engineering Technology

### **c. College of Business:**

Move Economics and Agribusiness Economics to Finance  
Move Information and Applied Technologies to Management  
Move Health Care Management to the College  
Move Education, Training, and Development in WED to Management

### **d. College of Engineering:**

Move Computer Science to the College  
Move Architectural Studies to the College  
Move Physics to the College  
Move Information Systems and Applied Technologies to Technology  
Move Mining and Mineral Resource Engineering to Mechanical Engineering and Energy Processes or to Civil and Environmental Engineering

- e. College of Education and Human Services:  
 Support the on-going reorganization of the College related to Educational Leadership, Higher Education, Special Education, & Counselor Education  
 Reorganize the entire college into two schools and one center.  
 (Linked undergraduate and graduate programs would be re-organized together. Graduate programs without an undergraduate connection would be placed within or outside the college.)  
*School of Education:* Early Childhood Teacher, Elementary School Teacher, Secondary Teacher in Social Studies, Learning Behavior Specialist I, Dual Certification: learning behavior specialist I and elementary education  
*School of Human Services:* Communication Disorders and Sciences, Rehabilitation Services, Social Work, Community Health Education, Leisure Services Management, Therapeutic Recreation, Outdoor Recreation Leadership & Management, Exercise Science, Physical Education Teacher, Sports Administration  
*Center for Quantitative & Qualitative Research Methods* to coordinate instruction and research in research methods campus-wide and graduate programs in educational research methods  
 Move all programs currently in Work Force Education and Development to the College of Applied Sciences and Arts  
 Move discipline/content specific Teacher Education Programs (e.g., Math, Sciences, Art, English, History) in other colleges
- f. College of Liberal Arts:  
 Re-organize departments into four schools:  
 Arts: Art and Design, Music, and Theater  
 Humanities: English, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Linguistics/CESL, Philosophy, and Speech Communication  
 Social Sciences: Anthropology, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Economics, Geography and Environmental Resources, History, Political Science, and Sociology  
 Interdisciplinary Studies: Africana Studies, Museum Studies, Paralegal Studies, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and University Studies  
 Move departments in Mass Communication and Media Arts to the College
- g. College of Mass Communication and Media Arts:  
 Create a new College of Media, Communications, and the Arts with the Departments/Schools of Architecture; Art and Design; Cinema

and Photography; Fashion Design; Interior Design; Journalism;  
Music; Radio, TV, and Digital Media; Speech Communication;  
Theater

h. College of Science:

Consolidate life science departments into one Department or School

Biological Sciences

Microbiology

Physiology

Plant Biology

Zoology

Move Pre-Nursing (or new BS in Nursing) to the College of Applied  
Sciences and Arts or the School of Medicine

Create a new College of Science and Applied Sciences and Arts

Create a new College of Arts and Sciences with six schools: Arts,  
Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences,  
and Interdisciplinary Studies

i. Inter-College Units and Programs:

Add interdisciplinary programs to already existing research centers:  
Coal, Dewey, Ecology, Fisheries, Materials Technology, and  
Wildlife

Create new interdisciplinary centers and/or institutes for research  
and degree programs: Design, Communication, and Media;  
Energy; Hydrology; Informatics; Quantitative and Qualitative  
Research Methods; and Sustainability

Create a new College Without Walls incorporating all interdisciplinary  
programs

## **2. Course Redundancy Review**

The Task Force received a number of suggestions concerning the review of course redundancies. Most of these were related to courses whose titles and descriptions contained key-words, such as CAD, communication, computer, design, finance, hydrology/water, management, marketing/merchandising, methods, research, and statistics, among others.

Once these courses were identified, IRS created spreadsheets, though it was immediately apparent that the documentation was too large and complex for the Task Force to examine in detail. It was agreed that the possibilities for reducing course redundancies were best left to Provost-appointed Task Groups of instructional faculty in the relevant fields to review and to recommend ways to achieve efficiencies.

Meanwhile, given the university's on-going difficult budgetary constraints, departments will most likely seek help in the delivery of many courses from other departments with the appropriate instructional expertise. This natural process also promises the collaboration of faculty, who offer very similar if not identical courses, in the short run.

### **3. Incentive Frameworks**

At the heart of the proposed changes, some of them substantial, are positive inducements for the faculty to explore, revise, and accept the ideas presented here. The Task Force believes that incentives will guide the negotiations the faculty must undertake in any substantive administrative re-organization and programmatic change. Clearly, the advantages of the restructuring and realignments should be evident to everyone concerned.

Once these arrangements have been worked out in detail, including the benefits accruing to the academic units involved, they need to be specified in Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). Provisions for matters such as cross-listing courses, new joint degree programs, headcounts, and administrative re-organization all must be defined in these documents. Each memorandum must state not only faculty roles and responsibilities, but also rewards for academic programs and units arising from the changes.

MoUs should specify direct inducements for faculty to embrace programmatic and organizational change. These incentives could be modeled on those already in place, such as distance education's 29.5%/70.5% split of net revenue generated from the tuition that students pay for online courses taught as an overload. While this revenue sharing is not applicable to on-campus faculty workloads, it suggests that other, more immediate inducements can and should arise from additional revenues and savings generated by new programs and organization: release time, OTS budgets, graduate assistantships, student work, space, and perhaps, over time, even NTT and TT staffing in participating units.

### **4. Procedures and Guidelines Going Forward**

The Task Force asks that the proposals and incentives be discussed by the Deans, among themselves and with the departmental and collegiate faculty. In cooperation with the Provost, their job will be to choose which of the ideas in this report they wish to pursue in line with the procedures and guidelines discussed below.

In many colleges, on-going efforts, such as the 120-hour major, need little guidance from the Task Force. These efforts are already eliminating redundant courses, creating new programs, and re-organizing to improve enroll-

ments and achieve efficiencies. Where such activities are already underway, the Task Force wants them to continue as part of a collaborative and cooperative process comparable to the one proposed here.

### Procedures:

The university needs to do still more to face its challenges. To this end, the Task Force suggests that the Provost and the Deans convene Task Groups of interested faculty members to probe the possibilities of any ideas proposed here – or others as they arise in future discussions. Because the Task Force never presumed to have the requisite authority or expertise, it would rather see administrative leadership decide which ideas it would like to see addressed by informed colleagues in these Groups to work on shared coursework, new programs, and/or re-structured academic units.

Deans in the colleges listed in Items “a” through “h” should form one or more Task Groups to consider ideas in more detail. For larger initiatives, such as the College without Walls, the Provost and interested Deans need to lay the groundwork and ask the right faculty members to explore them. Some ideas proposed in item “i” already have natural constituencies of interest: the directors overseeing existing centers. These Groups should be charged by the Deans, the Vice Chancellor for Research, and/or the Provost to investigate interdisciplinary programs based on their research.

Moreover, there needs to be a Task Group consisting of the appropriate instructional faculty for each key-word course (e.g., CAD, communication, computer, design, finance, hydrology/water, management, marketing/merchandising, methods, research, and statistics), whose spreadsheets require sorting and study. In most instances, the faculty know each other well enough to start the relevant Groups themselves, especially in light of what they have to gain from the discussions.

In all instances, the Task Groups should be held accountable to their colleagues as well as to administrative leadership. The Deans need to appoint a chair for all Task Groups working within his or her college; the Provost needs to do the same for all Task Groups working between colleges. The Groups will have a semester to complete their work and prepare reports to the Dean or the Provost, as appropriate, for implementation in MoUs.

### Guidelines:

Throughout its deliberations, the Task Force has made every effort to respect faculty prerogatives in curriculum and instruction as well as the many factors complicating programmatic and structural change. There are good reasons, not just administrative inertia, for the present array of degree pro-

grams and academic units. So the Task Force proposes the following considerations in the discussion of its proposals.

1. Efficiency parameters, as listed in the Mission section of this report (p. 3), namely, metrics mandated by the state legislation, supplemental datasets listed in the PCRC Report, and university and IBHE policies;
2. Non-academic efficiencies, such as student registration, course scheduling, and reporting requirements, as well as long-term retention rates at the program, department, and college level, which promise greater administrative flexibility, instructional improvement, and/or faculty productivity;
3. Comparable MoUs defining the cross-listing of courses, interdisciplinary programs, headcounts, and administrative organization at peer institutions, as indicated on links from the IRS homepage;
4. Space and proximity in programmatic and organizational changes, so that faculty in new units are located together as much as possible to facilitate their work together;
5. University mission, strategic plan, faculty cultures, and programmatic integrity as defined by external accreditation, licensure, and/or certification standards, all of which need to be respected;
6. Review of all programmatic and structural changes by the faculty constituency groups responsible for their oversight, namely, the Faculty Senate and the Graduate Council;
7. All relevant articles and provisions in the CBAs negotiated by the SIU Board of Trustees with the bargaining units; and
8. Proper authorization of new and modified programs and academic units by the IBHE through the RME and NUI approval process, resulting in the timely revision of the undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

In issuing these suggestions and recommendations to the university community, the CPAE Task Force urges prompt action during the 2013 calendar year. Most decisions need to be completed by the end of the Spring 2013 semester. It is in the manifest interest of everyone not to prolong discussions, lest the uncertainties about the future of programs and units adversely affect current and prospective students. The time to act is now; the future of the university is ours to make.

Lastly, the CPAE Task Force wishes to reiterate that it does not endorse any or all of the proposed ideas. Its members do not wish to pre-empt the rightful roles and re-

sponsibilities of the university's administrative leadership and the faculty to decide on these weighty matters. And so it submits its recommendations in all humility to the university community for further consideration.

**References:**

Eckel, Peter. Changing Course: Making the Hard Decisions to Eliminate Academic Programs. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Education, 2003.

Institutional Research and Studies dashboard:

[http://iquest.siu.edu/program\\_review](http://iquest.siu.edu/program_review)

Institutional Research and Studies homepage:

<http://www.irs.siu.edu/webroot/index.htm>

Program Change Review Committee Report, 2012: <http://pvcaa.siu.edu/links.html>