University of Wisconsin System
2009
Program Realignment Initiative

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Background

• November 2008: Working Group charged with reviewing the System’s undergraduate program array

• Action precipitated by overall budget climate
Goals

• Assess viability and productivity of degree programs in terms of enrollment and completion

• Provide institutions with information to assist decision-making regarding program array
Approach

• Collected and analyzed data on undergraduate enrollments and degrees conferred from 1998-2008

• Produced a clear picture of the System’s undergraduate array

• Developed a set of guidelines for program realignments or discontinuations
Findings: Array

- Undergraduate array: 280 different majors or fields of study

- 60% or 169 majors were not duplicated

- 10% or 27 majors were offered by more than 50% of the institutions

- One major (Psychology) was offered by all institutions
Findings: Degree Production

- Determination of each major’s share of total undergraduate degree production on a per institution basis (over the period 1998-2008)

- For example:
  - UW-Green Bay conferred about 10,273 undergraduate degree during the period reviewed.
  - Business Administration contributed 16% or 1,643 degrees to that total
Findings: Fewer-degree-producing majors

• Several scenarios selected as starting points for discussion:
  – Scenario 1: Majors producing 50 or less degrees over the ten-year period
  – Scenario 2: Majors producing 30 or less degrees over the ten-year period
Findings: Fewer-degree-producing majors

- 27% (75) of the 280 majors found to each produce 50 or less degrees over the ten-year period
  - However, 22 of these fewer-degree-producing majors were unique offerings

- 30 of the fewer-degree-producing majors were offered by at least 50% of UW institutions
Initial Outcomes

- Campuses encouraged to utilize report to initiate discussion on overall array and realignment
- Anticipated that some campuses will utilize report to make decisions on program closures
Initial Outcomes

- Development of:
  - Guidelines for program closures or discontinuations which
    - Encourage coordination among campuses
    - Ensure that the System maintain capacity to offer programs needed by Wisconsin citizens
  - Guidelines for program suspensions
Conclusions

• Inferences regarding fewer-degree-producing majors need to take into account several factors:
  • Campus mission and context
  • Uniqueness of the major
  • Capacity of the system as a whole to offer that major
Working Group

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2. Rita Cheng, UW-Milwaukee
3. Yufeng Duan, OPAR
4. Joseph Holland, UW-Stout
5. Greg Lampe, UW Colleges
6. Christopher Markwood, UW-Superior
7. Mike Pagel, UW-Stevens Point
8. Perry Rettig, UW-Oshkosh
9. Nicholas Sloboda, UW-Superior
10. Marty Wood, UW-Eau Claire