

The University conducts Academic Program Planning on a regular basis following a process published in January of 2002. <http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/strategic/newapp.pdf>

One of the stated goals of the APP process is to guide decisions on the status of programs and units:

“Fundamentally, academic program planning identifies strong programs that need to be further strengthened. At the same time, program plans may also help identify weak programs that need renewal, substantial change, consolidation, or elimination from the University’s academic portfolio. “

The Faculty Senate, approved by the administration in 1999, established procedures to be used to implement any and all changes to programs, which would include those that might arise from the APP process or any planning for curricular revision regardless of origin or perceived immediacy. This is a fundamental curricular policy adopted by the University.

http://www.wmich.edu/facultysenate/downloads/CRP_Org_Changes_Units.pdf

This policy obligates the Faculty Senate Executive Board to evaluate and weigh all proposals.

“The executive board may take its recommendations (which may include advisory reports) to the Faculty Senate. The final recommendation and all related materials are sent to the provost”

In order to fulfill that obligation the Board adopted a set of general criteria for itself to help it deliberate and then articulate any recommendations. By adopting a set of “indications” and “contraindications” the Board would hope to also signal to any individual, group or office the framework in which any given proposal for change will be viewed. The Board remains compelled to weigh and balance the relative impact of any indications or contraindications, and to provide interpretation and context to any mere collection of numerical scores that seem to support a given recommendation.

1. Contraindications for Program Reorganization

- a. The reorganization would have a negative impact on strategic goals or the University Mission.**
- b. The reorganization is idiosyncratic when compared to other institutions such that it may negatively impact recruitment and retention of quality students and faculty.**
- c. The reorganization would endanger the established quality of one or more of the programs affected.**
- d. The program's reorganization would have a demonstrably negative impact on education, societal concerns, or the SW Michigan area.**
- e. The reorganization may result in substantial loss of revenue currently derived from tuition, grants, contracts, endowments or gifts.**
- f. A combination of historical demand and future trends supports a continued demand and utility for the affected program(s).**
- g. The reorganization is primarily driven by a temporary shortfall of resources that could reasonably expect to recover.**

2. Indications Supporting Program Reorganization

- a. The discipline has changed significantly and is not reflected in the make-up of the academic program.**
- b. Reorganization will demonstrably serve the WMU Mission.**
- c. The viability of the unit is at risk without refocus of direction.**
- d. Multiple programs have a substantial similarity such that economics of operation or improvement in quality may result from consolidation.**
- e. The program's contribution to the WMU Mission of teaching, research, and service does not justify stand-alone maintenance.**
- f. The program is one that if reorganized will not impair the viability or quality of other WMU programs.**
- g. A combination of historical demand and future trends does not support a continued demand and utility for the affected program(s).**

3. Contraindications for Program Elimination

- a. The program has achieved a national or international reputation for high quality.**
- b. The program supplies significant instruction, research, or service that WMU is positioned to provide.**
- c. The program is novel/unique, and has been high performing with indications of high performance in the future.**
- d. The program is an essential program for a credible comprehensive university.**
- e. The program's elimination would have a negative impact on education and/or the SW Michigan region.**
- f. The program's elimination would result in substantial loss of revenue currently derived from tuition, grants, contracts, endowments or gifts.**
- g. A combination of historical demand and future trends supports a continued demand and utility for the affected program(s).**
- h. The elimination is primarily driven by a temporary shortfall of resources that could reasonably expect to recover.**

4. Indications Supporting Program Elimination

- a. The program is one that if eliminated will not substantially impair the viability or quality of other WMU programs.**
- b. The program is one that should be expected to be accredited, but is not; or one that is exposed to a substantial risk of loss of accreditation.**
- c. The program is one for which the present and probable future demand is insufficient to justify its maintenance at existing levels of support. Some exemplars might include sustained declines well beyond the institutional norm:**
 - in the number of applications for admission;**
 - in the student credit hours generated;**
 - in the number of students who complete degrees in the program;**
 - in the market demand for graduates of the program if designed for specific profession.**
- d. The instructional productivity of a program is substantially less than the norm for WMU with little evidence of future**

change.

- e. Budgetary constraints require elimination of a program within a department, school, or college in order to protect the core Mission of the institution.**
- f. A combination of historical demand and future trends does not support a continued demand and utility for the affected program(s).**