DATE: April 2, 2013

TO: Vice-Chancellor Kleine

FROM: Members of the University Senate Academic Policies Committee:

Lori Bica  Jerry Hoepner  Bob Nowlan
Selika Duckworth-Lawton  Patricia Kleine  Stephanie Wical
Doug Dunham  Jill Markgraf  Sam Fish, Student Senator
Gail Hanson Brenner  Don Mowry  Jean Pratt, Chair

SUBJECT: Program Review for Department of Economics

The Academic Policies Committee (APC) appreciates the time and effort invested by the Department of Economics in researching and reporting on both the successes and the challenges of their program. The APC also thanks the internal and external review teams for a thorough and in-depth review of the self-study report and all supporting documentation as well as the numerous interviews with students, faculty and staff. Their work informed our recommendation.

Based on our review of the supporting materials and our discussion with Chair Carroll of the Economics Department, the APC recommends that the Department of Economics continue in its present form.

Commendations
The Department of Economics received numerous commendations from the internal and external reviewers. The positive comments about the collegiality and diversity of the faculty stood out, as did faculty teaching, advising and community outreach. Faculty efforts in these areas stand as exemplars to the rest of the university. The program-review reports contain many supporting examples of faculty excellence in these areas.

Concerns
While we agree with nearly all the recommendations provided by the external and internal reviewers, we address a few concerns below:

- Encourage more peer-reviewed publications. The external reviewer recommended either one peer-reviewed journal article, or one chapter, or one conference proceeding per year. The internal reviewers expressed concern over the broadly defined measure of scholarly activities being equivalent, possibly resulting in a disincentive for tenured faculty to publish. Some members of APC are uncomfortable with vague scholarly standards and so concur with the internal/external reviewers that some standards need to be established. Addressing the ambiguity in scholarly standards will set clear expectations for junior faculty, which remain flexible and yet acknowledge the challenging demands (well-placed priorities) of their teaching loads. Additionally, more defined standards and intentional mentorship will assure consistency in support provided to junior faculty. While it is the perception of tenured faculty that support is consistent and well-distributed, the concerns of some junior faculty (whether well-founded or not) suggest some disparity in mentorship across faculty.

- Consider sequencing courses. The issue of course sequencing was an issue in the 2002-2003 program review and continues to be an issue. The Department removed the sequencing of 303/304 after the 2002-2003 review. Chair Carroll indicated his faculty are discussing sequencing, but flexibility is...
currently favored over sequencing. Once the assessment process has been improved, further data will be available to inform this discussion.

- Create a formal mentoring program to complement the current, informal mentoring program. The internal review committee noted that untenured faculty seem to have less information about tenure requirements than found in most departments. A more formal mentoring program would provide a more consistent message on tenure expectations and reduce the burden for the probationary faculty to seek out mentoring.

**Recommendations**

Many of the recommendations from the internal review team were embedded within the report rather than emphasized in the Recommendations section. The review form (Excel spreadsheet) submitted by the APC includes all the recommendations. The APC recommends the following:

- Build continual curricular improvement into assessment of the full program rather than just at the 104 and capstone levels.

- Work to expand the scope and funding of the Chippewa Valley Center for Economic Research and Development. With the passage of Act 32 and the emphasis on the role of universities for economic development, the CVCERD is in an excellent position to play a key role in measuring economic impact through research projects and collaborations with the community.

- Build faculty recognition and remuneration into high-impact practices.