

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE
UNIVERSITY SENATE RESOLUTION
IN SUPPORT OF
THE PROPOSAL BY THE FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES TO UW-SYSTEM ADDRESSING
SMALL PROGRAM CLOSURE POLICY

WHEREAS, the Chancellor of each institution in consultation with their faculties shall be responsible for designing curricula and setting degree requirements (WISCONSIN STATUTE 36.09[3]); and

WHEREAS, the Faculty shall have the primary responsibility for advising the chancellor regarding academic and educational activities (WISCONSIN STATUTE 36.09[4]); and

WHEREAS, the proposed UW-System policy regarding small programs (SYS 102_6.3 Program Monitoring Policy) would supersede the authority of the Chancellor and faculties; and

WHEREAS, the faculty representatives to UW System have proposed alternative reasonable policies that would keep intact local campus control of small programs;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University Senate of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire fully and heartily endorses and supports the proposal by the the faculty representatives to UW-System addressing small program closure policy.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that upon passage, a copy of this resolution be sent to UW System President Ray Cross and Chancellor Schmidt

Carleen Vande Zande-

We, the undersigned Faculty Representatives, submit the following revision to the SYS 102_6.3 Program Monitoring Policy

Proposal- The Faculty Representatives of the UW System campuses recommend that final decisions regarding program closure occur through shared governance at the campus level.

We recommend that all decision processes regarding the closure or continuation of a program should remain at the campus level. We believe that local shared governance and local campus administration should be the only ones empowered to initiate the process of program closure.

We also recommend specific revisions regarding the following:

1. **Use of “hard” cut-off measure** (average of 5 graduates/year over 5 years)- Using a metric that doesn't take into account student enrollment on a given campus is mathematically unsound.

Our first area of concern is the use of a “hard” cut-off (numbers) measure to determine the value of a program (i.e., programs are considered underperforming). One recommendation is that campuses choose the metric for their campus (similar to the performance based funding metrics) to measure program productivity. The existing proposed measurement does not take into account campus size, campus budgets, nor does it take into account the possibility that **a program can exist without any actual FTE cost** to the campus itself.

We recommend developing multiple measures from which campuses can select. These measurements should include, but would not be limited to, the following: percentage of campuses within the UW System that currently offer the program; the ratio of majors/FTE (i.e., cost); graduates as a percentage of the overall graduating class; and the number of general education student credit hours/FTE.

2. **In addition to our concerns regarding the metric, the timeframe in the current draft is far too short for a program to successfully meet the new target goals.**

The following timeframe is recommended as the current timeframe does not allow programs/campuses sufficient time to increase the number of graduates. Even if a program were to make a substantial effort to recruit new majors as soon as they are informed they are under consideration for closure, and thus eventually increase the number of graduates, three years is simply not enough time for said new students to actually matriculate and improve the program graduation average. We recommend that the time frame for remediation be increased from 3 to 5 years. For example:

- a. Year 0- identification of programs do not meet the identified metric,
- b. Year 1- Action Plan is developed to increase enrollment,
- c. Year 2-4- campuses implement the plan to increase enrollment in the major.
- d. Year 5- Program performance (e.g., # of graduates) is evaluated

3. **Campus-level Appeal Process-** with the campuses retaining the decision making authority, it is imperative that the campuses identify an appeal process that involves shared governance.

We recognize that System should play a role in ensuring campuses are offering the appropriate array of programs, but we must also recognize that curricular control lies within the hands of the faculty, not the System administration. We would also argue that local campus governance bodies and administrations are far better equipped than System administration to effectively determine the long-term viability of the programs housed on their respective campuses. Shared governance works best when all parties involved trust each other to do what is best for both for own campuses and for the System as a whole.

cc- System President Ray Cross,
Karen Schmitt VP ASA
Laura Dunek, Special Assistant