

January 8, 2002

**Academic Deans, Department Chairs, and Directors
Western Michigan University**

Attached for your review and use is a policy document that will guide the development of academic priorities, program plans, and allocation of related resources at Western Michigan University. The collaborative planning tasks outlined here will help us ensure the quality of our academic programs and more effectively link academic plans with available resources. This integrated process will build on work already being accomplished in some departments and colleges for externally accredited programs. Further, the overall process will be improved each year based on an evaluation of our experience.

The academic deans of the respective colleges will work with department chairs to identify a few departments that wish to participate in this academic program planning beginning in fall 2002. Departments selected will be announced by March 30, 2002, and brief process orientation meetings will be held in April and May. After the departments have developed their program plans, review teams will examine the plans for realism, capacity, and sustainability. Annually, the academic deans, the dean of The Graduate College, the vice provost for academic planning and assessment, and I will jointly review the departments' plans, consider team reports to set priorities, confirm academic quality, and allocate resources, including new faculty positions, as such resources become available.

Please study these materials, talk with your colleagues, and consider initial participation in this endeavor. An overview of this policy will be presented to the academic forum in January, the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Councils, the Faculty Senate meeting in March, and the AAUP Executive Committee. At those meetings Donald Thompson, dean of The Graduate College; Linda Delene, vice provost for academic planning and assessment; and I will respond to questions individuals may have about this collaborative task.

I look forward to working effectively with you to build productive linkages among our academic priorities, program plans, accreditation, assessment, and resource management in academic affairs throughout the University.

Sincerely,

**Fred Dobney,
Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs**

C: President Floyd and Vice Presidents

FRAMEWORK FOR INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

and

ACADEMIC PROGRAM PLANNING (APP)



Institutional Effectiveness

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dean, The Graduate College

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

January 7, 2002

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Framework for Institutional Effectiveness at Western Michigan University: Academic Priorities, Academic Program Planning, Accreditation, Assessment, and Academic Resource Alignment

Strategic academic planning, academic program planning and implementation, institutional and program accreditation, institutional and program assessment, and the effective allocation (or reallocation) of resources are sequentially linked academic management tasks. Each task informs our judgment and decision-making about the next one and, ultimately, institutional effectiveness. An overview of each task, in general relationship to the others, is as follows:

1) Strategic planning and academic priorities: the institutional mission statement, along with historic and continuing mandates, guides strategic planning and the establishment of academic priorities for Western Michigan University. The institution's academic priorities, reflecting student, market, and environmental demand, external program recognition, and the intellectual strength of the faculty are guides for enrollment growth, resource priorities, and reallocation judgments. Identification of WMU's academic priorities may result from: (a) enterprising efforts of faculty and departments, (b) academic administrative leadership, (c) campus-wide consensus, (d) formal innovation screening criteria used to benchmark other institutions and partners, or (e) external legislative, licensure, and accreditation requirements.

2) Academic program planning and enrollment management: academic program planning involves change and development through forward planning by the academic unit with attention to demand for graduates, application rates and applicant quality, student attrition and completion rates, student learning outcomes, major curricular changes, systemwide course and program offerings, accreditation reviews, and assessment findings. By examining demand, student quality and learning outcomes, persistence in programs, and external review findings, the academic department charts its future development against recent accomplishments, including the designation of programs targeted for change and improvement. Among the most important outcomes of academic program plans are: (a) student demand, quality, learning and graduation targets, (b) faculty and staff positions required to support targeted student levels and program alterations, (c) prerequisite physical space and facilities, (d) instructional and research equipment and technology needs, (e) externally funded sponsored research targets, and (f) program or partnership goals for enhanced program development.

3) Institutional and program accreditations: the external institutional and specialized program accreditation reviews provide cumulative, continuous, and relatively objective overviews of specific programs as well as the entire University. As such, the recommendations of accrediting groups are incorporated into strategic thinking and academic program planning, especially when developing programs of distinction or when correcting apparent deficiencies that lessen program quality for students and other constituent groups.

4) Institutional and program assessments: the externally required program and institutional assessments, often a part of external accreditation reviews, yield important findings that demonstrate the range of academic program quality in terms of

student and other program accomplishments. Moreover, the assessment outcomes for general education and other student learning should inform the more specialized academic programs about student preparedness for specific occupations and their admission into professional and/or graduate programs.

5) Academic resource effectiveness: the first four tasks help academic decision-makers judge how effectively available resources are aligned with stated academic priorities. Where program quality, student outcomes and successes, and reputational measures are demonstrably enhanced with additional resources, then that resource use is clearly effective for Western Michigan University. On the other hand, where institutional priorities and academic program plans require additional resources, subsequently made available without corresponding improvements, then that resource use has been marginal. A re-examination of institutional priorities or program planning is in order if the academic unit continues to lack improvement. The documentation of continuous improvements through institutional and program accreditation reviews and institutional and program assessment activities confirms the effective allocation of resources in terms of both the University's academic priorities and the academic units' program plans.

I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM PLANNING INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE:

The provost and the dean of the Graduate College at Western Michigan University request that all University academic programs engage in a systematic academic program planning cycle beginning with the fall semester, 2002. The primary reasons for this request are the following:

- First, and above all else, comprehensive program planning is a collaborative procedure for faculty, department chairs, deans, and the provost to assess and ensure the improvement of academic programs on a continual basis. Academic colleagues should use the academic program planning process to examine the effectiveness and ongoing vitality of their academic programs.
- Second, academic program plans help ensure currency of the intellectual framework and content. Curricular relationships among disciplines or professions are key considerations when examining program content and determining future plans. Such curricular relationships are of particular importance when framing plans for interdisciplinary program development among departments.
- Third, program plans provide faculty colleagues with an opportunity to determine how to balance new and traditional conditions in degree programs in the dynamic educational environment and the constraints facing the University.
- Fourth, academic deans, the graduate dean, the provost, and the president may use academic program plans to reauthorize existing faculty positions, and/or to make base fiscal adjustments in specific academic programs. As a result, there should be improved understanding about the assortment of academic programs at Western Michigan University.
- Fifth, this program planning endeavor will provide the basis for the allocation of any additional, new faculty positions as University resources become available. Annually, the provost, vice provost for institutional effectiveness, dean of the Graduate College, and the academic deans will jointly consider all program plan reports and make a final decision about new position allocations and related resources. The provost will communicate their decisions in writing to the involved departments.
- 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.

II. ASSUMPTIONS:

The following institutional assumptions provide the context for academic program planning at Western Michigan University.

- With its mission to be a student-centered research university Western Michigan University ensures that both undergraduate and graduate students have access to learning through instruction and research in all academic programs. [Note: In terms of the University's mission statement, research is defined as the inclusion of interpretive writing and musical composition, oral history, directing, acting, internships, clinical and field praxis, film production, choreography, musical performance, scholarly publications, and targeted interviewing as well as the more classic qualitative and quantitative survey, laboratory and field research activities usually found in the life, physical and social sciences. *Final Report* (2001) The Committee to Revise the University's Mission Statement, page 2.]
- Second, the call nationally for greater access, affordability, transparency, and innovation in higher education will result, among other things, in universities' publicly reporting aggregate information about student learning outcomes.
- Third, although there will be increasing competition for students nationally, overall University enrollment will increase slightly in the foreseeable future.
- Fourth, students will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.
- And, finally, existing resources, constrained by relatively modest student tuition increases and declining State of Michigan funding, will remain stable at best, and resources for new initiatives will require other sources of funding.

III. GOVERNING PRINCIPLES:

Program Definition: academic programs are defined as the composite of academic and curricular requirements necessary to earn a degree awarded by Western Michigan University (University Curriculum Review Process, August, 1999, p. 16). For the academic program planning process, a program is defined as any combination of courses leading to the designation of a major, a curriculum, minor, concentration, certificate, master's, specialist, or doctoral degree offered by a unit, usually an academic department. This program definition may also include interdisciplinary programs that involve faculty from multiple departments or other academic units.

Intrinsic Educational Values: the University holds central the value of an educated person. Program plans that demonstrably contribute to the development of a liberally educated person, including general education, will include the involvement of relevant departments and faculty, including professional or specialized programs through which students matriculate.

Plan Initiation, Schedules, Costs, and Evaluation: The respective college dean, in consultation with the graduate dean and the vice provost for institutional effectiveness, will annually determine which departments shall initiate formal academic plans. A small number of formal program plans within each college should be established annually to assure that, within a five-to-ten-year institutional planning cycle, systematic improvements are made in all academic programs. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will fund any direct, additional costs for program plans (i.e., the use of external peer consultants).

During the 2001-02 year, the provost and deans will schedule the development of several formal academic program plans for the 2002-03 and 2003-04 academic years. Wherever possible, the development of formal academic program plans will be scheduled to coincide with or immediately follow external program or professional accreditation reviews.

After both the 2002-03 and the 2003-04 academic years, a critical evaluation of this academic program planning process will be conducted and involve participants from each prior year. The purpose of both evaluations is to determine how to improve the process and outcomes for academic program planning at Western Michigan University.

Composition of Review Teams and Timetable: Shortly before the department completes its program plan report, a planning review team will be established. The respective college dean will designate the team's chair. The review team will consist of:

- 1) Two or three faculty colleagues from the academic department who are recommended by departmental faculty to the department chair, and selected by the college dean in consultation with the department chair,
- 2) At least one external peer faculty colleague recommended by departmental faculty to the department chair for selection from the slate of external faculty nominees provided by the vice provost for institutional effectiveness in consultation with, where appropriate, the Graduate College.
- 3) Two or three students (undergraduate and/or graduate students as appropriate) from the program selected by the departmental chair,
- 4) One outside-the-home-department WMU faculty colleague may be recommended to the respective college dean as a team member by the Faculty Senate (based upon the ability, experience, and program knowledge of the faculty colleague).
- 5) One or two external stakeholders (e.g., members of advisory boards or boards of visitors) may be invited to serve at the discretion of the respective dean and department chair.

Program planning reviews will be conducted within two months after all team members have been selected and have agreed to serve on teams.

Accreditation and Assessment Guidelines: the operative accreditation guidelines, program reviews, and student learning outcomes are important dimensions of all academic program plans. The requirements of external accreditation bodies and their related measures for program assessment and student learning may serve as useful starting points for the development of a department's academic program plans.

Program Mix: the mix of program levels (differing combinations of undergraduate, master's, specialist, doctoral, or certificate programs) affects the administrative and operating factors within each department. For example, teaching loads, sponsored research, public performances, and advising demands will vary due to a department's program mix. Therefore, comparing technical planning factors (pp. 10-16) across departments that have a different mix of program levels is inadvisable.

Dimensions of Program Plans: Plans should indicate how the recommended changes would enhance the department's role in achieving the goals expressed in the college and/or University mission statements. Moreover, there may be several levels or dimensions of program content within academic plans at Western Michigan University.

- **Organizational Dimensions:** A single academic department will be the most common unit for program plans. Different undergraduate majors or graduate concentrations in the same academic department should be planned for concurrently yet discretely, and not combined as if a single academic program within the department. Additionally, interdisciplinary programs that involve or affect more than one department or college may present plans as a combined unit if approved in advance by the dean(s). Regardless of the unit involved, it is intended that the academic plan and the plan's review will encompass all teaching (undergraduate, graduate, on and off campus), research, and outreach dimensions for each department including contributions to the Lee Honors College as well as the University's international programs and international study abroad of WMU students.
- **Undergraduate Dimensions:** Undergraduate programs (majors, minors, and curricula) within departments or academic units will be simultaneously examined to determine program strength and the academic contributions already being made to students, the department, college, and University.
- **Doctoral, Master's, and Certificate Dimensions:** Doctoral, specialist, master's, and certificate programs established for more than five years will be examined to determine continuing program vitality and ongoing contributions to students, the department, college, and University. Updating original program plans should occur within three to five years after graduate degree or certificate initiation. The plan review team will examine the "new" doctoral, master's or certificate programs to ascertain if original expectations are being met and what, if any, program adjustments should be initiated.

Disciplinary Duplication or Fragmentation: Academic program plans must consider whether a particular academic program leads to unwarranted content duplication or organizational and program fragmentation within the University. If so, the program plan review team must recommend a plausible solution. For example, the reorganization of academic units, the establishment of an institute or center, better use of cross-listed courses, or the lessening of duplication or fragmentation by program integration into another organizational framework may all be alternatives considered by the plan review team.

External Demands: Academic program plans must consider any external market, environmental, or social factors that foster a program's need or support its growth and enhancement. These factors may be related to innovation and knowledge formulation, career or employment prospects, or profound changes in educational demand and delivery methods.

IV. TECHNICAL PLANNING FACTORS:

While all technical planning factors designated below do not apply to every department's academic plan, there are ten factors that must be explicitly considered when formulating and presenting forward plans. These mandatory technical planning factors (demand for graduates, application rates, applicant admission scores, attrition rates, completion rates, student learning outcomes, physical space and facilities, curriculum changes, systemwide or external program or degree offerings, and external accreditation report findings) must be included in departments' academic plan reports. Information about most of the mandatory factors should be reported for the preceding five years (fall and winter semesters as well as for spring and summer sessions) wherever possible. Departments may also include a statement about distinctive program strength (factor #11) if such distinction is externally recognized.

The other technical planning factors (#12 through #28) may be included at the discretion of departmental faculty, department chairs, or deans if such factors clearly help identify program quality and student learning assessments that are central to the department's academic plan for improvement.

REQUIRED TECHNICAL PLANNING FACTORS:

1. **Demand for Graduates:** This factor ("5" = high demand and "1" = no demand) reflects demand for a program's students. For example, students who have a 100% placement rate in their field of study at graduation or within five years of graduation reflect "high" demand while students in programs with low placement rates do not reflect high external demand. Career services, graduate schools, industry, government, non-profit organizations, and other professional placements all provide important information about the demand for students from a particular academic program. [N.B. The "placement rate" factor may include actual employment or student acceptance for advanced study.]

2. **Application Rates:** The numbers of students who apply for program admission (and the comparative qualifications of the applicant pool versus the admitted pool) are factors for consideration in all program plans. Application rates (including those for incoming undergraduate transfer students and graduate students) should be considered over at least the prior five-year time period. Where known, information on unmet demand (qualified students' desire to matriculate in a program to which they cannot gain admission and/or class seats after program admission due to program constraints) should be noted in the department's academic program plan report.
3. **Applicant Admission Scores:** One index to program quality is the admission criteria and student credentials of those matriculating or recruited into programs. Standard measures are the scores on the Verbal (V), the Quantitative (Q), and Analytical (A) scores for sections of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or the Verbal (V) and Quantitative (Q) scores for the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT). Further, student scores on relevant subject tests required for program admission also are an index to program quality. To obtain a stable measure, figures for the last five years can be averaged although this is not universally regarded as a reliable measure of program quality. Similarly, changes in TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) scores will indicate shifts in English proficiency among international students. Transcripts and GPAs of prior academic work may also help identify the program quality of program applicants. Lastly, comparable SAT/ACT data for undergraduate programs will help identify the quality of admitted undergraduate students. Higher scores may indicate greater program quality.
4. **Attrition Rates:** The attrition rate and the timing of such attrition within programs (during undergraduate or graduate degree progression, after comprehensives, or during dissertation work) may indicate programs in difficulty. [The six-year rule for master's degrees and the seven-year rule for doctoral program completion could initially be monitored.] Program attrition rates for undergraduate students are determined after student admission to a recognized major and does not include attrition during the "pre" curricular programs for undergraduate majors.
5. **Completion Rates:** Time-to-degree student completion rates within programs at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels should be established for students who persist within programs. Also within this category, the student pass/fail rates on comprehensive exams should be determined for each doctoral program.
6. **Student Learning Outcomes:** Historical data (either qualitative or quantitative) with an evaluative summary must be presented on student learning outcomes (composite knowledge, skills, activities profiles) for five years (if available) in academic program plans. The assessment data provided should be appropriate for program graduates based upon the department's program and/or student assessment plan. Evidence should be provided to document how student-learning outcomes have directly changed programs or affected the department's decisions about its academic programs.

7. **Prerequisite Physical Space and Facilities:** This factor is a summary statement about physical space and/or facilities that are necessary for the program alterations or enhancements proposed in the department's plan. While not exhaustive, this synopsis should indicate what physical space constraints currently limit the program's quality, student learning outcomes, and research accomplishments of the program. Fundamentally, this factor is a judgment about additional physical space, as well as any major facility improvements, that are essential to the department's academic program advancement.
8. **Curriculum Changes:** This factor is an evaluative summary of substantial changes made to the intellectual content, the organization of courses (including the required number of credit hours) or the instructional sequence of the curriculum in the academic program during the five-year period preceding the formal plan. Further, any substantive changes in the admission or graduation requirements for students should be noted.
9. **Systemwide External Program or Degree Offerings:** This factor identifies the courses or degree programs provided by the department for the past five years that are offered externally from the main Kalamazoo campus. Such courses for academic programs or degrees may have been provided at one or more Extended University Program (EUP) sites, may be offered via the Internet or through other alternative delivery methods. The program plan report should indicate who taught the specific courses offered (adjunct, part-time, or tenure track/tenured faculty) and the enrollments per course. Further, if verified demand exists for programs or courses elsewhere in the EUP system, the department should indicate how the provision of specific, new faculty positions would facilitate additional non-Kalamazoo course or program offerings to meet the known student demand.
10. **Specialized Program Accreditation Findings:** Executive summaries of program strengths and weaknesses or other major findings about academic programs from external accreditation bodies also should be included with academic program plans. These executive findings, along with the latest external accreditation reports, must be made available to the program plan review teams.
11. **External Recognition of Program Quality:** Departments may include notice of externally based recognition of programs published during the past five years. For example, the *U.S. News and World Report 2002* ranked four WMU graduate programs (audiology, occupational therapy, physician assistant, and speech pathology) in the top fifty programs nationally.

OPTIONAL TECHNICAL PLANNING FACTORS

12. **Instructional Productivity (Student Credit Hours) by Faculty Type:** The number of credit hours produced by tenure-track (TT) faculty excludes credit hours generated by graduate assistants and instructors per semester and/or spring and summer session. This same type of teaching-productivity (or internal demand) measure could be developed for non-tenure track faculty (NT), part-time faculty (PT), doctoral associates (DA), and others, as applicable. Department chairs are included based on their actual teaching in a semester or

session. Further, program mix within the department must be seriously considered when making instructional productivity comparisons or when using as the rationale in program plans. [Note: If faculty teach in interdisciplinary programs or in courses outside their 'home' departments, the number of credit hours produced by those tenure-track faculty must be identified and included in the instructional productivity measure for each home department.]

13. **Changes in Credit Hours:** This factor tracks changes in the total number of credit hours produced in departmental programs over time by different faculty types per semester or session. The average credit hours produced in earlier years, for example, FY90 through FY95, can be used to create a stable and unbiased internal benchmark. Prior annual comparisons of credit-hour production for recent years by faculty type (item #12 above) and by program levels since 1996 may indicate enrollment demand shifts, changes in program mix, or organizational unit change that is important to the department's academic plan for improvement.
14. **Teaching Course Loads:** This measure refers to the number of courses taught by tenure-track faculty members (and other types of teaching faculty) within each department during semesters and sessions of the past five academic years. Faculty (not graduate assistants or doctoral associates) are counted on an FTE basis, while courses are defined as instructional activities that (a) meet at regularly assigned times and (b) carry three or more hours of credit. Courses meeting more or less often and having differential credit or contact hours are weighted proportionately to this standard. Data are taken from the Course List of the University, with higher numbers of courses taught per semester or session indicating heavier teaching loads. (Reassigned-time or buy-outs of faculty teaching loads must be noted.)
15. **Class Size:** A five-year summary of class size by course level (100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600 and 700 course numbers) may be provided if important to the program's plan. Information should be for all courses taught both on and off campus, and with the average class size by course level noted for each of the five years.
16. **Program Costs:** The measure of total annual program costs (faculty compensation, graduate, staff or technical support salaries, equipment, supplies, and travel) describes the WMU cost of educating students in a given discipline. Some programs will have differential costs due to variable equipment and supply costs essential to that program (e.g., laboratory equipment, clinical supplies, field placements or doctoral associates). The "cost per credit hour" (CCH) measure is the most frequently used standard to compare instructional costs across departments and colleges. Clear distinctions must be made for CCH for different program levels (i.e., undergraduate, master's, or doctoral programs). Course fees should also be noted along with their relationship to program quality for students.
17. **Equipment Inventory and Needs:** The department may provide an inventory of specialized instructional or research equipment used in departmental programs and explain how instructional and research programs are impacted by this inventory. Further, each department may decide to provide a brief description and rationale for no more than two additional pieces of equipment and explain

their potential impact on teaching, student learning, and/or research endeavors of the department as part of its academic program plan.

18. **Library:** Description of library holdings and an assessment of their adequacy in supporting the academic programs in the department. This factor should include consideration of the need for more specialized resources that are pertinent to the knowledge base of the discipline and the department's instructional and research plans.
19. **External Success Measures:** Any external annual measures of program success may be included and shall be considered by program plan review teams. Examples of these include ongoing prestigious graduate school placements, undergraduate student awards from national or regional competitions, nationally recognized fellowships, casting in a major theatrical or film production, professional licensure rates, or any other external confirmation of program merit and the learning or educational successes of its students. Examples of faculty measures include exchange professorships, and Fulbright, Woodrow Wilson, and Mellon awards or by election as a Fellow to the American Physical Society.
20. **National Research Council (NRC) Assessment Ratings or Other Widely Accepted External Ratings:** The forthcoming 2008 National Research Council assessment of research-doctorate programs will assess the quality and characteristics of graduate program performance, including research impact, student support and outcomes, and diversity of academic environment. Earlier assessments (1982, 1995) were reputational ratings of the "scholarly quality of program faculty," made on a 6-point scale, with 5 defined as "distinguished" and 0 defined as "not sufficient for doctoral education." If 2008 assessments are available for a department offering doctoral degrees, this information may be included in the academic program plan report. Other types of major external ratings of academic programs may be presented as measures of program quality.
21. **Funded Activities and Sponsored Research:** This program measure reports the total annual dollar value of all externally funded research grants (and the source of funds) acquired by faculty, staff, and students within a department over the most recent five years. Broadly defined, research grants and contracts awarded to the institution in such categories as research, instruction, demonstration, and training grants are all included. Interdisciplinary funded research grants shall be proportioned between departments on the basis of faculty time and effort in project involvement. The higher the number of faculty with grants, the greater sponsored research productivity. Further, higher dollar amounts per grant typically indicate greater resources available to the program and student learning activities.
22. **Humanities and Creative Recognition Activities:** This measure reflects the annual breadth of creative arts and humanities participation by tenure-track faculty. Such activities are defined as writing, creative readings and oral history, directing, acting, designing, technical direction, film and television production, choreography, juried exhibitions, musical composition, and musical performance. Higher figures indicate greater participation by the department's faculty.

23. **Publishing Recognition Activities:** This measure reflects the breadth of annual scholarly publication by tenured and tenure-track faculty. Publications are narrowly defined as scholarly books, edited scholarly volumes, book chapters in edited scholarly volumes, and articles published in refereed journals. Individual departments may propose, as part of this technical factor, an interpretation of publication quality. For example, publication quality may be indicated by the relevant citation index, for example, the *Science Citation Index Expanded*, the *Social Sciences Citation Index*, the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*, the *Philosopher's Index*, or the *Electronic Journals Indexes*. Moreover, the department may establish a rationale for different, variable categories of faculty scholarship in a given department. [The department may, for example, use the scholarship of discovery, of integration, of application and of teaching as defined in *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professorate* by Ernest L. Boyer, The Carnegie Foundation, NY, 1990, as the more appropriate measures of departmental scholarly performance.]
24. **Endowed Chairs, Distinguished Faculty Scholars, Emerging Scholars, Alumni Teaching Excellence, and Distinguished Teaching Awards:** A measurement of faculty quality in a department is the number of colleagues who have received WMU's most prestigious internal awards: Endowed Chairs (ECs), Distinguished Faculty Scholar Awards (DFS), Emerging Scholar (ES) Awards, Alumni Teaching Excellence (ATE), and Distinguished Teaching (DTA) Awards. (External student and faculty awards may be related to #15 and #16 above). To offset the inherent advantage of larger departments, this index treats *currently* working ECs, DFSs, ESs, ATEs, and DTAs as the numerator, with the number of current tenured and tenure-track positions in the department as the denominator. Higher scores for years preceding the formal academic plan period indicate a greater proportion of internally recognized, distinguished faculty and the department may wish to relate this to other technical factors.
25. **Bachelor's Degree Productivity:** This measure reports the annual number of undergraduate degrees completed within each major of the department during the last five years. A five-year time frame should be used to reflect recent enrollment changes within a department. The data, if used, should be reported on an annual per capita faculty basis, with higher numbers indicating greater undergraduate degree productivity by the department. Also, the proportion of undergraduate students who annually engage in academic research and/or applied scholarship should be reported. Examples of undergraduate students engaged in academic research or applied scholarship could include recitals and artistic performances, survey research, targeted interviewing, or professional practice and clinical activities may be reported.
26. **Master's Degree Productivity:** This measure reports the annual number of master's degrees completed by students within each department during the five years preceding the program's plan. The data are reported as a five-year total and the total is reported on an annual per capita graduate faculty basis, with higher numbers indicating greater departmental degree productivity. If applicable, the number of certificates completed annually by the department should also be separately reported. The proportion of graduate students who annually engage in academic research and/or applied scholarship may be reported.

27. **Specialist's Degree Productivity:** This measure reports the annual number of specialist degrees completed by students within each department during the five years preceding the program's plan. The data are reported as a five-year total and the total is reported on an annual per capita graduate faculty basis, with higher numbers indicating greater departmental degree productivity. The proportion of specialist students who annually engage in academic research and/or applied scholarship may also be reported.
28. **Doctoral Degree Productivity:** This measure reports the total annual number of doctoral degrees completed by students within the department over the last five years. The longevity of the doctoral program may be a consideration when interpreting such data. To control for faculty size, degrees are reported on an annual per capita graduate faculty basis, with higher numbers indicating greater departmental doctoral degree productivity. The proportion of doctoral students who annually engage in academic research and/or applied scholarship should be included along with noteworthy contributions to the discipline.

V. PROGRAM PLANNING RESULTS:

Certainly the careful deliberation, compilation, and reporting of the requested program plans will require collaboration by many colleagues. Clearly important will be the department's recommendations for academic program improvements within the operating and fiscal constraints of Western Michigan University. However the results, if used systematically and incrementally, should strengthen our academic programs, improve student learning, and enable us to make more comprehensively informed academic decisions and judgments—stressing connections among planning, accreditation, assessment, and our fiscal resources, including faculty position allocations. Moreover, the results of this academic program planning process should be a general assessment of program quality with a well-designed, agreed-upon plan for phased improvements by the faculty, department chair, deans, and provost. The program improvement plans that emerge should:

- Advance the University's mission as a student-centered research university
- Be explicit, realistic, and sustainable in terms of the human and fiscal resources available to the department, college, and University; and
- Set forth a practical timetable for the plan's accomplishment subject to available resources.

It is suggested that the academic plan report comprise three parts: a) information on the mandatory technical factors plus any optional technical factors the department elects to include, and b) the department's improvement plan with a cogent justification for the selected course of action, and c) the department's information profile. Reports should be succinct and clear.

Inquiries, requests for clarification, or suggestions for improvements to this academic planning process are welcome at any time and should be sent to:

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