

Academic Coordination and Efficiencies in the State University System

2010-2011 Academic Coordination Project

- The Board's Academic and Student Affairs Committee initiated the review of SUS academic degree programs to coordinate System program delivery and to identify academic efficiencies that might be gained across the System.
- For each institution, degree programs by level were identified as being below the degree production threshold criteria that were established in the CAVP Project work plan as follows:
 - Baccalaureate Programs – an average of less than six (6) degrees awarded per year over a five year period.
 - Master's, Specialist, Advanced Programs – an average of less than four (4) degrees awarded per year over a five year period.
 - Doctoral Programs – an average of less than three (3) degrees awarded per year over a five year period.
- Each university provost with faculty and staff reviewed the low productive programs based on: student demand for the program, workforce demand for graduates, program delivery options and innovations, and resource allocation.
- Campus decisions and proposed actions were reported for each program in one of five categories:
 - Program continuation with a specific rationale for doing so
 - A new collaborative or joint-delivery model
 - A specific corrective action plan for the program
 - Place the program in inactive status
 - Program termination.
- University submissions were compiled by the Board Office and reviewed by the CAVP in consideration of the SUS Degree Inventory and the need to provide high quality, high demand programs that meet employer needs.
- The Board Office reviewed with university representatives all programs recommended for continuation with specific rationale. This review included discussions on new delivery formats or other corrective action plans.
- The CAVP provided a summary report to the Committee at its June 2011 meeting.

FINDINGS

2011 Project

Of the **492** threshold programs (low productivity) identified:

- **59** programs were identified for corrective action or collaboration.
- **51** programs were place in inactive status.
- **74** programs were terminated or recommended for termination.
- **128** programs were newly established programs during the period.

- Since 2005, state universities have worked to streamline academic operations by reducing the array of general education courses, increasing enrollment in and thereby reducing course sections, consolidating courses and departments, optimizing the instructional load of faculty, closing non-essential and low-producing units, and increasing the delivery of distance education.

FINDINGS

For the period: Summer 2005 through Spring 2011

- 218 SUS degree programs have been terminated or are planned for termination.
 - 74 SUS degree programs have been placed or are planned for placement into an inactive status.
 - 191 SUS new degree programs have been implemented or have been approved for implementation.
- In the 2011 University Work Plan updates, the universities listed 96 proposed programs that are being planned for UBOT approval and implementation during the next three years.

An Annual Review Process: 2012 and Beyond

- The 2011 Academic Coordination Project triggered valuable academic planning sessions on the campuses regarding student demand for specific degree programs, workforce demand for graduates, program delivery options and innovations, and resource allocations.
- At its November 2011 meeting, the Board will consider for approval Regulation 8.004 – *Academic Program Coordination*, which will codify a process for the System-wide review and coordination of university academic programs.
- The CAVP will coordinate an annual review process for SUS academic program delivery and coordination that will consider the current and planned degree program offerings at each university and make recommendations that lead to better coordination across the State University System.
- The CAVP will meet at least annually to review degree programs recommended for termination and/or inactive status, along with proposed program reactivation and new degree program plans, to ensure that an appropriate level of access is provided for students across the State, and to ensure that opportunities are examined for collaborative design and utilizing shared resources across multiple institutions.
- In the University Work Plans, each university annually submits a list of new academic degree program proposals for the next three years and a list of low productive degree programs recommended either for a new collaborative or joint delivery model or for other corrective action.

- In each university's Annual Report submission, academic degree program changes are reported, including new program implementations, program suspensions, and program terminations.

System Efficiencies

Below are updates on other SUS Initiatives to gain academic efficiencies that evolved, in part, from the Academic coordination and Efficiencies project:

1. Adult Completion Initiative

Each year a significant number of students are forced to discontinue their pursuit of a college degree due to numerous factors that may include financial, work related, family obligations, health problems, and more. Some of these students have earned 60 to 120 credits, but no degree. The average income of Americans with a four-year degree is \$43,000 per year, compared to \$27,000 for those with just a high school diploma. In Florida, over 1.9 million adults have some college credit, which equates to 23% of the workforce.

To increase the number of Floridians holding a baccalaureate degree and thereby help to build a strong workforce and improve economic conditions in the state, a statewide degree completion initiative is under development that will utilize the resources of SUS institutions by developing a pilot program with USF, UWF, and other SUS institutions (FIU, UNF, FAMU and UF have expressed an interest). This program will be implemented under institutional Cooperative Program Agreements and it is envisioned that a single statewide portal will be developed for adult learners interested in degree completion. The agreement will enable SUS institutions to participate in this statewide degree completion initiative in two ways (1) offer complementary specializations to students for a program at another SUS institution using transient student model; (2) and/or develop a complementary degree completion program to offer within the statewide initiative.

2. Florida Institute for Oceanography

When FIO was reconstituted under the SUS AISO, Marine and Coastal Science education was a key component of the plan. There were numerous discussions regarding the role FIO could play in Coastal, Marine and Oceanography education, but the Deep Water Horizon oil spill moved that discussion onto the backburner.

Subsequently, the Council developed a plan built around a Marine/Coastal Biology Summer Program. Four or five FIO members located strategically around the state will agree to teach a 5 week Marine Science Course. Each location will specialize in one aspect of the course. Proposed sites include:

- St Petersburg - where oceanographic vessels are available,
- The Keys Marine lab - where reefs could be a focus,
- The Carolinian Bio-geographic Province - where oyster reefs and classic estuaries could be the emphasis,
- The Big Bend / peninsula area; and
- The SW part of the state - where the coastal Everglades and mangroves could be a focus.

Students will register at the five colleges or universities hosting or providing teaching faculty and spend one week at each location. This would likely be a 4 or 5 hour credit course and provide a fantastic and broad exposure to the field of Coastal Science/ Marine Science/ Oceanography. Most teaching institutions already have a course on the books that include these topics. The courses would be funded largely through tuition at the home institution, with some help needed for student ship time at St. Petersburg. Registration priority would be for member institutions, but students from other campuses could also take the course if space was available. It is projected that 80-100 students can be accommodated each summer in this course.

3. Professional Science Masters

Professional Science Master's (PSM) is an innovative graduate degree program initiated by the SUS Council of Graduate Deans and designed to allow students to pursue advanced training in science, while simultaneously developing workplace skills highly valued by employers. PSM programs prepare graduates for careers in business, government, and non-profit organizations, combining rigorous study in science and/or mathematics with coursework in management, policy, law, or related fields. Along with an emphasis on writing, leadership, and communication skills, most PSM programs require a final project or team experience, as well as an internship in a business or public sector setting.

- Currently, there are 27 PSM programs, with 8 more planned.
- In fall 2010, 272 students were enrolled in PSM programs.
- Since 2009, 66 degrees have been awarded in PSM programs.
- A statewide industry advisory board has been established.
- Student and employer surveys have taken place.
- A website is now online.

4. SUS Critical Language Network

The SUS Council of Academic Vice Presidents has initiated creation of a SUS Critical Language Network (CLN) to streamline the acquisition of the critical languages (e.g., Arabic, Mandarin, Russian, Hindi, Farsi, and Portuguese). The SUS CLN of nine state

universities (USF, UF, FSU, UCF, UWF, UNF, FIU, FAU, and NCF) will allow Florida's citizens to access the critical language courses and programs they require from across the entire state university system through: (1) coordination and communication of existing offerings; (2) targeted expansion of existing offerings to increase (online) access throughout the state; and (3) development of new language expertise to be shared across the SUS and the state.

This program will enhance **Florida's global competitiveness** by connecting local business and economic development to new markets (e.g., China, India, Brazil) and by improving the communication skills and intercultural literacy of its work force. In addition to economic benefits for the state and its citizens, this program will contribute significantly to enhancements in national security.