

To: Bob Snyder, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: Nancy L. Hurlbut, Interim Dean, College of Professional Studies

Subject: Recommendation for Two Programs in Category I of the Final Prioritization Report

Date: March 6, 2009

Cc: Erick Eschker, Chair, Department of Economics and Saeed Mortazavi, Chair, School of Business

This memo is in response to the request that all Deans forward their recommendations regarding programs in their College which were ranked in Category I in the recent Academic Program Prioritization Report. Among the College of Professional Studies for which I am the Interim Dean, the Department of Economics community outreach, research, and revenue generation, and the School of Business (SOB) in terms of faculty shortage were categorized in the Group One, potential for enhancement. According to The Prioritization Task Force (PTF), programs assigned to Category I generally received high overall program scores. Investment in these programs should be a priority to strengthen the academic performance of the university.

***Ranking of When to Enhance.***

The School of Business is one program that needs to be enhanced first. The Department of Economics would be my second choice to enhance. The reasons are stated below.

For one, enhancement of the SOB directly impacts students' ability to complete their education at HSU and HSU's overall FTES. The SOB is critically short of faculty to meet the very high and growing internal demand for the major. The Business Administration undergraduate program has grown in FTES consistently between 2003 (175 in 2003, 165 in 2004, 183 in 2005, 198 in 2006, and 213 in 2007, and 242 in 2008). Business Administration appears to have one of the fastest growing FTES on campus. The Department of Economics has not shown an increase during these years.

Secondly, as with FTES, the number of majors in the Business Administration (BA) Program has increased significantly. In 03/04, there were 316 Business Administration majors and in 08/09 there are 388. . This is an increase of 72 majors. Also, the Business Administration Program has one of the largest majors on campus and only Art and Biology appear to have more majors. Economics on the other hand, has a small number of majors and has only grown from 34 to 40 majors from 03/04 to 08/09.

Third, the Business Administration Program only has 3 tenure/tenure track faculty presently and probably only five in 09-10. They are critically low on faculty especially when compared to other programs of similar or even smaller size.

### *How to Enhance the Business Administration Program.*

First, the SOB has been unstable of late and needs to take stock of its programs' directions to enhance their success; it may be that the Masters of Business Administration (MBA) program needs to be reduced or suspended in order to support the fast growing BA program, at least until there is sufficient faculty in the school. As such, enhancement in the Business Administration Program needs to occur in combination with an analysis of, and changes in the MBA since the MBA program fell into Category 3. The prioritization report put SOB in category one to hire faculty to support the current undergraduate program but expressed serious concern for the graduate program's quality and the SOB's ability to hire and retain new faculty. In the chair's response to the PTF report, he indicates that the SOB has not had the opportunity to hire which is only partially the case. To the contrary, the SOB has had searches for at least the last three years with mixed results. Searches have had limited success with results ranging from failed searches or hiring faculty that did not stay. The SOB must have successful searches with faculty who stay in order to maintain its large undergraduate program. It looks like the school will have two successful searches this year.

I do not recommend eliminating the MBA program; however, it is very important to reorganize the department's efficiency to make it more cost effective if the MBA is to continue. As it is organized today, the program demands significant summer school funding without meeting the FTES thresholds established for most other summer school courses. Since the program is placed in category 3, I suggest that the year round set-up for summer school be seriously examined and that no additional faculty be hired for the MBA program at this time but instead hire faculty to support the undergraduate program. Another possibility would be to suspend the MBA until the undergraduate program is well supported and then to look at re-establishing the MBA with sufficient resources to support a high quality program.

The PTF indicated that Business Administration was difficult to place stating that, "Given its ranking based upon overall score, this program warrants a 2, however to maintain enrollment levels and quality it requires additional faculty which will require considerable enhancement. Very difficult to place: issues include faculty recruitment and the demands of accreditation. 2\*: This is a high-enrolled program but with inadequate staffing to maintain high quality. 1\*\*." This difficulty is likely due to the critical shortage of faculty in the SOB but also to the school trying to do too much at this time. In Dr. Mortazavi's, Chair of Business, response to the PTF, he states, "The program needs to become accredited (p. 38). The School agrees with the need for accreditation. The School has taken the first step and has become a member of the AACSB. With sufficient faculty, accreditation can be achieved." I do not support an investment in accreditation at this time. After attending a few meetings in which I discussed the importance of HSU SOB accreditation with many other CSU Business deans, it is clear that our program is far from being able to meet the requirements of accreditation, and that we have too few FTES, majors, and faculty to be accredited. Further, it would take substantial investment in order to do so (e.g., at least 10 to 15 permanent faculty members).

Presently, I recommend that we stabilize the school with new faculty and then we have a future discussion (about five years) about accreditation, and whether we have the need and the resources to be successful. As such, I do not agree with the chair that we put money into the accreditation process by sending the chair or a faculty member to the very costly accreditation meetings. I do believe the department should plan their curriculum and scholarship in the direction of being accreditable as this is a recognized standard for the field. I am uncertain about continuing to maintain HSU membership in the AACSB; however, this is likely a good idea.

**Based on the evidence provided in the prioritization report, and on my own involvement in and observation of the program and the field, I concur with the prioritization report that we must invest in the SOB by increasing the faculty by about four additional faculty with competitive salaries at or**

**above the going rate for a non-accredited program and that the SOB look at consolidating or suspending the MBA program in order to focus its strengths on the undergraduate program. Investment in accreditation needs to be postponed and reconsidered in three to five years.**

*How to Enhance the Department of Economics.*

The prioritization report was very explicit about what aspect of the Department of Economics was put into Category 1. They state, “1\*: This is a top quality program. There are numerous benefits gained from ties with local community. Seek funds to enhance community connections, research opportunities and revenue generation. 2\*\*: Number of majors appears to be stable and enhancement of the program may not be needed at this time. Were there an influx of majors, program should be enhanced accordingly.” The program was put into category one to seek funds to enhance community connections, research opportunities and revenue generation and not to grow its major or faculty. I concur with the analysis that this is an excellent program.

In accord with the PTF recommendation, I would enhance the department by giving them opportunities to seek external funding to support their community work and research, and to bring in an external visiting scholar for a year or two. **I would suggest giving release time for up to one year of one course per semester with the expectation that release time would be used by the faculty to seek external funds to support their future activities and to work with Advancement and other groups such as Small Business Office to locate and establish on-going funding sources. If the first year results in significant external funds, I would consider a second year of such release time but I do not support a continued reduction in teaching load using general funds.** This is particularly the case for the Economics Department as according to the FAD analysis of WTU/FTEF, the Economic faculty already have a lighter teaching load compared to most faculty in other departments on campus; the faculty also have a very light advising load with three faculty to advise only 40 majors. One possibility is that after the two years of support for release time for the faculty in the Department of Economics to continue “research for/success in getting” external funds as a rationale for the continued lighter teaching loads.

I do want to underscore the strength of the department and that any funds put into the Department of Economics will likely yield a solid return.