



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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May 13, 2009

To: Phyllis Wise, Provost
Douglas J. Wadden, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Planning
Office of the Provost, Box 351237

From: Gerald Baldasty, Vice Provost and Dean
James S. Antony, Associate Dean and Associate Vice Provost Academic Affairs

RE: Review of the UW Bothell Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program

This memorandum outlines the Graduate School's recommendations on the review of the UW Bothell Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program. More detailed information on the program can be found in the documents noted below. The Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program review included the following milestones and documentation.

- UW Bothell Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Self-Study (March 25, 2008)
- Charge meeting between review committee and administrators (April 26, 2008)
- Site Visit (May 5-6, 2008)
- Review Committee report (May 23, 2008)
- IAS Program's response to the report (October 15, 2008)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (February 5, 2009)

The review committee consisted of the following faculty:

J.W. Harrington, Professor, Department of Geography (Committee Chair)
LuAnne Thompson, Associate Professor, School of Oceanography
Paul Waddell, Professor Evans School of Public Affairs and Department
of Urban Design and Planning
Stephen Esquith, Professor and Dean, Residential College in the Arts and
Humanities, Michigan State University
Caroline Haynes, Professor Interdisciplinary Studies, Miami University

A subcommittee of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations to the full Council at its February 5, 2009 meeting. Specific comments on the IAS Program and degree programs included the following.

Degrees Offered

- Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences
- Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science
- Master of Arts in Policy Studies
- Master of Arts in Cultural Studies

Program Strengths

- Faculty commitment to interdisciplinarity—they are “creative and energetic...committed to the programs’ interdisciplinary, experiential, and multicultural emphases.
- Faculty commitment to student learning is evident in small class sizes, availability of faculty mentoring, emphasis on assessment of student learning, student involvement in decision-making, and the high level of student engagement.
- The mix of traditional and non-traditional students who learn from one another in the classroom.
- The Program has grown from 103 to 499 students and from 12 to 37 faculty since 1990.

Challenges and Risks

- Given the wide range of educational backgrounds and aptitudes of entering students, building a common foundational knowledge and analytical tools is an ongoing challenge. It may not be possible to meet the needs of such a diverse student population without offering more courses that have prerequisites.
- Growth in enrollment at UW Bothell is expected to continue. Curriculum expansion to accommodate growth is likely to increase the overall workload. The increasing stress is particularly hard on the junior faculty, who are also under pressure to demonstrate their research productivity.
- The review committee expressed concern about the lack of clearly defined standards for assessing the scholarship of recent faculty hires and felt that infrastructure is needed in order to ensure that the new hires will have the time and resources needed to satisfy those requirements.
- Increasing ethnic diversity of both faculty and students presents a significant challenge, which is complicated by the relatively low ethnic diversity in the Bothell area.
- Critically needed facilities such as laboratories, studios and performance space are not yet in place to support new degree offerings and new program options.
- New programs that are being phased in over the next few years will be competing for resources with some existing IAS programs that lack the resources required for high quality student learning experiences.
- The governance structure of IAS may need to evolve to enable it to accommodate new disciplinary degree programs, such as Psychology, and to participate in the campus-wide STEM initiative.

Recommendations

- The IAS faculty should continue to work to refine their shared understanding of interdisciplinary learning in light of the needs of today’s students.
- The faculty are encouraged to consider changes in organizational structure to strengthen the STEM component and facilitate the offering of disciplinary degrees.
- IAS should consider hiring a limited number of specialist faculty in areas such as mathematics.
- The foundational math/science education areas should be strengthened. Faculty are urged to address the need for deeper sequencing of courses to achieve intended program outcomes and to develop stronger foundational courses. Courses that are rarely offered should be eliminated.
- The unit should develop a strategic plan for enrollment growth that includes a well defined marketing strategy.

- Additional resources for the performing and visual arts including multi-purpose exhibit and performances spaces should be provided.
- The faculty should consider adding new degree options sparingly and strategically.
- Continuation and timing of next reviews:
 - Bachelor of Arts in IAS: Approve continuation of the degree programs with the next review in 10 years.
 - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science: Re-introduce the Conservation and Restoration Biology track. The next review should occur in 10 years. Given that the program was re-introduced in 2008-09, an interim report on the program's progress should be submitted to the Graduate School in 5 years. In view of the Review Committee's concern that the Earth System Science component of the track appeared to be subcritical, some kind of interim review process in the third year would be advisable to ensure that it is on track.
 - Master of Arts in Policy Studies: Approve continuing status with the next review in 5 years and an interim report to the Graduate School in 3 years. Issues to be address include the need for new faculty resources, recruitment of more and stronger students.
 - Master of Arts in Cultural Studies: The program was implemented in autumn 2008, has provisional status and is to be reviewed in 5 years.

Since the review, IAS has addressed a number of the review committee's findings and recommendations. The faculty have continued to work on other program areas which require more long-term effort.

We concur with the Council's comments and recommendations.

- c: Kenyon Chan, Chancellor, Office of the Chancellor, UW Bothell
 Susan Jeffords, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Office of the Chancellor,
 UW Bothell
 Janice M. DeCosmo, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
 Bruce Burgett, Director, Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program, UW Bothell
 Diane Gillespie, Associate Director, Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program,
 UW Bothell
 Martha Groom, Associate Director, Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program,
 UW Bothell
 UWB Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Review Committee
 Graduate School Council
 Jake Faleschini, President, Graduate and Professional Student Senate
 Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School