



UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
GREEN BAY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Scott R. Furlong, Dean
College of Liberal Arts and Science

FROM: Franklin M Chen
Co-Chair of the Academic Affairs Council

DATE: May 20, 2015

SUBJECT: Program Review Summary and Recommendation of Public and Environmental
Affairs
{Environmental Policy and Planning, and Public Administration} Self-Study
Report

Attached is the Program Review Summary and Recommendations of the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) for the Self-Study Report for Public and Environmental Affairs {Environmental Policy and Planning, and Public Administration}.

A copy of the summary has also been sent to Interim Provost, Greg Davis. He will provide the AAC with his evaluation of the assessment plan of the unit.

cc: Greg Davis, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
John Stoll, Chair Public and Environmental Affairs (memo only)

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Public and Environmental Affairs Program Review

May 20, 2015

Overview

The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) received the revised Public and Environmental Affairs (PEA) Self-Study Report on May 1, 2015. The unit reported two major accomplishments since the previous review in 2006. First, PEA has collaborated with Environmental Management and Business Institute (EMBI) from a grant to place interns from the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation (GLHEC). This establishes an effective internship program for PEA students. Second, Through The Center for Public affairs under the leadership of Dr. Lora Warner, the unit established a Research Scholar Program to award students to work on specialized Snap-Shot Reports on public issues under the guidance of faculty.

Strengths

The AAC has reviewed the Public and Environmental program and found the following strengths:

- Established students' internship and research scholarship program through effective collaboration with EMBI and through the Center for Public Affairs (CFPA). Over the past two years PEA has placed 50 or more interns in each year. The unit holds its Celebrating Students event each spring semester to recognize teaching assistants, honors students, independent studies, interns, and outstanding students in our programs. The unit has used the CFPA to create a "research scholar" program wherein appropriate students have been awarded a financial stipend to work on specialized Snap-Shot Reports on public issues under the guidance of faculty. In the past two years two have been released to much community attention and several more are in process. The two already released are "School Choice Vouchers in Green Bay: Factors to Consider" and "Connecting the Dots" Public Performance and Financial Trends in Brown County and City of Green Bay".
- The unit has revised and streamlined its curriculum: The new curriculum replaces emphasis of nonprofit management and emergency management with a transcriptable certificate. The unit also adds Human Resources in its curriculum by submitting and receiving full approval for a new course, "Public and Nonprofit Human Resources and Risk Management" (PU EN AF 345).
- While the number of EPP majors has declined, the numbers of majors of PA are growing: Numbers of majors of PA have increased from 71 to the low 80s, constituting a roughly 15% increase. The proportion of females

in the program matches the general trend of the campus as a whole, showing an increase from 51% to 61% over the 2008-2014 period.

- Through internship and honors programs, PEA students engage in the community through collaboration with students from other units such as Arts Management, Humanistic Studies, Social Work, and the campus' Adult Degree Programs. A variety of service learning activities have directly involved students in evaluation of nonprofits organizations (Public and Nonprofit Program Evaluation), critiquing of organizational budgets (Public and Nonprofit Budgeting), fundraising (Fundraising and Marketing for Nonprofits), and many other activities encouraged through academic courses. The annual "Steps Walk" has raised around \$4-8 thousand dollars per year that has been distributed by the Phoenix Philanthropy student organization.
- Students in Environmental Policy and Planning (EAA) adequately receives advising, gaining research opportunities with accessible and responsive faculty. The EAA students are also highly engaged in community such as having interviews with community public service leaders.

Concerns

Based on our analysis of Self-Study Report, the AAC identified several concerns about the Public and Environmental Affairs (PEA).

- The EPP major was strongly impacted by the departure (retirement, resignation) of three significant prominent faculty in 2011 and 2012. The numbers of majors dropped significantly after they left. This results in declining number of majors and minors for EPP: The number of majors drops from n=70 in 2010 to n=37 in 2014; the number of minors drops from n=33 in 2011 to n=18 in 2014. This trend may reverse with new faculty on board now. But it would take time.
- Employment opportunities for students graduated from the EPP program is a concern. Based on the alumni survey data (n=7, Tables 7, "Current Employment Status", 57% for EPP students fully employed vs. 78% for UWGB students in the category of 'fully employed'; n=6, Table 8, "Satisfaction of the job", 50% for EPP students vs. 72% for UWGB students in the category 'very satisfied' ; n=6, Table 10, "Extent of job related to major", 33% for EPP vs. 51% for UWGB students). For Public Administration, the employment data shows that the employment opportunities for PA students are at par with the UWGB students. Nevertheless, the PA students rate lower in the category of "Extent of job related to major" (n= 18, Table 10) 39% for PA students vs. 51% for UWGB students.

- For PA, Graduating Senior Survey, Table 7, "Educational Experiences", while PA students rate at par or better than UWGB students in most of the categories, the PA students rate lower than UWGB students in two categories: (1) "committed to racial harmony" (56% for UWGB vs. 34% for PA, n=44), (2) "committed to gender equity" (75% for UWGB vs. 64% for PA, n=45).
- The unit refers the need to strengthen and consistently apply its outcome assessment methods, stating that "Our past efforts at outcome assessment have not been continued and are being revised over the coming year." A number of different approaches are described in the self-study, with six recommendations to improve the process listed, including "look into other universities' assessment methods." Another paragraph discusses quality teaching, informal feedback from students, and job placement rates. With this variety of information discussed, no actual assessment data is presented in the document.
- The merger with the Urban and Regional Studies could have major impacts on the curriculum design with the unit.

Recommendations

- The AAC is interested to learn more about the specific strategy that is set in place upon the merger with the Urban and Regional Studies. The AAC is encouraged to learn that the new unit (PEA and URS) have met together twice and agreed to hold a retreat in the fall for the purpose of planning the curriculum and mapping out the merger.
- Concerning about the declining numbers of majors for EPP, and fewer employment opportunities for EPP students, a major effective marketing effort must be instituted. Major efforts from the Administration to reduce faculty turn over in the EPP unit can be considered. The unit also needs specific plans to recruit more majors.
- Concerning about PA students' perception on racial harmony and gender equity, the PA unit must make efforts to reverse that perception.
- Referring to the assessment, the AAC recommend that the unit develops a simple, formal assessment plan and compile data on student performance on the outcomes listed.
- The AAC is in support for the PA and EPP to set up a Master in Public Administration, and to develop a graduate certificate in Emergency Management because PA and EPP are unique to University of Wisconsin System. Even there are budgetary issues, the Administration and the unit faculty need to make efforts to make these plans a reality.