THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

Academic Information Series 1.
(ACIS-1)

This document replaces ACIS-1 dated August 1984,
ACIS-1.1 dated October 1987, ACIS-1. revised dated September 1992,
ACIS-1. revised dated November 10, 1995, ACIS-1. revised dated December 1998,
ACIS-1. revised dated May 2000, ACIS-1. revised dated August 2002,
ACIS-1. revised dated July 2003, ACIS-1. revised dated June 2006,
ACIS-1. revised dated May 2008, ACIS-1. revised dated June 2009,
ACIS-1. revised dated December 2009

ACADEMIC PLANNING AND PROGRAM REVIEW

April 2010

This document is a statement of the Regent Policy on Academic Planning and Program Review
in the UW System. This document contains information on the principles underlying academic
program planning, the context for academic program planning in the UW System, the process
involved in requesting and implementing new academic programs, and the program reviews
conducted at the institutional level.

Other related documents:
>   ACIS-4 January 1977
>   ACPS-1 February 1975
>   SG9 B
>   Academic Program Review Guidelines

University of Wisconsin System
Academic Planning and Program Review

Table of Contents

Academic Program Reporting Overview

This table describes the various academic program actions that require approval or reporting. Institutions are expected to consult with each other and with UW System Administration at appropriate points in the process of developing and implementing all new academic programs.

NOTE: All submissions should be directed to the UW System Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs at afgp@uwsa.edu. All "I" items will be reported to the Board of Regents annually or upon request.

Institutional Action	System Admin Action	Board of Regents Action	Required Documentation
1. Institutional Plan	I	I	Academic Plan, Executive Summary
2. Establish New Academic Degree or Program:			
a1. Entitlement Request or	A	I	Memo requesting Entitlement to Plan
a2. Expedited Review Process (undergraduate only)	A	I	Memo requesting Expedited Review
b. Authorization to Implement	A	A	Executive Summary and Proposal for Authorization to Implement
c. Implementation	I	I	Memo stating date of Implementation
d. Joint Review	A	I	Report and Recommendation
3. Offer an Existing Degree Program via Distance Education	A	I	Submit documentation of HLC approval and/or substantive change notice, if applicable, otherwise written notification.
4. Establish or Alter the Institutional Mission	A	A	Written request outlining rationale and analysis of impact on UW System
5. Extend Degree Program to a Second UW System Institution	A	I	Written notification, included in the Annual Program Report

Institutional Action	System Admin Action	Board of Regents Action	Required Documentation
6. Extend Degree Program to an Additional Location (formerly "remote site")	I	I	Submit documentation of HLC approval, if required; otherwise submit documentation of HLC notification and acknowledgement.
7. Establish a College/School[1]	A	A	Written request
8. Rename or Eliminate a College/School	I	I	Written notification, included in the Annual Program Report
9. Redirect Major/Degree Substantively	A	I	Written request
10. Establish, Rename or Eliminate a Center or Institute[2]	I	I	Written notification, included in the Annual Program Report
11. Eliminate a Degree/Major	I	I	Written notification, included in the Annual Program Report
12. Suspend a Degree/Major	A	I	Written request
13. Rename Major/Degree	I	I	Written notification, included in the Annual Program Report
14. Review General Education Program	I	I	Report to coincide with NCA/HLC re-accreditation review
15. Report on Institutional Program Review	I	I	Summaries due July 1 of each year

A=Approval Required
I=Information Only
[1]=Section 36.09 (1)(gm), *Wis. Stats.*, applies to creation of some schools or colleges
[2]=Only when state funds are involved initially or as a commitment for continuing the center or institute

Section One: Planning and Review Principles

Including "UW System Cost Control Policies"

Over the years, the UW Board of Regents has developed these planning and review principles designed to enable institutions to maintain high quality academic programs through efficient and effective use of available resources. UW System Administration is responsible for planning and oversight of the systemwide program array.

A. Each institution has responsibility for efficiently and effectively using available resources to develop and maintain the high-quality academic programs that will enable it to carry out its mission.

B. UW System Administration has responsibility for coordinating the program initiatives of the institutions in order to assure that initiatives are consistent with all mission statements and that they are consistent with the efficient and effective use of the resources of the UW System as a whole.

C. Board policy states that future program development in the UW System will rely heavily on base budget reallocation and/or resource redevelopment at the institutional level; and that, therefore, new program proposals which become part of the UW System's planning will be closely linked with, and often dependent on, existing program reviews and stated planning priorities of all the institutions.

D. UW System Administration and the institutions must use the review of existing programs to identify and plan toward the modification, elimination, or consolidation of low demand, inefficient, obsolete, and unnecessarily duplicative programs during consideration of possible reallocation of finances and/or personnel.

E. Whenever possible, the UW System will implement general inter-institutional planning and programming within regional consortia. The board encourages the development of consortia as one basis for increased cooperation not only among UW institutions, but also among private colleges and universities, and WTCS institutions.

F. The board will continue to designate institutional, inter-institutional, regional, or state bases for coordinated planning and/or implementation of UW System-sponsored programs, such as the Great Lakes Research Facility.

G. All decisions concerning program development or elimination in the UW System will be made with reference to the following general academic priorities:

  1. High-quality teaching and scholarship in the basic arts, humanities, and sciences associated with higher learning should provide the basic common context from which or within which all programs in the UW System should flow. For this reason, UW System Administration will place high priority on planning, implementing, and/or maintaining appropriate capability for excellent undergraduate teaching programs in general or liberal studies at each of the institutions.

  2. Beyond undergraduate liberal studies offered throughout the UW System, a diverse array of undergraduate and post-baccalaureate programs should also be present.

3. Plans regarding the range and diversity of professional, liberal arts, and sciences programs at any institution must be developed according to the priorities established in the relevant mission statements.

4. While mission and program differentiation are high priorities of the UW System, the range of professional and liberal studies programs offered by the institutions should overlap only when program duplication is clearly necessary to meet the highest priority concern: to provide the highest quality, most cost-effective university system possible for the citizens of Wisconsin.

H. Programming within the UW System must also be planned with reference to the following additional priorities for the efficient and effective use of resources:

1. UW System Administration and the institutions must place high priority on balancing access with cost effectiveness.

2. UW System Administration and the institutions will continue to avoid unnecessary duplication of educational opportunity and will eliminate unnecessary duplication where it exists.

3. UW System Administration and the institutions will consider nationally-available educational opportunities as they develop priorities concerning newly-identified, unfilled educational needs in Wisconsin. If Wisconsin's educational needs can be effectively and more economically served by consortium or compact relationships with institutions in other states, that avenue should have the highest priority.

I. Use of external consultants (academic and/or professional) is required for all new undergraduate and post-baccalaureate academic programs.

J. All program planning or review must take into consideration the following UW System Cost Control Policies:

1. The board affirms that UW System Administration and the institutions have responsibility for maintaining and enhancing educational quality. They also have responsibility for holding costs to the minimum level consistent with quality standards. Since the cost of higher education is an increasing impediment to maintaining and expanding educational opportunity, the UW System will give priority attention to this responsibility in all planning and review efforts.

2. Factors other than price inflation and compensation increases generate increased costs for some courses, course sequences, and programs. These factors include the costs of materials and equipment and the costs associated with necessary or desirable changes of teaching methods. Therefore, overall costs can be controlled only by eliminating low priority efforts or by reducing unit costs for some courses, sequences, and programs below present levels. In its planning efforts the UW System will emphasize methods for achieving savings which will then be used to support efforts to maintain or enhance quality in other courses, sequences, and programs.

3. Another major objective of all planning and review efforts is the development of procedures to ensure cost savings through:

   a. The elimination or consolidation of low-enrollment courses.

b. The elimination or consolidation of administrative, academic, or academic support units too small to efficiently use resources.

c. The elimination, reduction or regionalization of low-priority programs.

d. The control of course proliferation, including requirements in the major and/or in credits required for the degree.

e. The appropriate elimination of specific courses, academic programs and/or academic support services no longer relevant to students' needs or to the state of Wisconsin.

f. The re-examination of instructional practices, especially in high cost-per-credit areas, and the application of research into the development and implementation of appropriate, alternative practices which both maintain quality and reduce costs.

g. The development of appropriate workload policies.

h. The provision of accurate and timely information to potential students regarding requirements for admission into and completion of major programs of study, to facilitate efficient and effective use of credits-to-degree by individual students.

i. During review of existing programs and/or planning of new programs, institutions must consider or reconsider the academic and fiscal implications of specialized accreditation.

j. Every institutional report of program review and/or document in support of new program planning must contain substantive discussion of allocation and/or reallocation decisions necessary for maintaining and/or supporting the program under discussion, using the appropriate standard format.

Section Two: UW System Planning in Academic Programs and Academic Support Programs

Overall Context for Planning

Mission Statements

In addition to the overall UW System mission statement, the Board of Regents approves select mission statements for each institution. Within the framework of mission statements, the board delegates responsibilities to the institutions and UW System Administration respectively. Institutional program planning cannot deviate from nor expand upon an institutional mission statement without board approval.

Basic policy papers

Implicit in the board's balanced delegation of responsibility is the need for comprehensive academic planning. In previous actions, the board adopted the "Planning and Review Principles" [Section One] that outline general policy concerning the efficient and effective use of available resources and academic planning and program review, including specific criteria, priorities, and procedures for planning and program review decisions. These "Principles", including "UW System Cost Control Policies" [Section One, item J and following], are to be considered during academic planning and review activities.

Institutional Academic Planning and Priorities

Efficient and effective system wide planning is dependent on responsible institutional efforts. Therefore, each UW System institution must develop and implement planning efforts through methods chosen by and suitable to the institution. Such institutional planning should be consistent with the UW System's overall planning principles, as well as with appropriate mission statements. The paramount goal of institutional planning is the development of stated priorities for any new institutional undertakings. Institutional planning principles should specify criteria and procedures for planning and program review.

Every five years, the Provost will submit a long-term academic plan to the Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs, and present to the Education Committee of the Board a ten year campus academic plan (ACPS 1) to include:

- Programmatic intentions for the first five years in reasonable detail.
- A more general description of programmatic intentions for the subsequent five-year period.
- Programmatic intentions include both the continuation, modification, elimination, or consolidation of existing programs, and new programs.

Annually, institutions will share their short-term academic program plans and priorities with the UW System Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs, in their annual program

report. These short term updates should be congruent with the most recently submitted long term plan.

UW System Administration will maintain and annually update a list of approved entitlements to plan. Approved entitlements expire after five years if the institution takes no further action.

Section Three: Joint UW System Administration/Institutional Planning and Review

UW System Administration and the institutions collaborate in the planning and approval of new academic programs. In addition, UW System Administration and the institutions may undertake more comprehensive joint reviews of selected academic program areas across institutions (e.g., strategic planning and lateral reviews conducted in the 1980s and 1990s).

New Program Planning and Approval

Board of Regents' policy calls for joint planning of new degree programs, with formal board approval at stipulated decision points, to ensure such planning meets the policies and principles described in Sections One and Two.

Formal activity in the new program planning process begins when an institution requests an Entitlement to Plan a new academic program leading to a degree. Institutions may request an expedited review process, which consolidates and shortens the entitlement phase for existing sub majors, minors, and concentrations.

The program development and authorization process for new majors and degree programs involves four primary phases, which are outlined below.

I.   Request for Entitlement to Plan a New Program

   A. The institution(s)[1] determine(s) the feasibility of developing and requesting a new degree program. Informal consultation with other institutions is strongly encouraged.

   B. The Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs sends a memo to the UW System Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs requesting an Entitlement to Plan a new degree program. This memo includes a brief statement identifying the program and addressing the following issues (extensive documentation not required):

   1. Need for the program, including information on student demand and market demand for graduates;

   2. Description of the curriculum or identification of the learning outcomes;

   3. Relation to institutional mission, strategic plan, goals and objectives;

   4. Relation to other academic programs in the UW System, the region and, if appropriate, the nation; and

   5. Projected source of resources.

   C. As part of a preliminary review, the UW System Associate Vice President, Faculty and Academic Programs may consult with institutions to determine how the proposed program fits into the systemwide program array. If concerns arise, it is possible that a request for entitlement will not go forward.

---

[1] "Institution" is understood to refer to a single UW System institution or to a consortium of two or more UW Institutions collaborating on a new academic program.

D. The UW System Office of Academic and Faculty Programs (AFP) circulates the request for entitlement to the Provost/Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs of all institutions for comment. The purpose of this review is to ensure that all institutions know about the request and to consider the potential for collaboration.

1. AFP will act on a request for entitlement to plan within one month of receipt.

2. Institutions will have one calendar month to provide feedback on requests for entitlement to plan circulated by AFP.

3. Institutional comment on requests for entitlement are optional, and Provosts need not respond if they have no input they would like to provide.

4. Any concerns raised by UW System Administration and/or other institutions in response to an entitlement to plan are to be addressed in the program authorization document.

E. The institutions' comments are forwarded to the Provost/Vice Chancellor of the requesting institution and are shared with the Provost/Vice Chancellors of all the other institutions.

If necessary, the UW System Office of Academic and Faculty Programs consults with institutions to determine how the proposed program fits into the systemwide program array and whether revisions need to be made to the proposal.

F. The UW System Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs, makes a decision on the request for Entitlement to Plan. S/he may consult with the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs prior to making that decision.

The decision may be to: a) approve the Entitlement to Plan; b) return the proposal to the institution for additional work; or c) deny the request.

G. If the UW System Office of Academic and Faculty Programs and the requesting institution are unable to reach an agreement on the disposition of the request for Entitlement to Plan, the request can be forwarded to the Chancellor and the President for resolution.

H. Approved entitlements expire after five years if the institution takes no further action. The UW System Office of Academic and Faculty Programs regularly updates the Entitlement to Plan list, which is available upon request.

Expedited Review Process

The Expedited Review Process applies to approval of a new <u>undergraduate</u> academic program (major) that is currently offered as a submajor (e.g., track, concentration, emphasis). The request need not go through the Entitlement to Plan process, but can proceed directly to the Authorization process.

A program is eligible for an expedited review process if:

1. The program has been offered as a submajor or track for at least 6 years
2. The program has data to demonstrate sustained student interest and need.
3. The institution can demonstrate that offering the program as a major requires no substantial addition of courses or resources.
4. The new major has a substantial curriculum that does not duplicate or detract from the program from which it emanated.

If the institution believes their submajor to major program proposal fits the criteria for an expedited review, it sends a formal request for determination of eligibility to the Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs at afgp@uwsa.edu, addressing points 1-4 above. If approved, the program proposal can proceed directly to the *Authorization to Implement New Program* process as described in Section II below. The request must be submitted at least three (3) months prior to a desired BOR action.

II. Authorization to Implement New Program

A. The institution develops a proposal for Authorization to Implement the entitled program. The following reviews must be included in the process of developing the proposal. Choice of the sequence of these reviews is left to the institution.

1. Review of the proposal by a three-person Program Review Committee consisting of at least two representatives of the institution (one of whom should represent the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs) and a representative of the UW System Office of Academic and Faculty Programs. The Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs appoints the institutional representatives, and the Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs appoints the System representative. The Provost/Vice Chancellor's representative typically convenes the Committee. The role of the UW System representative is to work with the institutional representatives to ensure that the final proposal addresses the kinds of issues that might concern the Board of Regents.

2. Review of the proposal by at least two consultants from outside the proposing institution(s).

3. Review of the proposal by the appropriate institutional governance bodies.

B. When the above reviews are completed, the Program Review Committee recommends to the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs whether the academic program should be implemented. If the Committee recommends implementation and the Provost/Vice Chancellor agrees, the Committee prepares an Executive Summary to be submitted to the Board of Regents. The Provost/Vice Chancellor then submits the complete proposal and the Executive Summary to the UW System Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs for review.

If approved to move forward, the Board of Regents acts on the proposal for Authorization to Implement the program.

III. Implementation of the New Academic Program

A. The institution is responsible for implementation. However, the Authorization to Implement expires five years from the date of board approval of the Authorization if the institution takes no further action.

B. The Provost/Vice Chancellor notifies the Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs in writing when the program is actually implemented.

IV. Joint Program Review

A. The institution and UW System Administration undertake a Joint Review approximately five years after implementation of the program. The institution will schedule the review to coincide with the first institutional review. The institution will provide the anticipated date of the joint review with the notification of implementation. Prior to the review, the UW System Office of Academic and Faculty Programs will provide a copy of the original Executive Summary.

B. The general purposes of the joint review are:

1. Determine whether the goals and objectives, as originally stated in the program proposal, were met. If the goals and objectives were not met, determine the reasons why.

2. Ascertain how the program is related to other programs offered by the institution and how important it is to the institution's program array.

3. Assess the level of quality the program has attained since its implementation.

4. Determine the resource implications of continuing this program.

C. The review of the program will follow the institution's guidelines for self-study, external evaluation and review by appropriate governance bodies. The inclusion of an academic planner from AFP on the Joint Review Committee is recommended, so that the committee may benefit from a systemwide perspective prior to submitting final documents for approval to the Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs.

D. The Joint Review Committee forwards its findings and recommendations to the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Following review, the Provost/Vice Chancellor then makes a recommendation to the Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs on the continuation, modification or discontinuation of the program, forwarding the internal reports and accompanying documents with his/her recommendation.

E. The Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs reviews all documents and contacts the Provost/Vice Chancellor to discuss any questions that arise. Following this review, the Associate Vice President, Academic and Faculty Programs notifies the institution of his/her decision regarding the program.

F. If the decision is to continue the program, the final step in the development of a new academic program will be considered to have been completed and that program will enter the normal institutional review cycle.

Systemwide Reviews of Academic Programs

Periodically, the UW System may undertake intensive and comprehensive examinations of similar academic programs at several or all institutions. The purpose of such reviews is to determine the educational needs of the state and the UW System and to help ensure that state resources are being used effectively and efficiently to meet those needs. Consistent with the Planning and Review Principles (Section 1), these systemwide reviews seek to balance high quality with cost effectiveness.

The first step in conducting a systemwide program review is determining the specific issues and expectations. Particular attention is given to systemwide program capacity, access and quality; institutional program quality and costs; unnecessary program duplication; and supply and demand for majors in and graduates of professional degree programs.

The review focuses on the quality and cost effectiveness of the individual institutional programs in relation to the state's and the UW System's overall needs and effective and efficient use of resources. The review team submits a report containing its findings and recommendations to UW System Administration. These recommendations should be designed to serve broad System and state goals of quality, access and cost effectiveness. Each institution involved then has an opportunity to respond to those findings and recommendations, including action plans for responding to the recommendations. These recommendations are then brought to the Board of Regents for discussion and action.

Section Four: Institutional Review Processes

Purposes and Requirements for Institutional Program Review

The major purpose for institutional review of existing academic programs is to help ensure that the high quality of academic programs offered in the UW System is maintained and that the programs continue to be consistent with institutional and System needs and priorities. These reviews are expected to:

- improve the quality of undergraduate and/or graduate instructional programs;

- identify needs for additional study or planning;

- help set priorities for allocation/reallocation of resources within or among departments and colleges, and to ensure overall institutional financial equilibrium;

- ensure UW System standards for program quality;

- identify the needs and unique circumstances of certain programs;

- identify nonfunctional or unnecessarily duplicative programs;

- identify needs for structural changes in programs or administrative units.

UW System Administration's involvement in the review of existing programs is to: (a) define broad guidelines; (b) verify that institutional processes, procedures, and results meet guidelines and board policies; and (c) receive and summarize institutional reports on the results of these reviews. UW System Administration's involvement can also include requirements for formal institutional reporting or site visitations by UW System Administration staff.

Types of Institutional Review

Institutional Review of General Education Programs

Every 10 years, in conjunction with their North Central Association (NCA) accreditation reviews, UW institutions are required to report to the Board of Regents on their General Education programs. This report should include discussion of the institution's philosophy of general education, including specific goals for the general education curriculum; an overview of the current general education program; a description of how the general education curriculum provides students with opportunities to achieve institutional goals; and a description of ongoing assessment process for reviewing and improving the general education program.

Cyclic Review of Existing Academic Programs and Academic Support Programs

Each institution is responsible for comprehensive and intensive re-examination of all academic programs and academic support programs. The review should lead to recommendations that a program be: a) continued in its present form; b) changed in form or direction; c) strengthened and reviewed earlier than the regular review cycle; d) consolidated with other programs; or e) phased out. All reviews must be based on the principles contained in this document and its

appendices, as well as other relevant board policies. The results will be evaluated by UW System Administration and must be available for reporting to the board.

Each institution shall place all programs on a regular review schedule. This schedule may be modified to reflect such factors as: (a) anticipated retirement or departure of key faculty members; (b) a regularly scheduled site visit by an accreditation team; and (c) recommendations from systemwide or institutional committees or task forces. The review process should be essentially the same for all programs.

In general, a cyclic review of an academic program by the institution should parallel the review that is required for the final authorization of new programs and should give consideration to the items considered in a joint review of academic programs. The general purposes of the institutional review are to:

- Determine whether the program is meeting its goals and objectives. Also assess how well the program contributes to meeting state, regional, or national needs.

- Examine the relationship of the program to other academic programs of the institution and the institution's mission. This includes considering the priority of the program within the institution and the effect of the program on other programs of the institution.

- Assess the level of quality attained by the program. This may include an examination of the quality of the instructional staff, enrollments, the curriculum, academic support services and external evaluations.

- Determine the resource implications of continuing this program.

The results of institutional reviews of academic programs are reported to UW System Administration annually and included in an annual report to the Board of Regents. These reports should include a summary of the program's strength as well as areas that need improvement, a description of any substantive changes to the program since the last review, and a summary of the recommendations resulting from the review.

External Accreditation

As a means of attesting that educational quality has met standards external to the institution, UW System institutions and some individual academic programs voluntarily seek evaluation by an accreditation agency or professional association. Accreditation can be a means of assuring the educational community, general public, and other agencies or organizations that the accredited institution or program has clearly defined appropriate educational objectives, has established conditions suitable to their achievement, appears to be accomplishing them, and can be expected to continue. These reports can also provide additional information to UW System Administration and the board. The UW System has formalized the relationship of UW System Administration and the board in these procedures in Financial and Administrative Policy Paper #G24 Accreditation Visits and Reports.

To be most efficient, institutions should coordinate institutional review with external review processes.

Board policy requires that accreditation of specialized programs be reconsidered during regular institutional program review. While for many programs, particularly professional degree programs, accreditation is desirable, no institution or academic program should renew or initiate accreditation procedures without serious consideration of both fiscal and academic consequences. The results of accreditation reviews, as well as other decisions concerning accreditation, are reported to UW System Administration and are included in an annual program report to the Board of Regents.