

JOINT SPECIAL REPORT

of the

ACADEMIC PRIORITIES, GRADUATE AND RESEARCH COUNCILS

concerning

**SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISIONS OF FACULTY SENATE DOCUMENTS
RELATED TO PROGRAM EVALUATION AND TERMINATION**

Presented at the
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**REVIEW OF FACULTY SENATE DOCUMENTS RELATED TO PROGRAM
EVALUATION AND TERMINATION
April 15, 1994**

I. BACKGROUND

The Academic Priorities Council has been asked to review the following Faculty Senate documents, in the event decisions regarding program consolidations and termination have to be made before the strategic planning process has been completed:

- "Procedures to be Followed in the review of Academic Programs Proposed for Termination" 5/17/90 #90-064A
- "Proposing Amendment to the Termination and Reduction Procedures" Amendment of #90-064A 5/23/91 #91-056
- "A University at Risk" 5/23/91 #91-057

The first two documents are concerned primarily with procedural issues and our review is contained in part II of this report. "A University at Risk," which describes the process for evaluating programs, is at the center of any reallocation, and has been our major concern.

II. REVIEW OF "A University at Risk"

Although the Faculty Senate asked the Academic Priorities Council to conduct the review, the means by which the mission and integrity of the university are enhanced is a prime concern of all faculty. Consequently, this response was prepared jointly with the Graduate and Research Councils, with the Chair of the Rules Committee also participating.

The Councils urge that any termination decisions be made in accordance with the Chancellor's strategic planning process. Until that strategic plan can be reviewed and implemented, the senate document "A University at Risk" is the most recent expression of the faculty regarding the assessment of programs for the purposes of distributing budget cuts. That document was carefully constructed with appropriate faculty consultation. Experience gained through implementing the process three years ago plus changes in the environment since then, however, require reexamination of the document. It would be futile to attempt to redraft the document in time to be approved before the Faculty Senate adjourns for the Summer. Even if the Academic Priorities Council had been given sufficient time, some of that work might be in conflict with the results of the strategic planning process.

The Councils, therefore, offer an interim report to inform the administration of our concerns. If the administration has to invoke "A University at Risk" before the strategic plan has been completed, we urge them to take into account the following suggestions:

- a. The binary, all-or-nothing "protection" scheme should be replaced by a procedure which recognizes levels of research quality, teaching productivity and centrality. Using the current document, a program in, say, a professional school with a strong (but not top 10) research program and a healthy enrollment of students with good employment opportunities would be as completely unprotected as a program with little research and few students having poor prospects. The existing scheme may simplify the difficult logistics administrators face, but expediency should not be a paramount consideration.

b. The first goal (relating to “Group A”), currently stated in terms of Research, might best be re-articulated in terms of the Research and Graduate Education mission that has been identified as the unique mission of this campus; it should continue to be the first goal, with emphasis remaining on quality.

c. The second goal (group B), focused on the undergraduate teaching mission, remains critical but should be reexamined in the light of changes in policies on tuition retention. Also, because the demand for courses is to a significant extent a function of university-wide regulations, thought should be given to how anticipated changes in the university’s mission might alter course enrollments.

d. The third goal, preserving and protecting programs deemed “central,” should not be retrospective but should look to the future and explicitly encompass the revised mission statement of the university. The articulation of “Group C” criteria on p.4 of the document already goes part way in this direction. It should be revised to explicitly mention centrality with respect to research and graduate education, teaching and learning, public service, contributions to economic development, and multiculturalism and diversity as indicated in the campus’s vision statement.

e. There needs to be a verification step in any rating system so an affected unit has the opportunity to check data or question an assessment. We do not wish to initiate lengthy debates, but departments should have a chance to question a ranking.

f. “PART III” of “A University at Risk” contains guidelines for the FY ’93 budget. Obviously, these guidelines are not applicable to the current situation. The Academic Priorities Council has approved a “Statement on Priorities” and suggested it be inserted in “PART III.” The chairs of the Graduate and Research Councils have endorsed the statement but time has not permitted them to discuss it fully in one of their meetings. The “Statement on Priorities” is contained in the attachment.

We are attaching a memo of April 7, 1994 in which the Provost responded to the Academic Priorities Council’s request for an evaluation of “A University at Risk.” This memo expresses some of the concerns we have raised plus a number of additional ones we believe should be addressed. Where the Councils did not fully agree with a point, or where we thought the point needed amplification, we have added a comment.

III. REVIEW OF SENATE DOCUMENTS 5/17/90 #90-064A #91-056

(Note: Only the Academic Priorities Council has reviewed the documents addressed below.)

Sen. Doc. 90-064A:

1. Clarify the procedure when a School vote is negative.

On page 4, section 2.2, end of the last sentence of the first paragraph replace “. . . forwarded to the Provost.” by “. . . forwarded to the provost, regardless of the outcome of the vote.”

2. Clarify the time table for termination

The advisory time table for termination decisions could cause difficulties if a review is to be completed within an academic year (see memo of March 31, 1994, from Dean Helgesen to Javier Cevallos). The Academic Priorities Council agrees that, under certain circumstances, one could adhere to the time table yet fail to complete a review within an academic year. There was also concern about how a summer could affect a schedule. We propose that at the end of the first paragraph in section 2.6, page 5, the additional sentence be added. *“The time table should be adjusted to take summer recess into account. If one phase of the process is completed in less than the allotted time, the due dates suggested for subsequent steps should be moved towards the present by a corresponding amount.”*

3. Include provision for flexibility in making choices

It was suggested that a program could score well in terms of the criteria: instructional demand, research productivity, reputation and outreach and centrality as described in section 4., yet still be a valid candidate for termination because it was in an area the school or college did not wish to pursue. To give a college flexibility in defining its mission we propose adding:

“4.5.5 A judgment shall be made as to whether the program is central to the mission of the College of School, as defined by that unit’s strategic plan.”

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate endorse the suggestions for revisions of Faculty Senate documents related to program evaluation and termination, as recommended by the Academic Priorities, Graduate, and Research Councils, presented in Sen. Doc. No. 94-053.