

July 10, 2023

Academic Transformation Update: Programs Identified for Formal Review

Dear Dean Donahue and Dr. Sven Verlinden:

As part of the ongoing Academic Transformation initiative, the Provost's Office has conducted a data-informed analysis of all academic programming at West Virginia University's Morgantown campus.

The Provost's Office reviewed several key metrics in determining whether to place a unit's programs under formal review. For this initial review, the Provost's Office focused on student demand, including enrollment in the major (as of Fall 2022) and enrollment trends in the major over a five-year period (Fall 2018-Fall 2022). Additionally, the Provost's Office evaluated department-level metrics, specifically focusing on financial performance and efficiency in instruction.

Programs for Formal Review and Access to Data

Based upon the analysis outlined above, the Provost's Office has identified the following programs in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences for formal review in accordance with the [Board of Governors Rule 2.2](#) Program Review process:

- BS Environmental, Soil and Water Science
- BS Environmental Microbiology
- BS Horticulture
- BS Sustainable Food and Farming

The determination has been made to review these programs within the department holistically due to the interconnectedness of the department's curricula and the operational and personnel resources required to deliver those curricula. Any programs not listed have been exempted based on one or more of the following criteria:

- A department with external research expenditures of \$1 million or more will have its doctoral programs and any associated non-terminal master's programs exempted from review.
- A new program with three or fewer years of data will be exempted from review.
- Pathways and completion programs will be exempted from review.

The following department- and program-level metrics served as primary indicators for this holistic review of the programs within your department:

- Enrollment has increased slightly across all programs in the department, but enrollments are below median for five of the six programs (2018-2022).
- Division student credit hours increased slightly but tuition revenue decreased over three years (2020-2022).
- Full-time faculty increased by two over four years (2020-2023), and the ratio of program majors to full-time faculty is well below the median.
- Division expenses increased over three years (2020-2022).
- Expenses exceeded tuition revenues by more than one-million dollars annually over three years and the trend worsened over time (2020-2022).
- The PhD programs in the department are not of concern due to external research funding exceeding one-million dollars in 2022, but the PhD student to tenured faculty ratio is below the median.

You can access these metrics, their definitions and additional program- and department-level data at: <https://provost.wvu.edu/academic-transformation/academic-program-portfolio-review>

Completing the Program Review Self-Study Form

As part of the Rule 2.2 Program Review process, the Provost's Office requires that a single [Program Review Self-Study Form](#) be completed on behalf of all identified programs in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. This Program Review Self-Study Form must be submitted to the Provost's Office by end of day on **August 1, 2023**.

We have scheduled a Deans meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 9 a.m. to review the program review process and next steps. We have also scheduled a Chairs meeting via Zoom for the same day at 10:30 a.m. to discuss the Program Review Self-Study Form and navigating the review process. (Deans are also encouraged to attend the Chairs meeting.) You should have already received the appropriate meeting invitation(s).

Notifying and Engaging Your Faculty and Staff

You must notify the faculty and appropriate staff within this department that the Provost's Office has identified the specified programs within the department for formal review **within 24 hours upon your receipt of this letter**.

Please use the attached standard notification letter template for this purpose. There are some blanks that you will need to complete. Please send your notification to faculty and

appropriate staff via email and cc Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment Lou Slimak (Louis.Slimak@mail.wvu.edu).

Before submitting the Program Review Self-Study Form, **you must seek input and feedback from the faculty and appropriate staff within the department.** At a minimum, you must circulate your completed draft form to the faculty and staff and ask that they provide feedback within a certain period of time (at least five days) using the online [comment form](#). We highly recommend that you host an in-person or Zoom meeting to discuss your completed draft form and solicit feedback via the [comment form](#).

After the Program Review Self-Study

The Provost's Office will review the submitted Program Review Self-Study Forms in early August. By **August 11**, you will receive notification of the Provost's Office Preliminary Recommendation. Additional information on the process and timeline is available at: <https://transformation.wvu.edu/resources>.

Finally, if you or your faculty have any questions or experience any issues accessing the data or completing the Self-Study form, please contact Associate Provost Lou Slimak at louis.slimak@mail.wvu.edu.

Sincerely,

WVU Office of the Provost