
Proposal for Academic Planning at UNBF

The Academic Planning Committee (APC) proposes the implementation of the following guidelines, timetable, and expectations for UNBF to use in the development of an Academic Plan. For the plan to become operational it must be approved by the UNBF Senate.

Overview of the Process

APC Mandate

The APC, in accordance with sentiment expressed in Senate at various times, but particularly at the 3 February 2015 meetings, has designed a process to address the following concerns:

- 1) That the academic planning process will not begin until the UNBF Senate approve this plan;
- 2) That academic planning begin with the engagement of faculty in their academic units;
- 3) That appropriate stages of approval are built into the process from the level of academic units to the Senate;
- 4) That appropriate mechanisms for transparency, consultation, review, and revisions are part of the process.

Planning stages (processes for each stage are provided in the document):

- 1) Each academic unit will complete a self-study by 31 October 2015. These reports will be posted on the website of the dean's office of their respective faculties.
- 2) Each faculty and the library will prepare a report based on the academic unit reports by 31 January 2016. These reports must be approved by faculty and library councils after appropriate circulation and discussion of the report. These reports will be posted on a common UNBF website.
- 3) The LCC will be composed of 12 faculty and library representatives and the APC. The Deans Council will be ex officio members of the LCC to assist with administrative issues. Each faculty and library council will select its representative in accordance with its council bylaws. These representatives are to be selected by 31 January 2016.
- 4) The LCC will meet during February to prepare an initial report by 28 February 2016. Its report will be posted on the same website as faculty-level reports.
- 5) During March 2016, the LCC will host a series of campus forums to discuss its report and to receive feedback.
- 6) By March 31, the LCC will send a final report to Senate.
- 7) In April or May 2016, there will be a special meeting of Senate to discuss the report. The report cannot be sent to the Board of Governors with a recommendation for implementation without Senate approval. If the Senate does not approve it at the special meeting, it will be discussed again at the last meeting of the 2015/16 academic year.

Additional Points of Clarification

- "Academic Unit" means departments in departmentalized Faculties and relevant sub-specialties in non-departmentalized Faculties.
- The criteria to be used in writing reports at the three stages – unit-level, faculty-level, and UNBF-level – will vary.
- The Library is included in this exercise, recognizing that its sub-units, workload indicators, and qualitative commentary are distinct.
- The VPA's Office (via the Registrar's Office and Office of Research Services) will assist in providing quantitative data to each academic unit. Academic units are encouraged to draw material from existing reports, such as Quality Assurance Reviews and Research Ranking exercises and supplement them as necessary.

Unit-Level Reports

The process for the preparation of unit-level reports will vary depending on the structure of the unit. However, all relevant faculty and staff within a unit should be consulted, the report shall be circulated before being finalized, and approval of the report by unit faculty is required before the report is considered completed. Students must also be consulted, by departmental or faculty representatives, and/or through the appropriate student societies. When the faculty-level report is being prepared, a unit may request permission to revise its report if upon consulting reports from other units it becomes apparent that additional material would better facilitate the writing of the faculty-level report.

Criteria: *Quantitative indicators*

Each unit should have the following information for the past five years: (As possible, these data will be provided to each unit by June 1, 2015 through the VPA's office.)

- Number and name of distinct majors, concentrations, minors, and certificate programs
- Total course registrants and registrants per section
- Number of program students
- Credit hours and number of courses per degree program
- Workload indicators for full-time instructional staff: number of course sections per year, number of students per section, and number of preparations per faculty member (professor track) and instructor, including graduate courses regardless of whether those courses are part of formal teaching load
- Number of courses taught, and course enrolments by contract academic instructors
- Number of faculty and staff members, broken down by those paid through the University's operating budget ("hard money"), and those paid through other funds ("soft money", research grants and contracts, entrepreneurial activities, etc.)
- Undergraduate student/faculty ratios
- Graduate students per faculty member, separately reported by research and course-based degrees

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- Number of graduates from each unit by degree (bachelor, masters -- separately by course based versus research -- doctorate)
- Research dollars/per research faculty member (professor track) and research associates (i.e., excluding instructors)
- Research participation rate: Number of active research faculty versus number of total research faculty. Use data from most recent research ranking exercise; research faculty are Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Adjunct Professor, Honorary Research Professor, Postdoctoral Fellow, Senior Research Associate or Research Associate.

Criteria: Qualitative information

Each unit should also provide qualitative information in the form of short statements that address the following:

- How does your unit complement other units, including interdisciplinary collaborations?
- How has the field of your discipline(s) changed over the last 10 years, and what are the implications for teaching and research in the unit?
- What are considered core programs and core faculty members for your unit?
- What are your unit's opportunities (and vulnerabilities) for growth (or decline) for research and course-based undergraduate students?
- What are your unit's opportunities (and vulnerabilities) for growth (or decline) in research and course-based graduate students?
- What experiential learning activities (e.g. internship, co-op, etc.) at the undergraduate and graduate levels does your unit offer and manage?
- What are the opportunities (and vulnerabilities) for growth (or decline) in research funding from Tri-Council and other sources?
- How does your unit intend to change program contents and delivery, including the following:
 - When was the unit's curricula last reviewed in its entirety? What changes were undertaken?
 - What kinds of new courses have been offered in the last five years?
 - How are graduate students used in undergraduate teaching, both current and planned?
 - How do space considerations affect program design and delivery?
- What are your unit plans for the upcoming five years: changes to existing programs (teaching and research focus), new programs (teaching and research), new sources of students, new sources of revenue, etc.?
- If your unit interacts on a regular basis with a comparable unit at UNBSJ, please explain the nature of the relationship.
- What relationships does your unit have with programs beyond UNB? Discuss the importance of these programs to UNB.

- Describe collaborations that the unit and unit members have beyond UNB, ranging from the local to the global, from community organizations to international institutions.
- Describe academic service and student advising activities of your unit.
- Discuss other issues relevant to your unit.

Faculty-level Reports

Deans are responsible for compiling a Faculty report, circulating it within the Faculty, and calling a special Faculty council meeting to discuss the report. A Faculty may choose to select a committee to assist the dean in preparing the report and revising it in light of the council meeting. The Faculty council will determine how the report will be approved, but at a minimum it must be approved by a majority at a council meeting. . Students must also be consulted by Faculty Council representatives, and/or through the appropriate student societies.

When the UNBF-level report is being prepared, a Faculty may request permission of the LCC to revise its report if upon consulting reports from other faculties it becomes apparent that additional material would better facilitate the preparation of the UNBF-report.

Criteria

- How does the distribution of complement to your Faculty contribute to UNB's ability to achieve the goals identified in UNB's strategic plan
- At an aggregate or summative level, address all quantitative and qualitative criteria as set out at the unit level and as appropriate at this higher level.
- What service teaching and programs does the Faculty provide for UNBF?
- What interdisciplinary programs and/or cooperation do units have within the Faculty and with other faculties?
- As appropriate, provide external benchmarks. It is up to each Faculty to identify appropriate comparisons, either within the university or with departments/faculties beyond UNBF, and to explain the reason for selecting those particular points of comparison.
- Describe the collaborations that units within your faculty have with colleagues at other universities.
- Describe collaborations that the Faculty and faculty members have beyond UNB, ranging from the local to the global, from community organizations to international institutions.

- Discussion of retirements and resignations (if known) for the upcoming two years should be included in each dean's complement planning submission. Part of this discussion should also include those positions for which replacements will be sought.
- Discuss other issues relevant to your Faculty

UNBF-level Report

The University of New Brunswick has a long-established reputation as a highly regarded comprehensive research and teaching university. As well, it is esteemed for its tradition of innovation in research and creative endeavours that have made it an international leader in some fields, such as in the literary arts and engineering. Thus the LCC should begin its deliberation with the awareness that its mandate includes recommendations for maintaining and building on those traditions.

The mandate of the academic planning exercise is to assess the overall academic profile of UNBF. To achieve that perspective, it must also assess individual programs in light of available and potentially additional human resources in the short to long term. The LCC shall seek to identify which programs merit more complement to meet current and future needs, which should be held at the status quo, and which should either be changed or have rationalized or reduced complement.

The LCC shall evaluate all units relative to the following criteria:

- Units and/or activities where past performance and future opportunities merit future additional resources when they are available.
- Units/activities that are core or central to UNB, and should be maintained at or near current resource levels, with the expectation that those units still engage in continuous improvement.
- Units/Activities that are in need of change because of changes within the academic discipline, lack of innovation within the unit, enrolment challenges and/or a lack of resources.

This evaluation of units should take both performance and opportunity into account. There is to be **no** forced distribution of units and activities into equal sized groupings. This is in recognition that we expect that the majority of programs will most likely be placed in the first or second groups. The LCC is to consider whether there is misalignment of people with programs and recommend how adjustments might be made. Some programs are over-subscribed; others are approximately the right size, while others under-subscribed.

“Need to change” has quite a number of possibilities and are not necessarily exclusive of the other two groupings. Needs could range from revitalizing a program's curriculum; working with domestic and international recruiters to seek new sources of students; to more significant

changes such as dropping a weak undergraduate program but maintaining a stronger graduate program (or vice versa); and only at the extreme, consolidations or phase-outs. Note that these are only examples of significant change; others are possible.

The LCC shall determine its own work process for preparing the report, including review of the reports, writing of different sections, and responsibility for the entire report. The report shall not be circulated to the UNBF community for discussion until a majority of the LCC approves it. The initial report shall be submitted to the UNBF community by February 28, 2016.

In the first three weeks of March, the LCC shall hold a minimum of two university-wide forums to discuss the report and receive feedback. At least four members of the LCC will be present to field questions and respond to feedback. If a Faculty Council wishes to discuss the report with the LCC, the LCC will send two members who are not in the faculty in question. Thus with the faculty rep there will be a minimum of three LCC members available to address questions.

[We might also want to recommend one meeting of the LCC for UNBF to meet with the LCC of UNBSJ.]

The LCC will revise the report in light of meetings, and prepare a final version to be presented to Senate. Senate will hold a special meeting after the end of classes in Spring 2016 and before the last regularly scheduled Senate meeting to discuss and approve the report. The report will not be finalized until Senate has approved it.