

WCU Program Prioritization Task Force
Final Report, Part I:
Prioritization Process,
Program Assessments and Comments
May 2013

Prioritization website: <http://programprioritization.wcu.edu>

CONTENTS: PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT, PART 1. MAY 2013*

Introduction - 3

Task Force Membership - 4

Task Force Charge and Operational Principles – 5

Task Force Timeline - 8

Task Force Process - 10

Review Criteria - 12

Review Process: Phase I - 15

Review Process: Phase II - 18

Task Force Outcomes - 20

Appendix 1: Task Force Program Recommendations - 21

Appendix 2: Task Force Program Assessments and Comments – 26

College of Arts and Sciences - 26

College of Business - 34

College of Education - 37

College of Fine and Performing Arts - 41

College of Health and Human Sciences - 44

The Kimmel School - 47

Contact information - 49

** Program Prioritization Task Force Final Report, Part 2 will be released in June 2013.*

Introduction

The Program Prioritization Task Force was created by Provost Angi Brenton in September 2012 for the purpose of fulfilling the university's promise to better serve the educational needs of our students, state, and region, as stated in Strategic Direction 1 of the 2020 Strategic Plan:

Western Carolina University is committed, first and foremost, to fulfilling its academic mission of providing each student a rigorous and relevant curriculum with learning experiences that emphasize knowledge and skills that are durable, flexible, and transferable. WCU is committed to providing an education grounded in a strong set of foundational knowledge and skills combined with specific practical knowledge in content degree areas, the outcome of which is personal, intellectual, and economic enrichment for each student. WCU seeks to ensure educational opportunities that result in graduates who are prepared for success, who are ready to compete in a challenging, changing, and global environment, and who are committed to contributing to the intellectual, cultural, and economic development of our region and state.¹

Goal 1.1 of the Plan seeks to "deliver high-quality academic programs (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) designed to promote regional economic and community development." To that end, initiative 1.1.1 promises to "undertake a rigorous and inclusive process to prioritize all undergraduate and graduate programs based on universally applied criteria, including quality, regional need, demand, enrollment trends, retention and graduation rates, and alignment with the University mission and the following integrated curricular focus areas: creative arts, education, environment, health, innovation and technology, and recreation and tourism."

From October 2012 through May 2013, the Program Prioritization Task Force designed and implemented a process to accomplish this initiative. Our charge was to provide a comprehensive review of programs, with a goal of program-specific recommendations to Chancellor David Belcher. The results of this process are found in Appendix 1 of this report in the form of a breakdown of the 130 programs reviewed. Appendix 2 of this report includes assessments and comments for each of the programs reviewed.

The Task Force would like to note the diligent and unparalleled support offered by the Office of the Provost throughout our process. Anne Aldrich, Executive Assistant to the Provost, provided a firm foundation of support that allowed us to complete our work efficiently.

The members of the Task Force also want to remember Provost Angi Brenton for her leadership throughout our process. Even after Provost Brenton's cancer diagnosis in February 2013, she maintained leadership and provided direction. The Task Force was honored to have worked with her and each member will carry lessons of her leadership through our continued service to WCU and the region.

¹ <http://www.wcu.edu/about-wcu/leadership/office-of-the-chancellor/wcu-2020-plan/2020-vision-focusing-our-future-wcu-strategic-plan/strategic-direction-1-fulfill-the-educational-needs-of-state-and-region.asp>

Task Force Membership

Comprising faculty from every college, a representative from the staff, and three students (two undergraduates, and one graduate student), the task force completed the first comprehensive program review in over a decade at WCU. Members of the Task Force were chosen and appointed by Provost Brenton, with nominations and feedback for membership from the Council of Deans, the Chair of the Faculty, and the Faculty Senate. Vicki Szabo, appointed as co-chair of the Task Force in August, also provided feedback on the balance of Task Force membership. The membership was chosen to reflect a wide range of perspectives, with respect to discipline, college, rank, and gender, as well as administrative and faculty status. Members were appointed to represent the university as whole, not narrow constituencies.

The Task Force membership included:

- Angi Brenton, Provost, co-chair
- Mark Lord, Associate Provost, proxy co-chair
- Vicki Szabo, Associate Professor of History (CAS), co-chair / lead author of final report
- John Baley, Graduate Student Representative
- Debra Burke, Professor of Business Administration and Law & Sport Management & Associate Dean of the College of Business
- Joan Byrd, Professor of Art and Design (CFPA)
- Timothy Carstens, Associate Professor and Department Head, Content Organization and Management, Hunter Library
- Laura Cruz, Associate Professor of History (CAS) and Director, Coulter Faculty Commons
- Chip Ferguson, Associate Professor of Engineering and Technology and Associate Dean of the Kimmel School
- Jannidy Gonzalez, Undergraduate Student Representative
- Georgia Hambrecht, Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CHHS)
- Bruce Henderson, Professor of Psychology (CEAP)
- Mary Jean Herzog, Chair of the Faculty and Professor of Teaching and Learning (CEAP)
- David Hudson, Associate Professor of Physical Therapy (CHHS)
- David Kinner, Associate Professor of Geosciences and Natural Resources (CAS)
- Jason Lavigne, Business and Technology Applications Specialist (IT)
- Brian Railsback, Dean of the Honors College
- Hannah Wallis-Johnson, Undergraduate Student Representative

Student members provided formative feedback in the development of the overall process, but did not participate in the final program assessments in Phases I and II. The Task Force would like to recognize their efforts in helping us create a process that kept the WCU mission firmly fixed in mind. Their presence and participation reminded us at every meeting of why we were engaging in this challenging process.

Task Force Charge and Operational Principles

The Task Force met every Monday from September 2012 through May 2013, with the exception of holidays and during the review of program files. During our weekly meetings, the Task Force worked to design a clear process and appropriate review criteria. Early meetings focused on our concerns, goals, and clarity of purpose as we began broad discussions of prioritization, units of analysis, means of communication, and other concerns. Provost Brenton encouraged the Task Force to keep in mind five key drivers of our process: the 2020 Strategic Plan; the pursuit of excellence; enrollment growth; stewardship and accountability; and budget cuts.

As one means of ensuring clarity among all Task Force members, we discussed and created a working overview narrative (reproduced in italics below) that drove our process. We shared this overview with the WCU community via our Task Force website, where we posted working documents, minutes, forum presentations, and other materials throughout the year. Our intention was to ensure that our process and vision were communicated with full transparency from the start of our process through its completion.

Program Prioritization Overview Narrative (7 November 2012)

Western Carolina University's mission focuses on improving individual lives and enhancing economic and community development in our region, state and nation through engaged learning opportunities in our academic programs, educational outreach, research and creative activities, and cultural activities. Toward this end, WCU will begin an Academic Program Prioritization process in 2012-2013 to assess the quality, productivity, and centrality of all academic programs, with the goal of better aligning academic resources with strategic priorities and opportunities.

This process will allow us to make best use of our existing resources to serve our students and to assure the growth, vitality, and excellence of Western Carolina University. We are undertaking this initiative not under the imminent threat of looming budget cuts, but rather with a resolve to take a proactive and long-term view of how WCU can invest in excellent and distinctive programs for the future. Simultaneously, it is undeniable that budget constraints, declining federal and state funding, and limits on future tuition increases, as well as broader changes within the landscape of higher education, have affected our operation as an institution. Prioritization will ensure that WCU is flexible and responsive during these challenging times. We will be successful as we work together and transcend our own divisional perspectives, to take a broad perspective of our university as a whole. This process of Academic Program Prioritization will take place simultaneously with an Administrative Prioritization process to ensure that the University is functioning to its highest capacity at all levels.

The Academic Program Prioritization Task Force (PPTF) is composed of students, staff, faculty, and administrators. The Task Force membership, representing a broad array of experiences,

perspectives, and disciplines, was appointed after nominations were solicited from Deans, Department Heads, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, and the SGA. All members of the Task Force are committed to ensuring that the Prioritization process is conducted fairly, transparently, comprehensively, and consistently. Furthermore, all members should be seen as representatives of the university as a whole and not representatives of narrow interests, departments, colleges, or individual programs. It must be emphasized that the Program Prioritization process is not being undertaken with predetermined goals involving elimination or changes to any particular number of programs or with any specific financial goals.

The Task Force will spend the Fall 2012 semester conducting research on program prioritization, by studying academic literature and through comparison with various system, peer, and regional comprehensive institutions that have recently undertaken and implemented their own program prioritization processes. The Task Force will use this research as we define units of review, and in choosing and defining criteria and measures, both qualitative and quantitative, for our Prioritization process. This process will rely on consistent and comprehensive data-driven conclusions, with the integration of qualitative and quantitative data that is extant, available, and can be assessed reliably, according to selected parameters. In November, the Task Force will vet proposed criteria and measures in open forums and through various university committees and representative bodies, which may include the Chancellor's Leadership Council, the Council of Deans, the Faculty and Staff Senates, and the Student Government Association, among others. The Spring 2013 semester will be spent collecting and reviewing data, presenting preliminary conclusions in numerous open forums, and will conclude with a series of recommendations to the Chancellor, which might include:

- Investment in programs that will advance WCU's vision and programs with a high potential for success;*
- Identification of successful programs that should continue their current course;*
- Increasing the effectiveness or efficiency in programs that may lack focus in offerings or current structure;*
- Developing collaborative programs within the university or with external partners;*
- Phasing out some programs and reinvesting resources in those programs that offer more promise with respect to our core values and mission. We recognize that if programs are discontinued it will take time to honor our commitments to students already enrolled in the program as well as to seek alternate assignments for tenured faculty members.*

Also among the outcomes will be a suggested iterative process that ensures proactive prioritization will take place on a five-year cycle. This process will include recommendations for different types of data to be identified and captured annually by OIPE (the Office of Institutional

Planning and Effectiveness) for future program reviews and prioritization. The process also will include a mechanism for institutionalizing on-going program prioritization review.

Faculty, staff, and students will be invited to provide feedback throughout the process, via email, feedback forms on the Prioritization website, open forums, and other means. We hope that throughout the process we can preserve the collegial culture of WCU and provide the transparency that this process demands. While not all will agree with our recommendations, we hope that all members of the campus community will feel that the process was fair, open, and transparent. We invite you to follow the process on the Program Prioritization webpage, where regular updates will be posted throughout the year.

Western Carolina University is committed to serving our region as its educational, economic, and cultural center. We strive to become a national model for student learning and engagement, embracing our responsibilities as a regionally engaged university. Among our core goals and principles, WCU aspires to free and open interchange of ideas, responsible stewardship and organizational effectiveness and sustainability. The Program Prioritization Task Force is deeply aware of the impact of our actions on our colleagues, students, and external community, and we thank you in advance for your support and participation in this important process that will help us become a strong institution.

Finally, our work was guided by the following additional key goals and values:

- The importance of participation by all members of the WCU campus community, including faculty, administrators, staff, and students.
- Providing consistency, clarity, transparency, and openness throughout the process.
- A reliance on consistent and comprehensive data-driven conclusions, with the integration of qualitative and quantitative data that is extant, available, and can be assessed reliably, according to selected parameters.
- A deep understanding of the impact of our actions on our colleagues, students, and external community.
- A conviction that this is a time we must transcend narrow divisional loyalties to take the broader perspective of what is best for the university as a whole.
- A view to the future and better proactive planning for more regular program prioritization and review.

Task Force Timeline

Items in italics denote actions and tasks beyond the Program Prioritization Task Force.

September 2012	Task Force membership selected and initial process planning
October 2012	Comparative institutional discussions
10 October	Open Forum I, UC Theatre to discuss initial approach and process for program prioritization
November – December 2012	Criteria and data drafted, revised, and finalized Program review list finalized for major programs
January 2013	Phase I data produced and distributed to department heads by OIPE Department heads and program directors complete narratives and revised data reports for Phase I
16 January	Open Forum II, UC Theatre to discuss and garner feedback on proposed Phase I criteria and process
February 2013	Phase I continues
15 February	Phase I major program narratives and data submitted to Task Force
18 February	Task Force begins review of major program reports for Phase I
25 February	Stand-alone minors receive notification of review for Phase I process
March 2013	Completion of Phase I process
4 March	Phase I information session for stand-alone minor program directors, department heads, and deans
11 March	Stand-alone minor narratives and data submitted to Task Force
12 March	Task Force members complete review of major program reports for Phase I and submit initial assessments to the Office of the Provost
14-15 March	Task Force Retreat for Phase I assessments of major programs
18 March	Task Force meeting for Phase I assessments of stand-alone minors

21 March	Initial assessment communications to all major programs and stand-alone minors Process ends for Category 1 and 2 programs; process continues for Category 3 programs.
April 2013	Phase II process begins for Category 3 programs
3 April	Open Forum III, UC Theatre to discuss Phase I recommendations and Phase II process
15 April	Phase II narratives due to Task Force
18-22 April	Phase II Hearings for Category 3 programs
May 2013	Phase II completion
1 May	<i>Preliminary meeting of Program Prioritization Ad hoc Coordination Committee (facilitates coordination and communication of University to program prioritization recommendations and decisions)</i>
14 May	Final recommendations regarding Category 3 programs sent to Department Heads and Deans
22 May	Program Prioritization Task Force Final Report, Part 1 released, including process overview and program assessments
June 2013	Program Prioritization Task Force Final Report, Part 2 due <i>Program Prioritization process moves to Administration</i>
June TBD	<i>Open Forum on Program Prioritization, led by Administration (date, time, location TBD).</i>
20 June	Final Report, Part 2, including Task Force recommendations for future process and broader observations on WCU's strengths and challenges; Program Prioritization Task Force ends work
17 – 21 June	<i>Program discontinuation direct appeals to Chancellor Belcher</i>
July 2013	<i>Final decisions from Chancellor Belcher</i>
August 2013	<i>Program Prioritization Implementation Task Force formed</i>

Task Force Process

Although Provost Brenton provided an aggressive timeline for our process, the Task Force ensured that this accelerated process would not fail from lack of foresight and planning. To this end, we engaged in a series of activities designed to teach every Task Force member about program prioritization. This process included discussion of shared articles, monographs, webinars, and tutorials from OIPE (the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness) and the Registrar. Among our most valuable activities was a series of conversations held with peers and colleagues from other institutions, within the state and beyond, about their own academic program prioritization processes. UNC-G, ECU, NCSU, and Sacramento State University all had recently undertaken academic program prioritization initiatives. Each Task Force member agreed to contact a peer at these institutions, or was assigned a contact. All contacts at the comparative institutions were asked a common set of questions.

- Describe the process (committee/prioritization) on your campus.
- How did you define programs (or other units of review)?
- What were your criteria, and how did you choose those criteria? (In our minutes, we had a few versions of this question: what questions or concerns prompted you to choose those criteria? or what information were you trying to capture in the criteria that you chose?)
- What problems did you have with data, and how did you resolve those problems?
- What went well?
- What would you do differently if you could do it over?
- How did your campus react?
- Did your chancellor follow through?
- What were the different ways you communicated with your campus?

Among the most compelling feedback from these comparative discussions were insights into potential pitfalls and challenges.

First, we were told that a thorough and consistent means of communication was essential. Thus, we committed to a series of forums (three held during the academic year), frequent communications via email with Academic Affairs or key stakeholders (deans, associate deans, department heads), an open means of community feedback, including anonymous feedback, via the program prioritization website, and frequent updates of working documents and Task Force minutes on the prioritization website. Transparency, in process, choices, and communications, was a guiding principle.

Second, we were told to choose our review criteria and data with utmost caution. Many data points are desirable but not attainable. Some data points work well for some programs, but not for all. We therefore spent most of the Fall 2012 semester debating, selecting, rejecting, refining, and negotiating realistic data sets for each program of review. Our colleagues reminded us that criteria are central to the success of the process; when in doubt, simplify.

Third, our peers noted that the process must include rebuttal; this feedback was essential in developing our Phase II process for Category 3 programs.

Finally, nearly all peers noted that the success or failure of the program prioritization or review process hinged upon the willingness of administrators to follow through and to create clear assessments plans. To this end, the Task Force relied on the Office of the Provost to communicate our process and plans to administration.

The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness was crucial to our development of data profiles, as was the Office of the Registrar. Representatives from these offices attended several Task Force meetings, provided sample data sets, provided tutorials on reading various data presentations, and compiled initial case studies to ensure that our final data points were, as much as possible, consistent and universal. The Task Force and OIPE noted that several programs would present challenges due to overlapping program codes, recent program or program code changes, or other unique data issues. The Task Force was determined, even before these issues were noted, to ensure that the process was not solely dependent upon quantitative data, so we added a narrative portion to our review process.

Equally important to our process was defining the unit of analysis for our review. While WCU has a college and departmental structure, academic prioritizations are typically centered on individual programs, which require a finer level of analysis than that in which we frequently engage. Much of WCU's annual and five-year reviews are focused on the department rather than programs, yet programs are the basic element of our academic exercise, in that we offer degrees at the level of program. Provost Brenton, and the 2020 Strategic Goal 1.1 required a review of academic programs, which necessitated a series of discussions and decisions between Task Force leadership, deans, and department heads in defining what constituted programs. As will be seen in Part 2 of the Final Report, to be released in June, the Task Force urges that WCU be far more attentive to program-level data collection and definition to improve future program assessments and prioritization efforts.

In the end, majors and stand-alone minors were selected as the units of analysis, numbering 130 programs in total. Degrees such as BA and BS, or MAT and MAEd, when in the same discipline, were considered as a single program throughout our process. Department heads and deans were given multiple opportunities to clarify and, if necessary, cull specific programs from the prioritization master list. Stand-alone minors proved to be difficult to define throughout the process, both with respect to available data and with respect to program status. Provost Brenton determined that they must be included in the review process in order to ensure a full and total accounting of WCU's complete range of program offerings.

Review Criteria

Over the course of the Fall 2012 semester, the Task Force met weekly to structure the process and criteria for program review. We decided early on that a five-year data set would be an appropriate measure of program development and performance. This period also coincided with the adoption of Banner, prior to which data would be less reliable at the department or program level. Provost Brenton led us through several weeks of discussion and revision of ideal criteria and means to assess the quality, mission centrality, and productivity of all programs under review. Following this process, we began winnowing the ideal criteria to a set of universal, manageable, and accessible criteria. The Task Force members sought both quantitative and qualitative criteria, to ensure that our program assessments took into account important and ongoing program engagements with the WCU strategic plan, the QEP, and other points of analysis that could not be captured within quantitative metrics.

In the end, over three dozen potential metrics became a much more streamlined set of data points, listed below, accompanied by a 600-word narrative. The narrative became our means of capturing qualitative data, particularly directed toward three specific points: 1) a brief context for the last five years of program data; 2) specific ways the program relates to WCU's 2020 strategic plan; 3) program distinction in the region and the state. OIPE provided numerous drafts, formats, and presentations of our chosen criteria. Through a series of examples and discussions, the Task Force requested a presentation moving from most to least granular (with each chosen data element being represented at the most granular level available), from 9-digit CIP to department. The Task Force also firmly held, in all stages of our review process, to the practice of never elevating any single data point above any other. While we valued program-specific data highly, no one data point determined the ranking of a program.

In keeping with our stated commitment to transparency, the Task Force created a glossary of prioritization terminology, which was made available on our website and included in emails to Academic Affairs. Likewise, prior to our second open forum, a template of proposed criteria was released to Academic Affairs, so that department heads and program directors could begin to familiarize themselves with presentation, formatting, and analysis of the quantitative criteria. The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness also created an accompanying FAQ, which was distributed at the same point as the proposed criteria.

The Task Force presented our proposed criteria in an open forum in January 2013. The forum yielded important questions and concerns about some data points, which resulted in jettisoning data or criteria which the Task Force concluded were not essential to the process. In this, we adhered to our peer institutions' advice to simplify when in doubt. One metric, for example, was a faculty count within programs, which proved difficult to produce over a five-year period. As suggested by forum feedback, the Task Force requested a single year of faculty data to be provided by department heads. The major program criteria are reproduced below.

MAJOR PROGRAM CRITERIA
Student Success: Retention and Graduation Rates
Comparative standard: WCU average for program level (i.e., undergraduate or graduate)
Unit of analysis: program code
Number of Majors Enrolled at Fall Census
Comparative standard: WCU median/numbers at UNC peers within the same program level
Unit of analysis: 9-digit CIP code
Degrees award per academic year
Comparative standard: WCU median/numbers at UNC peers within the same program level
Unit of analysis: 9-digit CIP code
Instructional Cost
Comparative standard: National average per Delaware Study of Instructional Costs (at other regional comprehensive institutions)
Unit of analysis: 4-digit CIP code
Generated versus allocated Faculty FTE
Comparative standard: WCU median and average
Unit of analysis: department
SCHs generated: total annual SCH and SCHs by level
Comparative standard: WCU median
Unit of analysis: department
Percentage of courses taught by faculty type
Comparative standard: WCU median
Unit of analysis: department
Number of faculty: simple headcount AY 2012-2013 (supplied by department heads)
No comparative standard
Unit of analysis: department/program
Qualitative statement, 600 words
1. Provide brief context for the last five years of program data
2. Discuss specific ways the program relates to WCU's 2020 strategic plan;
3. Discuss program distinction in the region and the state (you may include discussions of community engagement/service, student quality outcomes, faculty contributions to the program in scholarship and creative works, uniqueness in the state, accreditation, awards, revenue, grants or other program income generation)

In the same January forum, we announced that review of minors would proceed on a staggered schedule to that of major programs. This scheduling was due to differences in the data sets available for stand-alone minors. Approximately a month after our forum, we emailed program directors and department heads a set of basic metrics and a narrative request for stand-alone minors. The review criteria for stand-alone minor programs are seen below.

STAND-ALONE MINOR PROGRAM CRITERIA
Number of minors at end of Fall term (headcount)
No comparative standard
Unit of analysis: minor code
Number of graduates in minor (annual graduation headcount)
No comparative standard
Unit of analysis: minor code
Qualitative statement, 600 words
1. Describe or explain the unique aspects of your program, including: unique classes required for the minor; contribution to other programs; faculty, resources, or equipment dedicated to your program; graduation rates in the minor (especially in the case of low graduation / headcount ratios)
2. Provide brief context for the last five years of program data
3. Discuss specific ways the program relates to WCU's 2020 strategic plan;
4. Discuss program distinction in the region and the state (may include discussions of community engagement/service, student quality outcomes, faculty contributions to the program in scholarship and creative works, uniqueness in the state, accreditation, awards, revenue, grants or other program income generation)

Review process: Phase I

As we finalized our criteria, we also determined that a two-phase process, with initial and secondary assessments, would allow us to streamline our inquiry and allow greater focus on programs that required closer analysis. The Task Force also had agreed in January that all members would read all program files. The two-phase process, then, would allow the full Task Force to identify programs that necessitated additional analysis and allow for thorough discussion at a depth that could not be accomplished with all 130 programs. The Task Force determined that our Phase I analysis would be conducted with three categories:

- Category 1: programs recommended for investment.
- Category 2: programs requiring no additional study or discussion.
- Category 3: programs requiring additional study or discussion.

We held two initial meetings after submission of program data and narratives, aimed at common review and calibration of expectations for program assessment. In our first meeting, five programs were chosen by staff from OIPE to illustrate a variety of data analysis challenges. In our second meeting, twenty more programs were chosen. These test programs allowed us to create a firm rubric for individual analysis by Task Force members.

From 18 February to 12 March, the Task Force members individually analyzed all program data and narratives, providing a category assessment and comments for each program. During the course of our individual analyses, an error in comparative SCH data was discovered and reported to OIPE (department data were correct, but median comparison numbers were not). SCH metrics were corrected and regenerated, and department heads were given corrected data and 100 words to respond to the corrected version.

On 12 March, each member sent their individual results to the Office of the Provost for common compilation. On 14-15 March, we met at NCCAT for a two-day retreat and discussion of every assessed program, including the twenty-five programs that were used as case studies in our initial program assessment meetings. These two days were filled with conversation, debate, additional analysis, and ultimately, a high degree of consensus. A third day of meetings was held on 18 March for assessment of stand-alone minors.

The Task Force was constantly aware of avoiding advocacy in any manner as we analyzed and deliberated on the programs. Task Force member recused themselves from analysis of their own programs, and were asked not to speak on their programs during our two day retreat. College administrators on the Task Force recused themselves from the discussion of all programs in their college. This rule was rigidly enforced both in Phase I and II of our process.

By 21 March, the Task Force had completed the first round of assessments and emailed notifications of our category recommendations to department heads and deans. Phase I of program prioritization ended for those programs assessed as Category 1 or Category 2 with these notifications. The Task Force debated whether or not to continue the process for Category 1 programs to further clarify potential investment opportunities for those programs,

but ultimately decided that the Chancellor would create his own assessment for those programs once sources of investment were determined.

Our Phase I category assessment rubric is reproduced here:

STANDARDIZED CATEGORY 1, 2, 3 DESCRIPTIONS
Data trends and performance trajectory should be considered across the five year span of data.
Be attentive to the granularity of data (9- / 6- / 4-digit CIP code) and comparative measure.
Recall the important embedded initiatives within the 2020 strategic plan (QEP, etc.).
CATEGORY 1 DESCRIPTION: POTENTIAL INVESTMENT
This program exceeds WCU medians/averages on most criteria (or explains adequately why smaller numbers are necessary and appropriate for this discipline).
The program shows a clear and consistent upward trend in number of majors and SCH production
The program is above the WCU average for student retention and graduation.
Cost per student figures are at or below national averages (this may not be equally meaningful in assessing all programs)
The Allocated FTE is less than Generated FTE.
The majority of upper division and graduate classes in the program are taught by tenure-track faculty.
The number of lower division classes in the program taught by tenure-track faculty exceeds the WCU median.
There is some indication of unmet demand, that the program could grow further with more resources.
The qualitative statement gives data on program quality and high student outcomes.
The program seems well aligned with WCU's mission and the 2020 Vision strategic plan.
CATEGORY 2 DESCRIPTION: NO ACTION RECOMMENDED
This program is close to the WCU median on most criteria
The program shows a stable or slightly increasing pattern for number of majors and SCH production
The program is at or near the WCU average for student retention and graduation
The program is close to national averages for cost per student (may not be equally meaningful in assessing all programs)

CATEGORY 2 DESCRIPTION: NO ACTION RECOMMENDED (continued)
Allocated FTE is close or equal to Generated FTE.
Close to half of all upper division and graduate classes are taught by tenure track faculty.
The number of lower division classes taught by tenure-track faculty meets or is close to the WCU median.
The qualitative statement gives data on program quality and high student outcomes.
The program is at least indirectly aligned with WCU's mission and the 2020 Vision strategic plan
CATEGORY 3 DESCRIPTION: REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STUDY OR DISCUSSION
The program is below the WCU median/averages on most criteria
The program shows a declining pattern for number of majors and SCH production
The program is below the WCU average for student retention and graduation
The program is above national averages for cost per student (may not be equally meaningful in assessing all programs)
Allocated FTE is greater than Generated FTE
Less than half of all upper division and graduate classes are taught by tenure track faculty.
The number of lower division classes taught by tenure-track faculty is below the WCU median.
The qualitative statement gives insufficient data on program quality and high student outcomes.
The program is not aligned with WCU's mission and the 2020 Vision strategic plan

Review process: Phase II

The Task Force assessed 24 programs as fitting into Category 3. These programs underwent a further stage of review, including additional questions from the Task Force (below), discussion with program directors and department heads at Task Force hearings, and subsequent additional discussion by the Task Force before final recommendations were made.

Questions for clarification, asked of Category 3 Programs only:

1. Within the constraints of your current resources, how do you intend to grow your program or maintain it at a sustainable level?
2. How does the level of enrollment in your program sustain a critical mass of students for a distinctive program identity within the university, and an appropriate educational experience for those students?
3. How do you plan to address issues of cost effectiveness in your program?

Programs were asked to come to the hearings prepared to discuss class size, retention and graduation rates, time to completion, staffing of courses unique to the program, student populations and placement successes.

The Task Force requested one additional data point from the Registrar for Phase II. Course enrollments for program-specific courses were requested, following the same five-year span of data as used in Phase I. These enrollments were generated by the Registrar and provided to department heads in early April. Prior to the 15 April narrative submission deadline for Phase II, program directors and department heads were able to correct or add to the enrollment data, including the addition of cross-listed 400-500 level courses, which was requested by one department head but subsequently provided to all relevant programs.

On 18, 19, and 21 April, 30-minute hearings were held for each of the programs included in Category 3. At the discretion of some program directors or department heads, some programs were not scheduled for hearings, and instead were voluntarily discontinued. Some department heads or program directors, if called for multiple meetings, opted to combine their sessions and discuss related programs in a single meeting. A laptop was provided for visual presentations, although the Task Force expressed a desire to discuss programs, rather than hear formal presentations. Each Task Force member was provided with a full set of data and narratives, from both Phase I and Phase II, to review prior to these meetings. Our goal was to provide a means for explanation of data, narratives, or additional points that may not have been made clear in earlier materials. Within the 30-minute hearings, 20 minutes were devoted to discussion, with an additional 5 minutes for follow-up questions. The remaining time was needed to allow transition time between program meetings.

Our Phase II program assessment rubric is reproduced on the following page.

MOVE PROGRAM TO CATEGORY 2
Problems noted in Phase I resolved with additional study and information.
ACTION PLAN AND REASSESSMENT
Action plan may be warranted by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A transitional program that requires additional information and follow-up.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource adjustment: a program that has quality student outcomes and other positive attributes, but requires resource adjustment (over resourced with respect to faculty, operational, or other costs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganization: a program that is not successful in its current configuration; may better serve student needs if combined with another program or division; has no realistic potential for improvement in its current form; may be redundant with other programs.
Recommend action plan and revisit in 1 or 2 semesters until weaknesses or concerns can be rectified or improved.
Oversight / responsibility for follow-through to be determined by Chancellor or designee
PHASED DISCONTINUATION
Program demonstrates significant concerns in quality, outcomes, or cost.
Program no longer serves student population or student demand, evidenced by persistently small cohorts, low enrollments, low retention / graduation.
Program does not meet university's mission in significant ways.
No realistic potential that negative qualities of this program can be overcome in the short term.

Task Force Outcomes

The Task Force found that a majority of programs (104 including all programs in Categories 1 and 2) were functioning at an appropriate or exceptional level, meeting WCU's regional and national missions, and providing the students of WCU with a strong academic experience.

Ninety-five programs were assessed initially as Category 2. Following Phase II of the prioritization process, one program was moved from Category 3 to Category 2, bringing the total number of Category 2 programs to 96. These programs were at or near the quantitative median for program metrics, and provided narratives in line with WCU's mission and strategic plan. In short, these programs met expectations in the criteria laid out by the Task Force. There was great variation among Category 2 programs, with some performing highly in quantitative and qualitative expectations, and others showing some negative trends that brought them closer to a Category 3 designation.

Eight programs were classified as Category 1, highlighted as truly exceptional and high performing to the extent that additional investment would be warranted, should financial circumstances allow it. These programs showed positive metrics with upward trends, and provided narratives that not only were in line with WCU's mission and strategic plan, but were clearly and definitively exemplary.

Finally, twenty-four programs were designated as Category 3. These programs showed weak quantitative data and / or worsening trends, coupled with qualitative narratives that did not clearly articulate connections with WCU's mission or strategic plan, or did not clearly demonstrate program quality or student outcomes. Of the programs initially categorized as Category 3, one program, as noted above, was moved to Category 2 based on follow-up discussion and explanation. The remaining twenty-three programs were assessed as follows:

- 5 programs remained in Category 3 and were recommended for an action plan for improvement (ranging from one to two academic years);

- 13 programs were recommended for discontinuation;

- 5 programs were voluntarily discontinued.

Three additional programs were voluntarily discontinued prior to Phase I and were not counted in our Category 3 programs. The total number of voluntarily discontinued programs is eight.

Thus, 109 of the 130 programs reviewed were recommended for investment, continuation without action, or continuation with an action plan. 21 programs were recommended for discontinuation, or were voluntarily discontinued. In some cases, discontinuation was recommended so that a wholesale reconceptualization of the unit could be accomplished. The Task Force noted that some programs, while mission central, were no longer viable in their current structure. Discontinuation will allow academic leadership and faculty to reconceive these academic areas in a manner that will better serve our region and our students.

Appendix 1: Task Force Program Recommendations

Category 1: Recommended for Potential Investment - 8 programs		
Department	Program	Degree
Chemistry and Physics	Environmental Science (Interdisciplinary)	BS
Geosciences and Natural Resources	Natural Resource Conservation and Management	BS
Human Services	Parks and Recreation Management	BS
Communication Sciences and Disorders	Communication Sciences and Disorders	MS
Health Sciences	Emergency Medical Care	BS
Health Sciences	Recreational Therapy	BS
Nursing	Nursing	BSN
Social Work	Social Work	MSW
Category 2: No Action Recommended - 96 programs		
Accounting, Finance, Info Systems, and Economics	Accounting	BSBA
Accounting, Finance, Information Systems and Economics	Computer Information System	BSBA
Accounting, Finance, Information Systems and Economics	Finance	BSBA
Accounting, Finance, Info Systems, and Economics	Accounting	MAC
Accounting, Finance, Information Systems and Economics	Economics (ECON)	Minor
Anthropology and Sociology	Anthropology	BA/BS
Anthropology and Sociology	Sociology	BA/BS
Anthropology and Sociology	Cherokee Studies (CKST)	Minor
Anthropology and Sociology	Forensic Anthropology (FANT)	Minor
Art and Design	Art	BA/BFA
Art and Design	Fine Arts	MFA
Art and Design	Interior Design	BS
Art/Teaching and Learning	Art Education	BSEd
Art/Teaching and Learning	Art Education	MAEd / MAT
Biology	Biology	BS
Biology	Biology	MS

Category 2: No Action Recommended - 96 programs		
Department	Program	Degree
Biology/Teaching and Learning	Biology	MAEd/MAT
Biology/Chemistry/Geosciences / Teaching and Learning	Science Education	BSEd
Business Admin and Law and Sport Management	Business Administration	MBA
Business Admin and Law and Sport Management	Business Administration and Law	BSBA
Business Administration & Law and Sport Management	Sport Management	BS
Business Admin and Law and Sport Management	Conflict Resolution (CRES)	Minor
Chemistry & Physics	Chemistry	BS
Chemistry & Physics	Forensic Science	BS
Chemistry & Physics	Physics (PHYS)	Minor
Communication	Communication	BS
Communication	Journalism (JOUR)	Minor
Communication Sciences and Disorders	Communication Sciences and Disorders	BS
Construction Management	Construction Management	BS
Construction Management	Construction Management	MCM
Construction Management	Land Development- Minor - CM (LDV)	Minor
Criminology and Criminal Justice	Criminal Justice	BS
Criminology and Criminal Justice	Emergency and Disaster Management	BS
Engineering and Technology	Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology	BS
Engineering and Technology	Electrical Engineering	BSEE
Engineering and Technology	Engineering Technology	BS
Engineering and Technology	Technology	MS

Category 2: No Action Recommended - 96 programs		
Department	Program	Degree
English	English	BA
English	English	MA
English	Creative Writing (CRWT)	Minor
English	Film Studies (FM)	Minor
English	Literature (LITR)	Minor
English	Professional Writing (PRWT)	Minor
English/Teaching and Learning	English Education	MAEd/MAT
English/Teaching and Learning	English Education	BSEd
Entrepreneurship, Sale & Marketing and Hospitality & Tourism	Entrepreneurship	BSE / BSBA
Entrepreneurship, Sale & Marketing and Hospitality & Tourism	Entrepreneurship	ME
Entrepreneurship, Sale & Marketing and Hospitality & Tourism	Hospitality and Tourism	BS
Entrepreneurship, Sale & Marketing and Hospitality & Tourism	Marketing	BSBA
Geosciences and Natural Resources	Geology	BS
Geosciences and Natural Resources	Geography (GEOG)	Minor
Global Management and Strategy	Management	BSBA
Global Strategy and Management	Project Management	MPM
Health Sciences	Athletic Training	BS
Health Sciences	Environmental Health	BS
Health Sciences	Health Sciences	MHS
Health Sciences	Nutrition and Dietetics	BS
History	History	BA/BS
History	History	MA
History/Teaching and Learning	Social Sciences Education	BSEd
History/Teaching and Learning	Social Sciences Education	MAEd/MAT
Human Services	Birth-Kindergarten Education	BS
Human Services	College Student Personnel	MEd
Human Services	Counseling, Clinical Mental Health	MS
Human Services	Counseling, School	MAEd
Human Services	Educational Supervision	MAEd

Category 2: No Action Recommended - 96 programs		
Department	Program	Degree
Human Services	Educational Leadership	EDD
Human Services	Human Resources	MS
Human Services	School Administration	MSA
Human Services	Leadership Minor (LDR)	Minor
Mathematics and Computer Science	Computer Science	BS
Mathematics and Computer Science	Mathematics	BS
Mathematics and Computer Science/Teaching and Learning	Mathematics Education	BSEd
Modern Foreign Languages	Japanese Studies (JPNS)	Minor
Music	Music	BA/BM
Music/Teaching and Learning	Music Education	BSEd
Nursing	Family Nurse Practitioner	MS(N)
Nursing	Nurse Administrator Track	MS(N)
Nursing	Nurse Anesthesia Track	MS(N)
Nursing	Nurse Educator	MS(N)
Philosophy and Religion	Philosophy	BA
Philosophy and Religion	Religion (REL)	Minor
Physical Therapy	Physical Therapy	DPT
Political Science & Public Affairs	International Studies	BA
Political Science and Public Affairs	Political Science	BA/BS
Political Science and Public Affairs	Public Affairs	MPA
Psychology	Psychology	BS
Psychology	Psychology	MA
Psychology	School Psychology	SSP
Social Work	Social Work	BSW
Stage and Screen	Theater	BFA
Stage and Screen	Dance (DA)	Minor
Teaching and Learning	Elementary Education	BSEd
Teaching and Learning	Health and Physical Education	BSEd
Teaching and Learning	Inclusive Education	BSEd
Teaching and Learning	Special Education	MAEd/MAT

Category 3: Recommended for Action Plan - 5 programs		
Department	Program	Degree
Art and Design	Residential Environments (RE)	Minor
Chemistry & Physics	Chemistry	MS
Stage and Screen	Stage and Screen	BA
Teaching and Learning	Middle Grades Education	BSEd
Teaching and Learning	Elementary and Middle Grades Education	MAEd
Category 3: Recommended for Discontinuation- 13 programs		
Anthropology and Sociology	Women's Studies (WNST)	Minor
Communication	Broadcast Sales (BCS)	Minor
English/ Teaching and Learning	English / Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	MA
English/Teaching and Learning	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	MAEd/MAT
Mathematics and Computer Sciences	Applied Math	MS
Mathematics and Computer Science/Teaching and Learning	Mathematics	MAEd/MAT
Modern Foreign Languages	German	BA
Modern Foreign Languages	Spanish	BA
Modern Foreign Languages/Teaching and Learning	Spanish	BSEd
Music	Music	MM
Music/Teaching and Learning	Music Education	MAEd/MAT
Stage and Screen	Motion Picture and Television Production	BFA
Teaching and Learning	Health and Physical Education	MAEd/MAT
Voluntary Discontinuation - 8 programs		
Business Admin and Law and Sport Management	Business Administration	BSBA
Chemistry & Physics/Teaching and Learning	Chemistry	MAEd/MAT
English	American Studies (AMST)	Minor
English	Multimedia (MM)	Minor
Geosciences and Natural Resources	Earth Sciences (EHSC)	Minor
History	Appalachian Studies	Minor
Engineering and Technology	Broadcast Telecommunications Engineering Technology (BTEL)	Minor
Engineering and Technology	Digital Communications Engineering Technology (DCET)	Minor

Appendix 2: Task Force Program Assessments and Comments

Program comments vary in length and content, and are meant only to capture major themes of the Task Force discussions. Shorter comments do not denote any less attention paid to program data, narratives, or discussions.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Category 1: 2

Category 2: 36

Category 3: 10

Action Plan: 1

Discontinue: 9

Voluntary discontinue: 5

Anthropology and Sociology

Anthropology BA/BS: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this program's high cost derived from the inclusion of Forensic Anthropology, although also noted that course releases and declining retention rates make this program one that needs considerable improvement. The Task Force encourages the Anthropology program to increase local engagement strategies, as befits its role within the institution.

Sociology BA/BS: Category 2

The Sociology program would benefit from additional attention to linkages with the 2020 Strategic Plan and, as cited above, with more innovative engagement strategies within the region, which may distinguish it from peer programs at other institutions. The program would also benefit from aggressive self-study with respect to generated to allocated Faculty FTEs and costs.

Cherokee Studies Minor: Category 2

The Cherokee Studies minor is considered a mission-central program for WCU, yet historically this minor has underperformed with respect to recruitment and graduates. The Task Force recommends a critical self-study of resources, opportunities, recruitment, initiatives, and program management so that this important academic unit can fulfill its potential both for our institution and the region.

Forensic Anthropology Minor: Category 2

This stand-alone minor, which also functions as a track within the major, attracts high student numbers with a small number of dedicated faculty members.

Women's Studies Minor: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Women's Studies Minor be discontinued. This program does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns, serves a low number of minors and produces few graduates. There is no realistic potential that negative aspects of this program, including curricular obstacles and program management issues, can be overcome. The Task Force encourages the Chancellor to proceed with an institutional needs analysis leading to a more effective means of providing Gender Studies opportunities for our students.

Biology

Biology BS: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program's overall quality and productivity, particularly in the critical STEM disciplines.

Biology MS: Category 2

While noting the strength of this program, the Task Force encouraged greater attention to graduation rates within a 2-year period.

Biology MAEd/MAT: Category 2

The Task Force noted that MAEd/MAT data presented some challenges in program analysis, but other metrics indicate that this program, albeit small, is productive and important to WCU's regional mission.

Science Education BSEd: Category 2

The Task Force noted that the Science Education BSEd provided a strong narrative that demonstrated high-quality student outcomes and successes. Metrics showed that this program follows peer trends and has made positive improvements.

Chemistry and Physics

Chemistry BS: Category 2

The Chemistry BS boasts healthy cohorts and strong metrics in many areas. The Task Force noted that many courses in this program are service courses for other majors, but also noted low retention rates within the major. The Task Force encourages the program to be mindful of strategies that might encourage retention within other STEM programs, if not within the Chemistry BS itself.

Chemistry MS: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Chemistry MS develop an aggressive action plan. While the departmental metrics show some strengths, the Task Force noted concerns about retention and time to graduation and very small student cohort sizes. The Task Force appreciates actions taken to explore a new MS curriculum and program reorientation. However, a plan to create a focused program identity with the goal of a regionally-significant, high quality MS program, with increased student demand and population is recommended. The Task Force recommends that an action plan be developed in Fall 2013 and assessed in Spring 2014 within Academic Affairs, as determined by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Dean(s). If the objectives of the action plan are not met, the Task Force recommends that this program be discontinued.

Forensic Science BS: Category 2

Forensic Science is a successful new program with large cohorts and only two faculty members supporting the major. The Task Force applauds program efforts and successes, and expects continued growth.

Environmental Science BS: Category 1

The Task Force noted strong metrics in nearly all categories, with clearly articulated and demonstrated linkages to the 2020 Strategic Plan, as well as regional significance and an interdisciplinary curriculum. The Task Force considers this to be a program of great potential and worthy of future investment.

Chemistry MAEd/MAT: Voluntary Discontinuation

This program was voluntarily discontinued by the Department of Chemistry.

Physics Minor: Category 2

The Physics minor offers largely stable student metrics, and was considered to be a helpful minor for students in engineering, pre-med, and similar fields.

Communication

Communication BS: Category 2

The Communications BS revealed problematic metrics in Faculty FTEs, class sizes, and declining graduation rates. However, the Task Force also noted the burdens placed on this program due to Liberal Studies requirements. The Task Force recommends that this program's leadership and faculty consider interdisciplinary opportunities and linkages across the university with related programs in order to improve program metrics.

Broadcast Sales Minor: Category 3

The Task Force recommends this minor for discontinuation, noting that it does not serve sufficient student populations or demands, does not serve significant regional needs, and does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns or notable 2020 alignments.

Journalism: Category 2

The Journalism Minor is newly housed in the Communications Department. The Task Force encourages departmental leadership and faculty to be attentive to this new program's growth.

English

English BA: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program's overall quality and productivity, and noted positive program strengths as compared to peer institutions.

English MA: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program's overall quality and productivity, and noted that the program's performance exceeds university averages according to several metrics.

English Education MAEd/MAT: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program's overall quality and productivity, and despite having small cohorts, the program's retention is high.

English Education BSEd: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program's continued quality and productivity, and noted relatively high cohort sizes.

English, TESOL / Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages MA: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the English TESOL MA program be discontinued. The Task Force appreciates the program's uniqueness within the state, but felt that more fruitful opportunities appear to lie with undergraduate instruction. The TESOL MA program does not serve sufficient student populations or demands, and does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns.

TESOL / Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages MAEd/MAT: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the English TESOL MAEd/MAT programs be discontinued. The Task Force appreciates the programs' uniqueness within the state, but felt that more fruitful opportunities appear to lie with undergraduate instruction.

The TESOL MAEd/MAT programs do not serve sufficient student populations or demands, and do not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns.

American Studies Minor: Voluntary discontinuation.

This program was voluntarily discontinued by the Department of English.

Creative Writing Minor: Category 2

This stand-alone minor, which also functions as a track within the major, was distinguished by a strong program narrative and QEP connections.

Film Studies Minor: Category 2

This stand-alone minor was distinguished by good growth in numbers and its highly interdisciplinary nature. Faculty members within this program are encouraged to seek out and foster additional connections with related humanities programs.

Literature Minor: Category 2

This stand-alone minor, which also functions as a track within the major, currently serves a small number of students, but program leadership is making positive steps toward distinguishing its curriculum.

Multimedia Minor: Voluntary discontinuation

This program was voluntarily discontinued by the Department of English.

Professional Writing Minor: Category 2

This stand-alone minor, which also functions as a track within the major, was noted for its strong narrative and linkages to the 2020 Strategic Plan.

Geosciences and Natural Resources

Earth Sciences: Voluntary Discontinuation

This program was voluntarily discontinued by the Geosciences and Natural Resources Department.

Geology BS: Category 2

The Geology program was praised for strong program metrics and a very strong program narrative, particularly with respect to student engagement and curriculum. The Task Force noted the program's great potential for growth and distinction.

Natural Resource Conservation and Management BS: Category 1

The Task Force noted that the NRCM program is unique and impressive, with growing visibility, productivity, and excellent attention to the needs of its students. The narrative was strongly attached to WCU's regional mission. Metrics were uniformly stable or trending upward. The Task Force believes this program is a strong fit for WCU, shows great potential, and is worthy of future investment.

Geography Minor: Category 2

The Task Force praised the compelling narrative for geography, and noted that while currently small, this could be a notable interdisciplinary minor with investment in geography faculty.

History

Appalachian Studies Minor: Voluntary discontinuation

This program was voluntarily discontinued by the Department of History.

History BA/BS: Category 2

The History BA/BS programs were praised for their strong narrative, particularly with respect to mission centrality, as well as strong metrics both internally and in relation to peers.

History MA: Category 2

The History MA was considered a solid program with respect to metrics and narrative.

Social Sciences Education BSEd: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this program historically and currently is solid with largely stable, although somewhat small, cohorts and numbers of graduates.

Social Sciences Education MAEd/MAT: Category 2

The Task Force noted that MAEd/MAT data presented some challenges in program analysis, but other metrics indicate that this program, albeit small, is productive and important to WCU's regional mission. The number of graduates is small but stable.

Mathematics and Computer Science

Applied Math MS: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Applied Mathematics MS be discontinued. This program does not serve sufficient student populations or demands, and does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns. The Task Force specifically cited very small program numbers and minimal recruiting efforts.

Computer Science BS: Category 2

The Task Force encourages this program to seek out connections with similar programs across our campus (such as CIS) to increase student opportunities. The program has some problematic metrics such as retention, and minimally addressed the 2020 plan within the narrative, but did speak to ongoing student opportunities and projects.

Mathematics BS: Category 2

The Mathematics BS showed above-average metrics both internally and compared to peer Mathematics programs.

Mathematics Education MAEd/MAT; Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Mathematics MAEd/MAT be discontinued. These programs do not serve sufficient student populations or demands, and do not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns. The Task Force also specifically cited very small program numbers and minimal recruiting efforts.

Mathematics Education BSEd: Category 2

Like the Mathematics BS, this program offers largely stable student populations, with solid metrics and a convincing program narrative.

Modern Foreign Language

German BA: Category 3

The German program is recommended for discontinuation. This program does not serve significant regional needs and does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns. Proposed adjustments to curriculum and program identity do not appear to offer adequate solutions to ongoing program challenges. The Task Force encourages the Chancellor to proceed with an institutional needs analysis leading to a more effective means of offering a range of language opportunities for our students.

Japanese Studies Minor: Category 2

This program has approached recruitment and retention with innovative strategies. While small, the program maintains reasonable enrollment.

Spanish BA: Category 3

The Task Force recommends to the Chancellor that the Spanish BA be discontinued. Proposed adjustments to curriculum and program identity do not appear to offer adequate solutions to ongoing program challenges. This program does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns, unlike several regional peers, and there is no realistic potential that negative aspects of this program can be overcome. The Task Force encourages the Chancellor to proceed with an institutional needs analysis leading to a more effective means of offering a range of language opportunities for our students.

Spanish BSEd: Category 3

The Task Force recommends to the Chancellor that the Spanish BAED be discontinued. Proposed adjustments to curriculum and program identity do not appear to offer adequate solutions to ongoing program challenges. This program does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns, unlike several regional peers, and there is no realistic potential that negative aspects of this program can be overcome. The Task Force encourages the Chancellor to proceed with an institutional needs analysis leading to a more effective means of offering a range of language opportunities for our students.

Philosophy and Religion

Philosophy BA: Category 2

The Philosophy program provided a strong narrative and offered metrics that were largely stable. The Task Force noted that the program produces few graduates for the number of faculty within the program.

Religion Minor: Category 2

Religion is both a track within the major and a small stand-alone minor. The program's narrative report demonstrated that the minor is consistent with the university's mission.

Political Science and Public Affairs

International Studies BA: Category 2

This program was applauded for its 2020 Strategic Plan linkages and “synergy,” but was too new to be fairly assessed. The Task Force noted that while this program fills an important niche in the university, its lack of a common curriculum could be both an asset and detriment as the program develops.

Political Science BA/BS: Category 2

The Task Force complimented this program both for its high performance, mission centrality, and positive metrics both internally and in relation to peers.

Public Affairs MPA: Category 2

Public Affairs MPA is an extremely strong program that has recruited impressively and serves a growing student population at the Biltmore Park campus. The Task Force complimented the program for consistently strong metrics and regional engagement.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Category 1: 0

Category 2: 15

Category 3: 0

Voluntary discontinue: 1

Accounting, Finance, Information Systems, and Economics

Accounting BSBA: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Computer Information System BSBA: Category 2

This program was praised for its nice alignment with the 2020 Strategic Plan, interesting engagement opportunities, and growing number of majors. The Task Force encourages this program to make linkages with similar programs across the university to create additional opportunities for faculty, students, and staff.

Finance BSBA: Category 2

The Finance program offers largely stable metrics in retention and graduation rates.

Accounting MAC: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program for a strong narrative with respect to program uniqueness, attention to opportunities at Biltmore Park, and an appropriate plan for improving upon current program metrics.

Economics Minor: Category 2

The Task Force praised the Economics minor both for its overall strength as a program and for the narrative's attention to WCU strategic goals. This was noted as a particularly strong stand-alone minor with great potential.

Business Administration and Law & Sport Management

Business Administration BSBA: Voluntary Discontinuation

This program, offered only as a second major for students outside of the College of Business, was voluntarily discontinued by the College of Business.

Business Administration MBA: Category 2

Based on information in the program's narrative, the Task Force praised the attention given to growth opportunities, including actions taken to capitalize on WCU's Biltmore Park location. The Task Force saw this as a program with great potential and a positive trajectory.

Business Administration and Law BSBA: Category 2

This is a strong program with well-articulated and demonstrated 2020 Strategic Plan linkages and contributions.

Sport Management BS: Category 2

The Sports Management program, relatively new to the College of Business, is growing and demonstrates stable metrics.

Conflict Resolution Minor: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this is a relatively new program, but seems in line with 2020 objectives. It was noted that this could be an excellent certificate program in addition to a minor. The program's accompanying student organization and interdisciplinary course work were praised.

Entrepreneurship, Sales & Marketing, Hospitality & Tourism

Entrepreneurship BSE/BSBA: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this program has a strong connection to the region, national recognition as a unique program, and continued strong performance despite national economic trends.

Entrepreneurship ME: Category 2

The Entrepreneurship ME was praised for implementing strategies to enrollment and retention challenges. The Task Force encouraged leadership of this program to investigate the option of a certificate program.

Hospitality and Tourism BS: Category 2

The Task Force felt that this program has great potential, both institutionally and regionally, for growth and centrality. The program has strong linkages with the 2020 plan and has worked to improve metrics in recent years.

Marketing BSBA: Category 2

The Marketing BSBA, while somewhat costly and low-enrolled compared to peers, remains a stable and central program.

Global Management and Strategy

Management BSBA: Category 2

The Management program, while showing slight decreases in several metrics and in comparison with peers, remains stable.

Project Management MPM: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this is a program of great potential, but with troubling trends in retention, enrollment, and cost. The leadership and faculty of this program are encouraged to investigate new strategies for growth and recruitment.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND ALLIED PROFESSIONS

Category 1: 1

Category 2: 16

Category 3: 3

Action Plan: 2

Discontinue: 1

Voluntary discontinue: 0

Human Services

Birth-Kindergarten Education BS: Category 2

The Birth-Kindergarten Education BS is a strong program that has made critical adjustments to curriculum and instruction to meet regional and statewide needs. The Task Force noted that most metrics are stable or positive, making this program stronger than most peer programs. The Task Force noted that it could be worth considering a formal 2+2 program to further aid students in this field.

College Student Personnel MED: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this program, while stable in most metrics, requires additional faculty involvement and instruction in order to ensure future success; combination with a related program might allow a more reasonable student-faculty ratio. Nonetheless, the program shows stability in cohorts, assistantships, and graduation rates.

Counseling, Clinical Mental Health MS: Category 2

The Task Force noted stability in program metrics. The narrative report demonstrated that the program is consistent with the university's mission.

Counseling, School MAEd: Category 2

The School Counseling MAEd is a stable program with respect to student cohorts, graduation rates, and other key metrics. The program was praised for its student employment placements.

Educational Supervision MAEd: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program for its continued service to our students and institution. The program offers stable numbers and is mission central.

Educational Leadership EDD: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this program is currently inactive and will be reactivated in the coming year. For this reason, the Task Force did not feel additional discussion was warranted on this program.

Human Resources MS: Category 2

The Human Resources MS shows stable and positive trending metrics. The Task Force felt this online program showed good growth and was a productive program for WCU.

Leadership Minor: Category 2

This popular minor offers strong student numbers and demonstrates appropriate attention to the student experience.

Parks and Recreation Management BS: Category 1

The Parks and Recreation Management BS was praised for an excellent narrative, with strong 2020 Strategic Plan alignment, meaningful and sustained local and community engagement, and high potential for expansion. The student metrics were also positive and growing. The Task Force felt this program was a strong Category 1, and recommends future investment.

School Administration MSA: Category 2

The Task Force noted stability in program metrics. The narrative report demonstrated that the program is consistent with the university's mission.

Psychology

Psychology BS: Category 2

The Task Force praised this program's overall quality and productivity, with strong and positive student metrics and upward trends.

Psychology MA: Category 2

This program, like the Psychology BS, was praised for positive metrics, particularly in the graduation rate, and for impressive student research outcomes.

School Psychology SSP: Category 2

The Task Force noted the program's narrative demonstrated consistency with the University's mission and largely stable program metrics.

Teaching and Learning

Elementary Education BSEd: Category 2

The Elementary Education BSEd is a mission central program with largely stable metrics. The Task Force noted, however, downward trending majors, particularly in comparison to peer programs.

Middle Grades Education BSEd: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Middle Grades Education BSEd develop an action plan. While observing that some metrics for this program were positive, the Task Force noted a more serious decline in enrollments when compared to programs in peer institutions. Additional information and discussion revealed that this program has taken corrective steps toward improvements in instruction and metrics. This program was placed under an action plan to document growth strategies and demonstrate clear outcomes; the plan should be developed in Fall 2013 and assessed in Spring 2014, as determined by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Dean(s).

Elementary and Middle Grades Education MAEd: Category 3

As with the BSEd, the Task Force noted troubling trends in this program's metrics, notably in declining cohorts. The Task Force noted that this program shows potential for improvement in growth and other notable metrics, particularly in a hybrid/online model. Steps already taken toward additional improvements are commended. However, the program should be placed under a comprehensive action plan. The Task Force recommends that the Elementary and Middle Grades Education MAEd develop a comprehensive action plan that will document growth strategy, demonstrate quality outcomes, and further develop regional partnerships. The plan should span two academic years, developed in the Fall 2013 and Fall 2014 semesters, with progress assessment in Spring 2014 and Spring 2015, as determined by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Dean(s).

Health and Physical Education BSEd: Category 2

The Health and Physical Education BSEd offers largely stable metrics, with slightly downward trending majors. The program's narrative noted steps toward improvements, with promising curricular changes.

Health and Physical MAEd/MAT: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Health and Physical Education MAEd/MAT be discontinued. While noting the success of the undergraduate program, Task Force members did not see the same success or potential for the MAEd/MAT programs, which do not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns and do not serve sufficient student populations or demands, with too few specific connections to the 2020 Strategic Plan.

Inclusive Education BSEd: Category 2

The Inclusive Education BSEd had few program metrics due to a recent change of program code and no cohort data. Available data showed stable if somewhat downward trending metrics. The program narrative was mission appropriate.

Special Education MAEd/MAT: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this program has thoughtfully re-structured with innovative distance education opportunities. Metrics appeared largely stable, although the Special Education MAEd/MAT programs require a simplification of metrics and program codes for future prioritization assessments.

COLLEGE OF FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS

Category 1: 0

Category 2: 9

Category 3: 5

Action Plan: 2

Discontinue: 3

Voluntary discontinue: 0

Art and Design

Art BA/BFA: Category 2

The Art BA/BFA programs have stable metrics. The Task Force appreciated the narrative's account of ongoing curricular adjustments to clarify and strengthen these programs and improve student metrics. The BFA was noted as a somewhat stronger program than the BA.

Fine Arts MFA: Category 2

The Fine Arts MFA, while low in some program metrics, offered a strong narrative for regional service within both Asheville and Cherokee. The program was praised for its mission centrality and regional strength.

Interior Design BS: Category 2

The Interior Design BS is regionally unique and provides a solid narrative statement with relatively stable program metrics.

Art Education BSEd: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Art Education MAEd/MAT: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Residential Environments Minor: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Residential Environments Minor develop an action plan. The Task Force commends the new program director on steps taken to increase program enrollments and regional outreach, but recommends an action plan to document a specific strategy and demonstrate outcomes. The Task Force also

recommends a change of program name to clarify the program's intended purpose and audience. A plan that documents these improvements should be developed in Fall 2013 and assessed in Spring 2014, as determined by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Dean(s).

Music

Music BA/BM: Category 2

The Music BA/BM offers largely stable student metrics and a clear articulation of the unique nature of programs and regional service. The Task Force noted that graduation rates need improvement.

Music MM: Category 3

The Music MM was recommended for discontinuation. The program does not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns and does not serve significant regional needs. The Task Force felt that resources were better directed toward the larger BA/BM programs.

Music Education MAEd/MAT: Category 3

The Music MAEd/MAT programs were recommended for discontinuation. They do not demonstrate positive enrollment patterns and do not serve strong regional needs. The Task Force felt that resources were better directed toward the larger BA/BM programs.

Music Education BSEd: Category 2

The Music BSEd offers largely stable student metrics and a clear articulation of the educational mission.

Stage and Screen

Dance Minor: Category 2

The Task Force praised the growing strength of this program, both in student numbers and the narrative statement. This program is a strong addition both to the School and the university.

Motion Picture and Television Production BFA: Category 3

The Task Force recommends discontinuation of this program. The program serves a limited student population with below average graduation rates, but high and continued cost commitments. The Task Force noted some accomplishments of this program, but concluded that it was not essential in regard to WCU's mission. The Task Force recommends a School reorientation toward the stronger and more cost-effective programs it already offers with higher numbers and greater cost efficiency.

Stage and Screen BA: Category 3

The Task Force recommends that the Stage and Screen BA develop an action plan. The Task Force noted that Stage and Screen is a unique program that prepares students broadly for entertainment fields, as compared to other programs at peer institutions; however, the Task Force recommends program reorientation, including a change of program focus and name. The program name and focus should reflect the strengths of this program in theater technical skills and stagecraft, without emphasis on film and screen - areas which have been recommended for discontinuation. Additionally, the Task Force recommends that this program should seek out more intensive collaboration with related academic units across the university. The action plan, documenting growth strategy and program reorientation, will span two academic years. The initial plan should be developed in Fall 2013, assessed in Spring 2014 and again in Spring 2015, as determined by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the Dean(s).

Theatre BFA: Category 2

The Theatre BFA was praised for its stable and positive metrics and a strong narrative, noting regional engagement and high quality students.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Category 1: 5

Category 2: 13

Category 3: 0

Voluntary discontinue: 0

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Communication Sciences and Disorders BS: Category 2

The Task Force noted very strong and high trending program metrics. Communication Sciences and Disorders is a mission-central program.

Communication Sciences and Disorders MS: Category 1

The Communication Sciences and Disorders MS is a high quality program with strong national or international potential, very strong program metrics, a strong graduation rate and large cohorts. The Task Force felt that this program fully embodied Category 1 expectations and recommends future program investment.

Criminology and Criminal Justice

Criminal Justice BS: Category 2

Criminal Justice was praised for growing student numbers, positive metrics, and program productivity. The Task Force felt that this was a program with additional growth potential in the future.

Emergency and Disaster Management BS: Category 2

This unique program was praised for its recruitment strategies, potential for additional growth, and centrality to UNC initiatives with respect to military connections.

Health Sciences

Athletic Training BS: Category 2

The Task Force noted that this field offers a great deal of potential and was impressed with student engagement, but noted serious concerns about graduation and retention metrics.

Emergency Medical Care BS: Category 1

This program was described as a magnet, with high student success metrics and great growth potential. The small number of program faculty, coupled with new facilities and very positive and high-trending metrics led the Task Force to a Category 1 ranking.

Environmental Health BS: Category 2

Environmental Health was strong in both metrics and narrative, displaying good program retention and strong 2020 Strategic Plan and QEP alignments. The program, while small, has great growth potential.

Health Sciences MHS: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Nutrition and Dietetics BS: Category 2

Nutrition and Dietetics showed good program stability in metrics and provided an excellent narrative. The program was praised for its commitment to students and faculty professional development.

Recreational Therapy BS: Category 1

Recreational Therapy was praised for its strong 2020 Strategic Plan alignment, for high student success, and for an excellent growth trajectory. The narrative showed that the program has strong promise for regional growth and described an exemplary QEP program.

Nursing

Nursing BSN: Category 1

The Nursing BSN earned praise and a solid Category 1 rating for its thoughtful curricular adjustments at the undergraduate level and its attention to regional professional and educational demands. The Task Force recommended investment so that more placements can be offered than the program currently accommodates.

Family Nurse Practitioner MSN: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Nurse Administrator Track MSN: Category 2

The Task Force noted that, while small, this new program shows stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Nurse Anesthesia Track MSN: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Nurse Educator MSN: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative.

Physical Therapy, DPT: Category 2

The Physical Therapy DPT is a new program with somewhat limited data at this stage, but the Task Force felt this program has real promise as an area of growth for WCU. Early metrics were very positive. The Task Force looks forward to progress in this program, and sees this as a future area of investment.

Social Work

Social Work BSW: Category 2

Social Work BSW was called an admirable program, with large student numbers, steady growth, and steady or rising positive metrics. The Task Force hopes that it will continue to grow even with rigorous program admission requirements.

Social Work MSW: Category 1

The Social Work MSW shows all the positive qualities of the BSW, with even greater growth in student numbers, both in enrollment and graduates. The program narrative offered thoughtful connections to the 2020 Strategic Plan, and real promise for future demand. The Task Force felt that this program was well deserving of additional investment, particularly in tenure-track faculty.

THE KIMMEL SCHOOL

Category 1: 0

Category 2: 7

Category 3: 0

Voluntary discontinue: 2

Construction Management

Construction Management BS: Category 2

The Task Force noted a challenging set of metrics in Construction Management, partially due to broader economic forces, but also due to internal departmental conditions and a high faculty turnover. The Task Force encourages this program to continue to redefine itself, as it has begun to do, to ensure that it remains a stable program that is more sustainable and less sensitive to volatile external forces.

Construction Management MCM: Category 2

The Construction Management MCM shows general stability in some metrics, including majors and graduates. The Task Force praised the thoughtful program narrative statement with respect to additional growth potential, particularly online.

Land Development Minor: Category 2

The Task Force noted program stability in metrics and mission appropriate narrative. This small program continues to graduate students and is largely self-funded through external grants.

Engineering and Technology

Broadcast Telecommunications Engineering Technology: Voluntary Discontinuation

This program was voluntarily discontinued by the Kimmel School.

Digital Communications Engineering Technology: Voluntary Discontinuation

This program was voluntarily discontinued by the Kimmel School.

Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology BS: Category 2

Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology is a unique program with largely stable metrics. The Task Force noted that this program is closely aligned with 2020 Strategic Plan goals and offers a unique problem-based learning curriculum.

Electrical Engineering BSEE: Category 2

Electrical Engineering demonstrates largely stable metrics and stable student cohorts. The Task Force noted that this program, like several akin to it, remains high cost.

Engineering Technology BS: Category 2

Engineering Technology is also a unique program in our system, again with largely stable metrics.

Technology MS: Category 2

The Technology MS, while distinctive, has slightly less stable student metrics than the undergraduate programs. The Task Force encourages the program to address student populations and enrollment issues as it moves forward.

Contact information

If you are a current undergraduate student or a faculty or staff member, contact the Office of the Provost at 828-227-7495 or via email at vcacademicaffairs@wcu.edu.

If you are a prospective undergraduate or transfer student, contact the Office of Admission at 828-227-7317, toll-free at 877-928-4968 or via email at admiss@wcu.edu.

If you are a current or prospective graduate student, contact the director or adviser for your specific graduate program, or the Graduate School at 828-227-7398 or via email at grad@wcu.edu.

If you are a current or prospective distance education student, contact the director or adviser for your specific program, or the Division of Educational Outreach at 828-227-7397, toll-free at 866-928-4723 or via email at distance@wcu.edu.

Correspondence regarding this report should be directed to Vicki Szabo szabo@email.wcu.edu or Mark Lord mlord@email.wcu.edu.