Dear President Woodward, UFS Executive Committee, Senators, and Faculty,

I am writing to provide a written update on the ongoing work of the Academic Resource Management Committee with respect to review of the academic portfolio at Shawnee State University.

As you know, during the 2024-2025 academic year Shawnee State University is completing a review of the academic portfolio. In this document, I am sharing the background of the project, the data that has been compiled for review, and the timeline for our project.

Why must we review our programs in the 2024-2025 academic year?

There are multiple reasons to review our programs, their resource usage and need, and make decisions on how best to support our academic mission. Such a review is meant to be undertaken on a regular basis; however, SSU has not truly conducted a comprehensive review within the last decade. First, in September 2025, the Board of Trustees is required to report to the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education on SSU programs that the State has identified as low-enrolled or duplicative with other institutions of higher education in our region. The Board will recommend actions for these programs, and it is in the best interest of SSU that the Board have the information with which to make informed decisions.

Second, the Higher Learning Commission conducted a mid-cycle review of our institution in the Spring of 2023. From that review, HLC designated that SSU "met with concerns" aspects of three criteria. We must provide an interim report on our progress addressing these concerns by October 2025. The report must include a review of the resources available to support our programs and strategic goals across our programs.

Finally, the needs of our student population, our regional employers, and our campus have undergone significant change in the years leading up to and coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to strategically plan across our colleges, identify opportunities for enrollment growth, and fulfill our mission of providing opportunities for higher education and social mobility in Southern Ohio, we must have an understanding of the resources required to support our mission.

What is the timeline for receiving and reviewing the data?

Data was provided to College and Department/School leadership on September 15, 2024 according to a timeline previously established through shared governance in the UFS Procedure for Warehousing Programs. The Academic Resource Management Committee has been reviewing the data and will provide recommendations to the Interim Provost. This began on September 15, 2024 and will continue through October 31, 2024. If there are recommendations for program closure that the Interim Provost brings forward, the affected Colleges, Departments/Schools, and Programs will be notified of the recommendation by November 1, 2024. The ARMC may also recommend that programs are in need of improvement, are stable, are duplicative with other programs, or a candidate for additional resources that would allow expansion.

Will there be feedback from the faculty?

Yes. There are faculty representatives on the ARMC. The UFS Executive Committee will also have regular meetings with the Interim Provost allowing opportunity for discussion. The Interim Provost and College Deans will also meet with departments to receive feedback on the data and any recommendations.

Regardless of whether the department faculty or the Interim Provost initiates a proposal to discontinue a program, such proposals will be presented to faculty governance committees for review.

Is this strictly a quantitative review and analysis of academic programs?

No. We understand that there are qualitative variables to consider as the campus participates in this process. Following a review of the quantitative metrics, the ARMC membership will discuss qualitative variables for programs. Qualitative variables may include considering alignment with mission, sufficiency of instructional staffing, adequacy of operational support, external demands, internal demands, impacts on community and workforce partnerships, and other variables the ARMC may determine.

Who will make decisions regarding actions that may include discontinuation of programs, expansion of programs, and allocation of resources?

For programs recommended for discontinuation, those recommendations will move forward by November 1, 2024 to allow governance committees to review and provide recommendations. For other recommendations from the ARMC the Interim Provost will solicit feedback from faculty, and consult with the College Deans, members of Cabinet, and the President to create a report. The report will include a summary of the recommendations agreed upon by SSU's executive leadership and the data supporting those recommendations. The goal for 2024-2025 is to provide this report to the SSU Board of Trustees in advance of the February 2025 board meeting. The Board of Trustees will ultimately make the decision to enact, postpone, or reject recommendations in the report.

What data has been collected and reviewed so far during the portfolio review?

Data are based on academic years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024.

Enrollments: Enrollment for each program was determined using the official 15th day report for the fall term of each academic year included in the review period. After reviewing the first round of enrollment data, the ARMC asked for a double check of major 1 and major 2 designations. There were some errors found that changed data for a few programs in 2019, 2020, and 2021.

Revenue calculation: The revenue was determined starting at the course level. Student tuition for each academic year was assigned to each course that each student took during the designated year. This included payment of course and program fees, technology fee, instructional fee, graduate student fees, CCP fees, and out-of-state fees. This allowed calculation of gross tuition and fees at the course level. The institutional scholarship and any discounts were also applied at the course level. This allowed calculation of the discount rate at the course level per student and calculation of net tuition and fees. Each course was assigned to the program(s) that require it for major specific program requirements. This information was used to create program level revenue information.

In addition to Tuition/Fees and Discounts, State Share of Instruction received was also assigned to each program. This included revenue received for course completions and degree attainment.

A note about courses that are required by multiple programs and /or the General Education Program. Courses may be included in several programs as major specific requirements. They may also be included as a major specific requirement for some students while others are enrolled to complete their GEP requirement. Some courses are only offered as a part of the General Education program. Courses that are a part of multiple programs were assigned a weighted percentage for revenue calculations. To do

this, the 2023-2024 course rosters for all sections of the course were reviewed. For example, ARTH1101 is only required as a GEP course, and so 100% of revenue was assigned to the General Education Program. ARTH 3454 is only taken by a low percentage of students strictly for GEP purposes. Most of the students are majoring in a Fine, Digital, and Performing Arts program and are able to count the course toward both the GEP and their major. After review of a sample (1 academic year) of course rosters, revenue was assigned to ARTH3454 as 16% GEP, 13.4% Studio Arts, 47.9% Game Simulation Development Arts, 16.7% Graphic Design, and 6 % Multiage Visual Arts.   For courses that did not run in 2023-2024, but that did run in the review period, the most recent year rosters were examined.

Program Cost Calculation:

To calculate the costs associated with academic programs, the costs were assigned to either instructional costs or administrative costs. Administrative costs included: actual expenses in departmental or program non-compensation lines, stipends paid to chairs, program directors, and program coordinators, department Academic Administrative Assistant salary, lab/field/clinical coordinator salary, utilities and maintenance costs, and recruiting costs. Instructional costs included: ITS General Academic Computing costs (Blackboard, Library Catalog, Microsoft, Jenzabar), Computer lab maintenance, department specific student computer lab replacement costs, RisePoint share of tuition, General Library Costs, Program Specific Library costs, Adjunct salary, summer faculty salary, stipends for graduate assistants, full-service faculty salary, overload salary, course fee expenses, and program fee expenses. Where costs were not easily assigned to a specific program, the expenses were divided equally among all programs within the School or Department. The costs were calculated at the program level for each academic year. A 5-year average cost was calculated from that data.

Once 5-year average revenue and expenses were calculated, total program expenses were subtracted from program net revenue to determine overall program costs.

The ARMC viewed the revenue-expense data as part of the metrics to make recommendations on programs. Overall program costs were not the sole deciding factor in any of the recommendations from the committee.

UFS Metrics:

In 2017, the University Faculty Senate identified a set of metrics to be used in evaluating academic programs. These include:

Number of declared majors (yes/no); 20 or more for a baccalaureate program? and 10 or more for an associated program?

Number of graduates (yes/no); Are there at least 2 or more graduates per year?

Median number of earned hours upon graduation from the program.

Ratio of program graduates to full-service FTE program faculty

Program graduation rate: 6yr for baccalaureate, 3 yr for associate

Median number of students enrolled in program classes.

An additional metric on initial career or graduate program destinations of program graduates is part of the UFS Metrics, but based on agreement between UFS and SSU, this data was not included in this review due to limited or no data for most SSU programs being available. While

Additional Metrics:

In 2017, SSU had fewer graduate programs, and nothing was specifically indicated in the review of graduate programs. During this review, graduate programs were examined. The enrollment and graduate metrics (minimum of 10 enrolled, and minimum of 2 graduates/yr) were set the same as those for 2 year undergraduate programs.

While the UFS enrollment and graduate metrics are to be reported as yes/no answers, the actual enrollment and graduate numbers were included for each academic year. Additionally, Fall 2024 enrollment numbers were reviewed. This allowed the ARMC to view a longer-term trend in these metrics, and to compare program level trends to enrollment trends at the College and University level.

In addition to median data, the average enrollment in program courses and average hours earned at graduation were also calculated.

Program graduation rate data is based on the First Time Freshman entering SSU declared in a specific program, the number of students represented in this data can be very low at the program level. Institutional data is set at the time of entry into SSU and will not capture students who transfer in, change major, or are accepted into selective programs after their first semester. The ARMC also looked at the ratio of enrolled program students to program graduates. This ratio allows an understanding of the sustainable enrollment/ retention in a program. For a 4-year program, a 4:1 enrollment:graduate ratio is expected. For a 2-year program, a 2:1 enrollment:graduate ratio is expected.

Finally, the ARMC also examined the rate at which students transfer out of a program into another program at a different institution. This was obtained through the National Student Clearinghouse.

In addition to the full set of metrics for all degree programs, ARMC also reviewed enrollments and completions from 2019-present for certificates and minors.

Recommendations

The ARMC has made recommendations on actions for programs based on the review. These recommendations may include:

  No action recommended
  Review for growth/ resource needs
  Develop Recruitment plan
  Review for Improvement
  Develop Retention Plan
  Develop Recruitment, Retention, Marketing
  plan
  Develop Marketing plan
  Discontinuation
  Deep Revision
  Concentration Discontinuation

Revisit in New Year

By November 1, 2025 initial recommendations will be shared with Deans of the appropriate college who will begin conversations with Chairs and School Directors to determine next steps for programs in their areas. This timeline is most important for any programs that are recommended for discontinuation as it will allow time to discuss, gather feedback from the Schools and Departments, and work through our shared governance processes.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Inman

Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs