

**APER Executive Report Summary and Recommendations on Western Illinois  
University's Proposed Program Eliminations**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12th, 2016**

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## 1. APER Committee Membership

As specified in the 2010-2015 UPI contract (26.2), the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee consists of one faculty member from each college and one member from the library, each chosen through elections conducted by the Faculty Senate. The members of the 2015-2017 APER Committee are:

David Banash, College of Arts and Sciences  
 Sean Cordes, Libraries  
 Bart Jennings, College of Business and Technology  
 Cindy Piletic, College of Education  
 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

## 2. Overview of APER's Procedures:

APER began meeting in January of 2016. Provost Neumann directed the committee to review and make recommendations on the potential elimination of eight academic programs (majors):

- African American Studies (05.201)
- Bilingual/Bicultural Education (13.0201)
- Geography (45.0701)
- Musical Theater (50.9999)
- Philosophy (38.0101)
- Religious Studies (38.0201)
- Women's Studies (05.0207)

Provost Nuemann made clear to the committee that these programs were chosen for review because of their low numbers of declared majors and low annual graduation rates.

APER reviewed each program carefully and in great depth. The committee seriously studied the "Low Productivity Self Study Reports" produced by each of the programs (major). For each program (major), APER undertook a comprehensive, independent analysis of enrollments. When necessary, members of the committee asked for further information from the program (major) in question, and, in many cases, committee members met with the department chairs or other representatives of the programs (major) to gain greater insight.

The committee carefully reviewed all this information, and each program was individually and vigorously discussed at APER's weekly meeting.

APER wrote an individual report on each program (major). These reports include comprehensive explanations of APER's concerns that seek to give the broadest context possible in which to consider the program (major). The individual reports highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each program (major) in a table. These highlights are not meant to be read as a scale where a greater number of strengths than weaknesses would mean retention, but rather they serve to simply highlight some of many of the important aspects of the program

(major) that the APER committee focused on in making our recommendations. Each individual report concludes with the committee's recommendation.

### **3. Overview of Major Concerns**

#### *Context:*

All of the APER committee members expressed that this was unusually difficult and serious service to undertake. The charge of this committee is extraordinarily important for Western, for the departments, for the individual faculty members in each program (major), and for the students and the region we serve. Throughout our research and discussions, we had these responsibilities in mind at all times.

#### *Guiding Philosophy:*

The extensive review the committee undertook forced us to wrestle with many fundamental and difficult questions about the identity of Western and the meaning of our mission and values. Throughout, we were guided by our acute awareness of the fiscal challenges that Western currently faces, but we worked to balance this acute urgency by always keeping in mind the faculty's responsibility to uphold and protect Western's mission and values:  
<http://www.wiu.edu/catalog/intro/values.php>

While APER's work focused on one program at a time, the committee also developed a deep comparative sense of common challenges faced by the programs (majors) under review, and we developed a set of priorities that guided each recommendation. These include the following:

- Understanding each program first and foremost in terms of its contributions to Western's mission and values.
- Seeking whenever possible to conserve curriculum and faculty that serve Western's mission and values while achieving significant savings by recommending strategic and effective reorganization or curriculum revision.
- To help improve program (major) identities, strengths, and key metrics through insights that emerged in our careful and comparative review.
- To make recommendations for programs (majors) to make significant and meaningful improvements and then follow up with two-year reviews on their progress by APER.

#### *The Importance of Independent Review:*

Looking carefully and comparatively at the programs under review, the APER Committee came to see problems with overly complex curriculum options, missed opportunities to recruit and retain students, and areas where programs (majors) seemed to miss opportunities to develop their greatest strengths and core identities. We strongly believe that the APER committee findings produced through the review process can be of great value to the programs (majors) as they move forward.

At the same time, our findings seem to reveal what we believe to be weaknesses in the curriculum development and approval process at the college and university levels. Additionally,

the committee believes strongly that this kind of independent review undertaken by APER should be done for all programs on campus.

We also note with some interest that the university underwent a very similar process of program review in similarly challenging fiscal circumstances in 1983. In the the 1983 report from the “Program Review and Prioritization Committee,” which essentially served the same function as the current APER, that committee recommended that programs be independently assessed every five years, while programs facing serious challenges would undergo more frequent reviews: “If a program was found to be so deficient that it was placed in a ‘status quo\*’ or ‘phase down’ status, the program review could be updated on a more frequent schedule” (27).

The committee believes that improving and sharpening the scrutiny of Western’s curriculum development and approval processes, along with more frequent independent reviews of struggling programs (majors) beyond the individual college level could be of great benefit to Western.

#### **4. Summary of APER’s Recommendations on Proposed Program (major) Eliminations:**

Below is a summary of APER’s final recommendation on each program (major) under review. Complete rationales for each recommendation can be found in the individual program (major) reports.

##### **African American Studies**

The committee discussed simply eliminating the African American Studies Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining and reorganizing the African American Studies Program (major).

A majority of the committee favors a recommendation that the administration reorganize the AAS Program (major). The committee discussed a number of options to do this, while nonetheless recommending the administration find ways of maintaining the complete major option, the minor, and the current AAS Program (major) faculty. The APER committee suggests two possible reorganization strategies:

- Creating an “Area Studies” department by combining several departments, such as Women’s Studies and African-American Studies. This would save significant costs, including the elimination of a chair position, staff clerks, maintaining fewer overhead costs, such as photocopiers, phones lines, etc. as well as other potential savings. A consolidated degree, supported by a minor or major option in each of the specific fields, could also provide the consolidated numbers needed to support the major, while still providing the field expertise through the options and minors
- A second option would be to consolidate the African American Studies Program under the umbrella of a program such as the Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences to achieve significant savings.

A minority of the committee recommends leaving the African American Studies Program (major) and its department structure intact, with the understanding that they must

develop much better management, follow through on their plan for an online minor, and significantly drive down their cost/s.c.h. to a sustainable level during the next two years. The African American Studies Program (major) would then be reviewed again in two years.

### **Bilingual/Bicultural Education**

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program.

The APER committee believes that maintaining the program (major) in Bilingual/Bicultural Education is priority for Western in its mission to serve the region and the state of Illinois. The program also clearly serves a crucial role in supporting many other Education programs at Western, as is clear in their own self-study and APER's analysis of enrollments. Moreover, the obvious success of Bilingual/Bicultural Program (major) graduates in finding employment speaks to the vocational value of the degree. Finally, the program has lost a full-time faculty member through attrition already, thus producing significant savings for the university while still serving students in its own major and the other programs (majors) it also supports.

The committee believes that the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major) must improve by doing a more effective job of managing enrollments and teaching assignments to decrease cost/s.c.h. The APER committee thus recommends reviewing the program again in two years to determine that they have driven down cost/s.c.h. and improved enrollments through their online offerings, QC initiatives, and streamlined curriculum requirements.

### **Geography**

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Geography Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining the Geography Program (major).

Despite the current costs and Western's extraordinary fiscal challenges, a majority of the committee recommends that the administration retain the Geography Program (major) on the condition that they complete their proposed curriculum revisions and follow through on their commitments to develop recruiting and retention initiatives.

APER further recommends that the program (major) in Geography be reviewed again in two years to insure they have implemented the proposed changes and improved their numbers of declared majors and annual graduation rates.

### **Health Science/Public Health**

The Committee recommends eliminating the major in Public Health and the consolidation of the curriculum from the Bachelor's of Public Health into the options in

the Health Services Management bachelor's degree. By consolidation, the low performing bachelor degree would be eliminated, and the remaining degree options in Health Science may actually grow. The Health Sciences department should be recognized for their efforts to enhance the Public Health degree, but the Committee wonders whether one degree can meet the needs of both Public Health and Health Management positions in the job market.

APER further recommends that the program (major) in Health Science be reviewed again in two years to insure they have implemented changes and improved their numbers of declared majors and annual graduation rates.

### **Musical Theater**

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Musical Theater Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of of the committee recommend maintaining the Musical Theater Program (major).

Given the high quality of the program, its role as a "Signature Program" at the university, and the fact that eliminating the program would result in little or no savings due to course cross-listing, the APER committee recommends retaining the the program (major) in Musical Theater.

The program should continue efforts to increase enrollment and graduation rates. This may be possible with some recent changes made and proposed by the Musical Theater Program (major), and it is recommended that a review be conducted in two years to measure the success of both recent and proposed changes.

### **Philosophy**

The committee discussed simply eliminating Philosophy Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of of the committee recommend maintaining the Philosophy Program (major).

Despite the current costs and Western's extraordinary fiscal challenges, a majority of the committee recommends that the administration retain the Philosophy Program (major) on the condition that the program complete the curriculum revision that will include Religious Studies as an option in the Philosophy major.

Additionally, a review in two years should be conducted to determine whether the merger of the two programs (majors) has resulted in a change from the combined 33.1% reduction in student registration in Philosophy and Religious Studies courses since Fall 2011-Spring 2012, and whether there has been an increase in the number of declared majors and students preparing for graduation.

### **Religious Studies**

APER recommends that the administration support the plan put forward jointly by both the Philosophy Program (major) and the Religious Studies Program (major) to strengthen the Philosophy major and maintain the Religious Studies curriculum and faculty by making Religious Studies an option within the Philosophy major.

Additionally, a review in two years should be conducted to determine whether the merger of the two programs (majors) has resulted in a change from the combined 33.1% reduction in student registration in Philosophy and Religious Studies courses since Fall 2011-Spring 2012, and whether an increase in the number of declared majors and students preparing for graduation has been achieved.

### **Women's Studies**

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Women's Studies Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining and reorganizing the Women's Studies Program (major).

The Committee recommends that the administration reorganize the Women's Studies Program (major). The committee discussed a number of options to do this, while nonetheless strongly encouraging the administration to insure that any reorganization protect the whole curriculum, and particularly maintain the major option, the minor, and the current Women's Studies Program (major) faculty. Options for reorganization include:

- Creating an "Area Studies" department by combining several departments, such as Women's Studies and African-American Studies. This would save significant costs, including the elimination of a chair position, staff clerks, maintaining fewer overhead costs, such as photocopiers, phones lines, etc. as well as other potential savings. A consolidated degree, supported by an a minor or major option in each of the specific fields could also provide the consolidated numbers needed to support the major, while still providing the field expertise through the options and minors.
- A second strategy would be to consolidate the Women's Studies Program (major) under the umbrella of a program such as the Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences to achieve significant savings.

### **5. Complete Program Reports**

1. African American Studies
2. Bilingual/Bicultural Education
3. Geography
4. Health Science/Public Health
5. Musical Theater
6. Philosophy
7. Religious Studies



## 8. Women's Studies

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in African-American Studies**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12th, 2016**

### **APER Committee Membership:**

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David Banash, College of Arts and Sciences  
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 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in African American Studies. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program "strengths and weaknesses." In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER's Concerns:**

The African American Studies Program (major) presents an incredibly difficult challenge for the committee. The APER committee seriously and carefully read the program's self-study. Two members of the committee also attended the AAS department's colloquium, "The Department of African American Studies Still Matters." Additionally, APER undertook an independent and comprehensive analysis of enrollments. Informed by this research, the committee engaged in a lengthy discussion of the following: the program's history at Western; its current enrollments and enrollment trends; its role in general-education; and its impact on current majors and minors. The committee was also attentive to and wishes to acknowledge the larger contributions of the program (major) to Western's mission and community. We believe that there are many factors that must be carefully weighed and considered in making any decision on the African American Studies program's (major) future status.

The most serious concern of the committee is the low performance of African-American Studies in terms of cost/s.c.h. and overall enrollments. Though enrollments and cost/s.c.h. should never be the sole measure of a program's (major) value to the university, the current numbers and the overall trends in the AAS program are among the worst in the College of Arts and Sciences and the university as a whole. Of particular concern to the committee are the following statistics:

- Rising cost/s.c.h. from \$171 (2011) to \$269 (2015).
- Dramatically decreased s.c.h production, from 3,294 (FY2007) to 1,842 (FY2015).

- Consistently under-enrolled general-education courses, where the program has experienced a 40.8% decrease in enrollment in AAS 100 since Fall 2011.
- A 21.4% reduction in total s.c.h. in general-education courses since Fall 2011.
- 62.7% of s.c.h. concentrated in only 3 courses: AAS 100, 145, and 281.
- Consistently low numbers of declared majors and annual graduates.

The current cost/s.c.h., decreasing program enrollments, and most especially the overall decrease in general-education are all areas of significant concern. Low s.c.h. is a significant and serious problem for Western's African American Studies program (major). In the current economic crises conditions, these costs pose serious challenges for the university and raise legitimate questions about the sustainability of the program. After reviewing the s.c.h. records, the AAS program could serve most of its students with a very small number of courses, but reducing the program to those courses would mean the end of the major and the minor. While the trends since 2011 have seen decreasing enrollments, the APER committee is heartened to see some turnaround. As of SP16, there are now 22 declared AAS majors, the best number in three years, signaling a significant improvement. Additionally, there are currently 47 declared minors.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) recommends that from Fall 2017 forward, undergraduate majors should maintain a minimum enrollment of 40 declared majors and annually confer at least 9 degrees. However, there is an exception for programs that do not meet this metric if they have "strong institutional justification." Currently, there is not a single African American Studies major in the state of Illinois that would meet the IBHE guidelines. Were IBHE to unilaterally insist on meeting the requirements, it would mean the end of African American Studies degree programs (majors) in the State of Illinois. Historically, AAS programs (majors) in Illinois, and many other programs (majors) nationally, confer only 3-6 degrees annually, and usually maintain between 7 and 24 majors. Traditionally, offerings in general-education have played a key role in keeping the AAS program costs sustainable. Furthermore, the importance of their faculty, course offerings in African American studies, and the program's role in promoting diversity on the campus and in the region should be considered in terms of "strong institutional justification." The impacts and value of African American Studies programs (major) have historically been assessed in broader terms of their impact on the general-education curriculum and their importance to the university's mission.

At the heart of Western's mission and core values (<http://www.wiu.edu/catalog/intro/values.php>) is a strong commitment to diversity: "Western Illinois University empowers students, faculty, and staff to lead dynamic and diverse communities." Western's African American Studies program (major), is a nationally recognized and groundbreaking program that has helped Western move towards achieving its goal of fostering diversity in our region. Moreover, with its interdisciplinary and emphatically global perspectives in its curriculum, the AAS program is a university leader in providing "innovative teaching, research, and service, grounded in interdisciplinary, regional and global perspectives."

Not only is the AAS program (major) critical to Western's mission, it is also a leader in the state of Illinois. Considered in terms of all programs (majors) in African-American Studies in the state, Western's program (major) is among the top 3 in enrollments and graduates. This is an impressive achievement that speaks to Western's history as a groundbreaking program (major) in African American Studies and its historical sustainability and viability.

A bright spot in the Department of African-American Studies curriculum is its minor:

- 42 minors in the fall of 2015
- 47 minors in the spring of 2016

Currently, African American Studies has 47 declared minors. This is a robust number, and many of these minors support critical programs at Western. For instance, 11 AAS minors are in the LEJA program. The minor makes tremendous sense here, and also suggests there is much room for growth. Additionally, the African American Studies Department is currently developing an online version of its minor, which could lead to significant growth that could be bolstered both by the historical standing and national reputation of the department and its faculty. Having an online minor could result in the program that reaches well beyond the state of Illinois through the recruitment of distance learners.

Though not explicitly addressed or quantified in the self-study, the committee raised the possibility that the faculty in the department of African American Studies might well be having a significant impact on retention and graduation rates. Some of the most important metrics for Western are our retention and graduation rates, determining our rankings in crucial reports, such as *U.S. News and World Reports*, as well as the Department of Education "Scorecard" (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/search/?name=university%20of%20illinois&sort=advantage:desc>). Over the past ten years, the percentage of African-American students has dramatically increased at Western. In 2006, there were a total of 852 black students, making up 6.3% of the student body. In 2015, there were 1,895 black students making up a total of 17.5 percent of the student body. Bringing Western's student diversity more in line with society. Recruiting, retaining, and graduating black students is key to Western's current and future success. The committee would very much like to better understand the possible impact that the African American Studies Department might be having on recruitment and retention in their program (major) and beyond, through their general-education courses, minors, cultural events, service, etc. If the department could demonstrate such an impact, it might well justify their cost.

A concern of the committee is that any recommendation to eliminate the African American Studies Program (major) resulting in layoffs would have a disproportionate effect on African-American faculty and community on campus. Currently, Western employs only 32 black faculty members, including lecturers. Out of 176 full professors, only 15 are black. With 4 full professors, the African American Studies department alone accounts for 26% of black full professors at Western.

## 2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Making significant contributions to Western's mission to promote diversity on the campus and in the region</li> <li>● Maintaining a nationally recognized, ground-breaking program (major) that shows Western has been a leader in diversity for 40 years and continues to lead today.</li> <li>● Consistently among the top 3 producers of African- American Studies major graduates in the State of Illinois for over 20 years.</li> <li>● An accomplished faculty with active research agendas.</li> <li>● A faculty deeply involved in building the campus and the regional community through events and organizations that promote diversity.</li> <li>● A robust minor with 47 declared students.</li> <li>● A turnaround in SP16, with 22 declared majors.</li> <li>● A contribution to the general-education curriculum with 2299 individual student registrations between Fall 2011-Spring 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Extremely high cost/s.c.h., with a pattern of costs continuing to increase as enrollment drops</li> <li>● A reduction in general-education enrollments, even judged by the program's (major) history at Western alone. During the Fall 2011-Spring 2016 period, African American Studies has seen a 21.4% yearly decrease (524 student registrations to 412 student registrations) in student registrations in general-education courses.</li> <li>● A concentration of student course registration of 62.7% in only three courses - 100, 145, and 281.</li> <li>● Low production of degrees, significantly below current IBHE recommendations</li> <li>● Low enrollment in the major judged by current IBHE recommendations, with 69.8% of all student course registrations in general-education courses during the period Fall 2011-Spring 2016.</li> <li>● A reduction of 23.7% (751 to 573) in yearly student course registration during the period of Fall 2011-Spring 2016.</li> </ul>

## 3. Recommendations:

The committee discussed simply eliminating the African American Studies program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining and reorganizing the African American Studies program (major).

- A majority of the committee favors a recommendation that the administration reorganize the AAS program (major). The committee discussed a number of options to do this,

while nonetheless recommending the administration find ways of maintaining the complete major option, the minor, and the current AAS program (major) faculty. The APER committee suggests two possible reorganization strategies:

- Creating an “Area Studies” department by combining several departments, such as Women’s Studies and African-American Studies. This would save significant costs, including the elimination of a chair position, staff clerks, maintaining fewer overhead costs, such as photocopiers, phones lines, etc. as well as other potential savings. A consolidated degree, supported by a minor or major option in each of the specific fields, could also provide the consolidated numbers needed to support the major, while still providing the field expertise through the options and minors
- A second option would be to consolidate the African American Studies program under the umbrella of a program such as the Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences to achieve significant savings.
- A minority of the committee recommend leaving the African American Studies program (major) and its department structure intact, with the understanding that they must develop much better management, follow through on their plan for an online minor, and significantly drive down their cost/s.c.h. to a sustainable level during the next two years. The African American Studies program (major) would then be reviewed again in two years.

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in Bilingual/Bicultural Education**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12th, 2016**



### **APER Committee Membership:**

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 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in Bilingual/Bicultural Education. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program “strengths and weaknesses.” In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER’s Concerns:**

Bilingual/Bicultural education is high priority within the State of Illinois. There are multiple jobs in the state that must be filled and require educators to have bilingual and bicultural education endorsements. Unfortunately, on Western’s campus the demand for such an endorsement does not seem to generate significant numbers of declared majors and annual graduates in the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major). In part, this is explained by the overall declines in the College of Education, but it also reflects the tremendous intellectual challenges presented to students in the program (major), particularly in requiring them to commit to the study of foreign languages and study-abroad experiences, something that has been a perennial challenge here at Western.

The most serious concern of the committee is the low performance of the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major) in terms of cost/s.c.h. and overall enrollment numbers. Though enrollments and cost/s.c.h. should never be the sole measure of a program’s (major) value to the university, the current numbers and the overall trends in the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major) are not favorable. Of particular concern to the committee are the following statistics:

- Rising cost/s.c.h. from \$196 (2011) to \$402 (2015). These costs show a wide variability from year to year, which raises questions about curriculum and course focus, as well as cost accounting related to the program (major).
- The dramatically decreased student course enrollment of 43.0%, from 1,514 (Fall 2011-Spring 2012) to 863 (Fall 2015-Spring 2016).

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) recommends that from Fall 2017 forward, undergraduate majors should maintain a minimum enrollment of 40 declared majors and annually confer at least 9 degrees. However, there is an exception for programs that do not

meet this metric if they have “strong institutional justification.” Given the desperate statewide and national need for qualified teachers in bilingual education, this program (major) plays a key role in meeting urgent needs for our region and our state. Given this growing need and the success of the program’s (major) graduates, there is a very strong argument to make an exception for the program (major) in Bilingual/Bicultural Education.

In addition to teaching declared majors, the curriculum of the program (major) in Bilingual/Bicultural education draws significant numbers of students from other undergraduate programs and its graduate course offerings, as evidenced by their extensive cross-listing of courses. APER’s independent analysis of enrollments raised almost as many questions as it answered. There are a large number of other programs that include courses from Bilingual/Bicultural Education, and this makes the problems of both fully understanding the costs of the program (major) and the potential impacts of program (major) elimination extraordinarily complicated. For instance, in response to APER’s questions about low-enrollment in what seemed to be multiple sections of the same course, the program (major) in Bilingual/Bicultural Education provided this explanation:

Our 300 level courses are provided to many other programs and colleges throughout the university that offer teacher education tracks. The result is that some courses are offered even with a low enrollment—like in the case of practicums—and are not face-to-face classes, but have to be listed as such. This is why we have so many sections. Likewise, EIS 401 is a course that the students on the list below are required to take. This is the last course in their professional development sequence before student teaching. Sometimes we are obligated to offer smaller sections, if it’s the only class a student needs before student teaching and graduation.

It is unclear at this point if some of these inefficiencies could be dealt with more effectively through careful course management in an effort to drive down cost/s.c.h. It also remains to be seen how the push to put more courses online will affect enrollments in the next academic year.

One of the APER committee’s major concerns about the program was the dramatic variability in the cost/s.c.h. metric. Clearly, cost/s.c.h. of \$402 is simply unsustainable. However, our research revealed a number of factors contributing to these fluctuations. In recent years, two faculty members had significant course releases to develop new online options. These releases undoubtedly contributed to the radical fluctuations. The program also had three full-time faculty members. However, Dr. Joanne Sellen has left Western to take another position in California. The program will now be offered with only two faculty, significantly contributing to a decrease in cost/s.c.h. With the online options now developed, the impact for the Quad Cities campus, and the decrease in number of faculty, the APER committee fully expects to see a significant reduction and stabilization of cost/s.c.h. during the next two years.

The program (major) in Bilingual/Bicultural Education has in part supported itself with major state and federal grants, and the program (major) has a long and impressive history. As they report in their self-study:

Since 1986 we have received \$4,828,226 in the form of grants from the United States Department of Education to support our program, with over half of the monies coming to us in the last 10 years. The latest grant obtained, Project Estrella, ended in 2011 and amounted to \$1,499,724 over five years. The previous USDE grant, Project SABE (2002-2006), amounted to \$1,342,572 of program funding. These grants provided tuition monies, living stipends, and professional development

monies for students. While in the past, competitive grants were available nearly every year, in recent years, the United States Department of Education has decreased the number of grant competitions. In the fall of 2015 the USDE is projected to have a request for proposals for National Teacher Professional Development grants and we intend to apply for one. We have a long history of success with these grants and are confident that we will secure external funding again in the near future. We have over 35 years of funding history with the USDE.

While there have been reduced opportunities for grants, the faculty have been preparing and submitting new grant applications, and they are cautiously optimistic that they will secure a new, significant grants in the near future. Given budget constraints at both the state and federal level, it is unsurprising that these grants have become more competitive, but given the program's (major) long history of success securing such robust funding, it seems quite likely they will again be able to secure new grants in the near future.

Overall, the APER committee is heartened to see that the program has engaged faculty who are actively and aggressively taking steps to streamline the curriculum to make the program work more effectively for more students. These steps include:

- Putting more courses online
- Offering the program on the QC campus, particularly targeted to the need in Moline for more qualified teachers to deal with the growing population of ESL students.
- Not requiring students who can pass a proficiency exam to take the "study abroad" requirement. This is a major change in the program, and should make it more attractive to some students.

## 2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Illinois has the fifth largest English Language Learner population in the U.S., and Illinois has made educating these students a significant priority.</li> <li>● Graduates of the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program have 100% employment with a recognized shortage of teachers in the field both in Illinois and nationally.</li> <li>● Graduates are eligible for a license in Elementary Education with endorsements in Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language.</li> <li>● Curriculum in Bilingual/Bicultural Education supports many other programs (majors) in Education at the undergraduate and graduate levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major) has a low degree conferment, not meeting the IBHE standards, with a maximum of 4 degrees awarded and a minimum of 1 degree awarded 2011-2015.</li> <li>● No general-education courses are in the field, with all 5,695 individual student course registrations for the period Fall 2011-Spring 2016 in the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program field.</li> <li>● The number of individual student course registrations at the undergraduate level has reduced 43.0% (1514 to 863) since Fall 2011.</li> <li>● High cost/s.c.h, with a low of \$196 in 2011 and a high of \$402 in 2015</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent, active and engaged faculty working to improve enrollments and streamline curriculum</li> </ul>	
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### 3. Recommendations:

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining the Bilingual/Bicultural program.

The APER committee believes that maintaining the program (major) in Bilingual/Bicultural Education is priority for Western in its mission to serve the region and the state of Illinois. The program also clearly serves a crucial role in supporting many other Education programs at Western, as is clear in their own self-study and APER's analysis of enrollments. Moreover, the obvious success of Bilingual/Bicultural Program (major) graduates in finding employment speaks to the vocational value of the degree. Finally, the program has lost a full-time faculty member through attrition already, thus producing significant savings for the university while still serving students in its own major and the other programs (majors) it also supports.

The committee believes that the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program (major) must improve by doing a more effective job of managing enrollments and teaching assignments to decrease cost/s.c.h. The APER committee thus recommends reviewing the program again in two years to determine that they have driven down cost/s.c.h. and improved enrollments through their online offerings, QC initiatives, and streamlined curriculum requirements.

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in Geography**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12th, 2016**

### **APER Committee Membership:**

As specified in the 2010-2015 UPI contract (26.2), the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee consists of one faculty member from each college and one member from the library, each chosen through elections conducted by the Faculty Senate. The members of the 2015-2017 APER committee include:

David Banash, College of Arts and Sciences  
 Sean Cordes, Libraries  
 Bart Jennings, College of Business and Technology  
 Cindy Piletic, College of Education  
 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in Geography. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program “strengths and weaknesses.” In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER’s Concerns:**

The program (major) in Geography presents an interesting case for the APER committee. Geography is a central discipline in the College of Arts and Sciences, and Geography makes vital contributions to Western’s mission to educate students in “regional and global perspectives” (<http://www.wiu.edu/catalog/intro/values.php>). Moreover, Geography is a discipline that is of tremendous and ever growing importance to our globalizing world. The APER committee was frankly surprised to find that the program (major) in Geography has been struggling in terms of enrollments.

As with the other programs reviewed by APER, the most serious concern of the committee is the low performance of the Geography Program (major) in terms of cost/s.c.h. and overall enrollments. Though enrollments and cost/s.c.h. should never be the sole measure of a program’s value to the university, the current numbers and the overall trends in the Geography Program (major) are remarkably low for the College of Arts and Sciences and the university as a whole. Of particular concern to the committee are the following statistics:

- Dramatically decreased s.c.h. production of 38.4% since Fall 2011
- A 36.3% reduction in total s.c.h. in general-education courses since Fall 2011
- A concentration of s.c.h. in only four classes - 71.9% in courses 100, 110, 110Y, and 120.
- In AY2015, there were only 14 declared Geography majors.

While the situation for the program (major) in Geography is quite serious, the APER committee is heartened to see that the chair and faculty of the department are taking aggressive and meaningful action to develop the Geography Program (major). The APER committee discussed the program at length, conducted an independent analysis of enrollments, and a committee member met with representatives of both the program (major) in Geography and other programs

(majors) in which Geography plays a major role. APER has learned that the Geography program is undertaking the following actions to improve their curriculum and enrollments.

The Geography Program (major) has had a committee working on bringing the Geography major up to contemporary disciplinary standards, and has benchmarked their efforts with other regional programs. One of the key challenges the program (major) faces is that their current curriculum is not aligned with current trends and needs in the field. As a part of their committee's self-study, the program (major) in Geography have included comments from graduates and companies that recruit their graduates. Geography Department Chair Dr. Samuel Thompson commented that they were behind on making these changes. Indeed, many of their peers had already created options more in line with contemporary demands. Dr. Thompson noted that when the department's effort began, Western was "40 years behind" other schools.

While beginning from this terrible position, nonetheless the program (major) in Geography is now making substantial changes. These include:

- Renaming the "B.S. in Geography" the "BS in Geography & GIS." This change will be in the catalog for Fall 2016, and will include GIS as a core of the degree. This is in response to employment patterns seen for geography graduates, student interest, and demands from international students and their sponsors. For instance, many international students cannot receive funding for a degree in Geography if the degree title does not include "GIS."
- The Geography Program (major) is reducing the number of options from the current three:
  - Urban and Regional Planning
  - Geospatial Technologies
  - Human or Physical Geography
 The revised curriculum will include only two options:
  - Geospatial Technologies
  - General Geography.
- The program (major) will be experimenting with an online course in Fall 2016 to look at interest in distance learning from overseas and regional community colleges. This is potentially a large number of students.

In addition, the program (major) in Geography is doing much more to align itself with the needs of employers. As of Spring 2016, the Geography Program (major) has received a private commitment of \$300,000 to help make the changes and to increase recruiting at high schools, community colleges, and internationally. This is a substantial commitment, and it strongly suggests the broad regional and national demand for graduates in Geography.

Moreover, particularly through GIS, Geography is becoming more important to many other disciplines at Western, and it seems there is much potential for the Geography curriculum to play a crucial role in supporting other majors. Currently, the Geography Program (major) is working with program (major) in Precision Agriculture on its new degree. One GIS course (209) is required by Precision Agriculture and GIS 303 and GIS 309 are electives. Additionally, the program (major) in Emergency Management and the program (major) in Law Enforcement also include GIS courses as options or requirements in their curriculum.

Looking to the next two years, the program (major) in Geography sees potential for growth among the many international students who need “GIS” in the degree title to receive funding. The Geography Program (major) is also working to develop and expand 2+2 agreements with community colleges. Currently, this is where 50% of their current majors come from, and there seems to be significant room for growth.

**2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Makes key contributions to Western’s mission to teach and research through regional and global perspectives</li> <li>● The discipline of Geography is becoming more important to understanding and working in a globalizing world.</li> <li>● GIS is a growing and important field with demonstrable demand in both Illinois, but also nationally and internationally.</li> <li>● Faculty have generated over \$350,000 in external grants (National Science Foundation) and \$15,000 in internal grants (Office of Sponsored Projects at WIU).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A concentration of student course registration of 71.9% in only four courses - 100, 110, 110Y, and 120.</li> <li>● General-education accounts for 82.0% of student course registrations.</li> <li>● A reduction in general-education enrollments. During the Fall 2011-Spring 2016 period, Geography has seen a 36.3% yearly decrease (1762 student registrations to 1122 student registrations) in student registrations in general-education courses.</li> <li>● Geography has seen a total reduction in student course registrations of 38.4%.</li> <li>● Low numbers of declared majors and annual graduates.</li> </ul>

**3. Recommendations:**

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Geography Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining the Geography Program (major).



Despite the current costs and Western's extraordinary fiscal challenges, a majority of the committee favors a recommendation that the administration retain the Geography Program (major) on the condition that they complete their proposed curriculum revisions and follow through on their commitments to develop recruiting and retention initiatives.

APER further recommends that the program (major) in Geography be reviewed again in two years to insure they have implemented the proposed changes and improved their numbers of declared majors and annual graduation rates.

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in Musical Theater**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**March 12th, 2016**

### **APER Committee Membership:**

As specified in the 2010-2015 UPI contract (26.2), the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee consists of one faculty member from each college and one member from the library, each chosen through elections conducted by the Faculty Senate. The members of the 2015-2017 APER committee include:

David Banash, College of Arts and Sciences  
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 Bart Jennings, College of Business and Technology  
 Cindy Piletic, College of Education  
 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in Musical Theater. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program “strengths and weaknesses.” In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER’s Concerns:**

APER has carefully studied the program (major) in Musical Theater. As a university “Signature Program,” Musical Theater has had a prominent place in Western’s identity and, particularly, its marketing. Its unique and significant stature as a “Signature Program” compounds the already difficult task of evaluating the program and comparing it with others. The committee has carefully reviewed the program’s (major) self-study, conducted our own quantitative analysis of the program’s enrollment, and carefully discussed the challenges the program faces in the context of Western’s current fiscal situation.

As with all the other programs we are considering, the largest challenge for Musical Theater is in low enrollments and overall cost/s.c.h. The major consistently has less than the 40 majors recommended by the new IBHE guidelines, ranging between 35 declared majors in 2013 and 29 in 2015. Similarly, it typically graduates only 3-4 students per year instead of the recommended 9. However, the graduation numbers have increased with 9 degrees conferred in 2015. More troubling than the low enrollments is the growing cost/s.c.h. By 2015, this cost had risen to \$240, making Musical Theater among the most expensive majors at Western.

The great strength of the Musical Theater program (major) is its consistently high quality. As an “audition only” program, it attracts the best students from around the state and beyond. Further, the program expects these students to excel in all three areas: singing, dancing, and acting. This expectation is so high that a number of students do not complete the program. In discussion with faculty, it appears that some students use their required internship to enter the career field, and thus do not return to complete the degree. Others find the program to be a challenge and change their major to a related degree, with many reportedly changing their degree to the Theatre Acting B.A. degree, or other related degree. Determining how to credit the Musical Theatre Program (major) for these students is difficult. In part, the program seems to be

drawing a substantial number of students who begin the program, but many of them are unable to finish. However, even those students who do not finish in Musical Theater do tend to finish in the Theater and Dance Department.

A challenge in evaluating the program is that it includes courses in Music, Dance and Theater. These programs also support majors and minors in these specific fields. Looking more carefully at the data, the committee came to understand that some of the costs of the program might not be as accurate to the specific program (major) of Musical Theater. Since all of the faculty are teaching courses in the Music, Theater, and Dance department’s other programs (majors), and since most of the courses Musical Theater majors take are also courses that support other majors with other students supporting the overall s.c.h. production, the committee believes that the true cost of the program and its faculty may be substantially lower, or at least different. The question becomes whether the Musical Theater program/major can be considered as an individual program or should be viewed instead in the context of the Theater and Dance Department and all its major options.

The committee discussed and agreed that the Musical Theater Program (major) is better understood as a kind of honors program within the department of Theater and Dance. Just as students in the Honors College should not have the full cost of the faculty charged to the Honors College, Musical Theater should be seen in similar terms, as the cost of their faculty is largely borne by their other major options. Moreover, it seems unlikely that eliminating the Honors College would save the university substantial money, since its faculty are all parts of other departments. However, this also presents challenges in understanding the true costs of majors like Musical Theater.

Finally, the undeniable quality of the students the program attracts is a serious benefit to Western. Like students in the Honors College, the students that Musical Theater retains have high g.p.a. and they set a remarkable example for other students in COFAC and the University as a whole. Also, the tremendous success they find after the program, so well documented by the self-study and assessment documents from the Department of Musical Theater makes clear the value of the program to the students and the university as a whole.

**2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An extraordinarily high quality program with high g.p.a. students.</li> <li>● One of the only programs of its kind at a public university in the state.</li> <li>● The ability of the program to attract excellent students to WIU, some who remain at the university even when unable to maintain the standards of the Musical Theatre program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● High Cost/SH at its current level of \$240</li> <li>● Low graduation rate, with a maximum of 9 (2015) and a minimum of 3 (2013) during the period 2011-2015.</li> <li>● The design of small classes which are difficult to support in times of limited funding.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A high placement rate for its graduates.</li> <li>● High rate of internship experience.</li> <li>● Enhancing campus life and the community through performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is difficult to measure the actual s.c.h. impact in specific courses and degree programs of the Musical Theatre program, however, all three of the degree programs directly impacted have seen a reduction in student course registrations since Fall 2011. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Music has seen a 26.5% reduction,</li> <li>○ Dance has seen a 24.3% reduction,</li> <li>○ Theatre has seen a 0.7% reduction.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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### 3. Recommendations:

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Musical Theater Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of of the committee recommend maintaining the Musical Theater Program (major).

Given the high quality of the program, its role as a “Signature Program” at the university, and the fact that eliminating the program would result in little or no savings due to course cross-listing, the APER committee recommends retaining the the program (major) in Musical Theater.

The program should continue efforts to increase enrollment and graduation rates. This may be possible with some recent changes made and proposed by the Musical Theater Program (major), and it is recommended that a review be conducted in two years to measure the success of both recent and proposed changes.

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in Philosophy**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12th, 2016**

### **APER Committee Membership:**

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 Cindy Piletic, College of Education  
 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in Philosophy. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program “strengths and weaknesses.” In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER’s Concerns:**

The APER committee has seriously and comprehensively studied and discussed the challenges for the Philosophy Program (major) in our current financial circumstances. Philosophy has a unique role as a fundamental discipline in the identity of any institution that aspires to call itself a university. Given this, the committee is attentive to the fact that there are many more factors than mere numbers at play. That said, there are serious challenges for the program in Philosophy (major). The committee has carefully considered Philosophy’s own self-study. We also looked carefully at supplemental documents the program (major) submitted to us. Finally, we have looked broadly at enrollment trends from the freshman to senior levels. In choosing any course of action, we believe there are many factors that must be considered carefully. We will outline these below.

The most immediate challenge facing the Philosophy Program (major) is the number of declared majors and the number of annual graduates. While traditionally a smaller degree program, the Philosophy major has had some very challenging years. Of particular concern to the committee are the following statistics:

- Declared majors at a very low 10 and no degrees conferred in 2014.
- 2015 showed improvement, a slowly growing enrollment at 17 majors and 2 degrees conferred, but these numbers still raise concerns for the program.
- An overall decrease in general-education hours, from 909 student course enrollments in Fall 2011-Spring 2012, to 658 in Fall 2015-Spring 2016, a decrease of 27.7%
- General-education courses account for 86.4% of all student course registrations
- Low enrolled upper division courses necessary to sustain the major, such as: PHIL 300 (63 registrants in 5 sections), PHL 310 (80 students in 7 sections), and PHIL 312 (34 students in 10 sections).
- Student registration in Philosophy courses has dropped 30.8% since Fall 2011-Spring 2012

In the current economic crisis conditions, these trends and costs pose serious challenges for the university and raise legitimate questions about the sustainability of the program. While the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) recommends that from 2017 forward, undergraduate majors should maintain a minimum enrollment of 40 declared majors and annually confer a 3-year average of at least 9 degrees, but there is an exception for programs that do not meet this metric if they have “strong institutional justification.” Given its unique place in the curriculum of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Philosophy program (major) should be considered an exceptional program with this institutional justification.

In the self-study, the Philosophy Program (major) makes a very strong and persuasive argument for its key role in Western’s academic identity. They write:

Philosophy as a discipline is the foundation for all other academic pursuits. Universities were born out of the discipline and that is reflected in current universities. Philosophy has always been and continues to be a central discipline for any university or liberal arts college. All state universities in Illinois and total of 30 Illinois colleges offer a BA in philosophy. Nearly every university of significant reputation has a strong Philosophy program, ranging from Ivy League schools, to major conference schools, to regional public universities, to small liberal arts schools, to more technical schools like MIT or Cal Tech.

The commitment of schools of every size and at all levels of prestige to maintain majors in Philosophy speaks to the key and crucial role that the major and its faculty play in the academic aspirations and identities of all these schools.

In its mission statement, Western makes clear that its first core value is academic excellence. The university states:

Academic Excellence: Central to our history is the commitment to teaching, to the individual learner, and to active involvement in the teaching-learning process. Western Illinois University’s highly qualified and diverse faculty promotes critical thinking, engaged learning, research, and creativity in a challenging, supportive learning community. We are committed to student success in an academic environment that encourages lifelong development as learners, scholars, teachers, and mentors. (<http://www.wiu.edu/catalog/intro/values.php>).

The Philosophy Program (major) makes clear that Western is actually committed to these values. The Philosophy Program’s (major) primary purpose is to teach and research critical thinking. It is a program that has impact university-wide through general-education, and gives students the opportunity to devote themselves wholly to the discipline of critical thinking by majoring and minoring in Philosophy. Also, the Philosophy program (major) supports a significant number of minors (18 in the spring of 2016).

In supporting the program despite its low number of declared majors and annual graduates, Western is upholding its stated core values. If the university were to reduce its support for the program (major) in Philosophy, it would be seen as potentially compromising its commitment to academic excellence and Western’s identity as a comprehensive university.

While the committee recognizes the Philosophy Program’s (major) importance to the academic identity of both the College of Arts and Sciences and also Western as a whole, we are however keenly aware of the fiscal challenges facing the institution. Thus, we are heartened to see the



chair and faculty of the department of Philosophy and Religious Studies taking substantial and proactive administrative actions to significantly recruit students, consolidate and increase their overall numbers, and reduce their cost/sch. These actions include:

- Emphasizing recruiting through general-education and the pre-law option
- Creating more student scholarships by drawing on the Mary Olive Woods endowment in new and creative ways to attract more and better students to the department
- Most significantly, the department has moved independently and proactively to eliminate the major in Religious Studies and integrate this curriculum as an option into the Philosophy major itself.

These actions show that the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies is making significant changes that will have real impact on their overall number of declared majors, graduates, and costs.

Nevertheless, the combination of Philosophy and Religious Studies still faces a major challenge. Of particular concern to the committee are the following statistics:

- Combined, declared majors and second majors are declining from 34 in 2011 to 21 in 2015, with degrees (and second degrees) awarded declining from 10 in 2011 to 3 in 2015.
- A combined decrease in general-education hours, from 1413 student course enrollments in Fall 2011-Spring 2012, to 945 in Fall 2015-Spring 2016, a decrease of 33.1%.
- General-education courses account for 85.1% of all student course registrations.
- Student registration in all Philosophy and Religious Studies courses has dropped 33.1% since Fall 2011-Spring 2012.

## 2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Philosophy is key to the identity of Western as a university.</li> <li>● It supports Western's core values of academic excellence and critical thinking.</li> <li>● A strong, nationally recognized program.</li> <li>● Accomplished faculty with national reputations.</li> <li>● A strong response from the chair and senior faculty in developing a proactive and significant plan to address the current challenges.</li> <li>● A very reasonable cost/s.c.h. at \$164 in 2015.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consistently low number of declared majors, ranging between 13 and 22 since Fall 2011.</li> <li>● Consistently low degree production, ranging between 2 and 9 since Fall 2011.</li> <li>● Very limited room for growth in even the most optimistic scenarios.</li> <li>● 86.4% of student registrations are in a general-education course, and the number of students taking a Philosophy general-education course have dropped by 27.7% since Fall 2011-Spring 2012.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The substantial Mary Olive Woods endowment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student registration in Philosophy courses has dropped 30.8% since Fall 2011-Spring 2012.</li> <li>• With the proposed combination of Philosophy and Religious Studies, the s.c.h. trends for both programs should be examined. Combined, the two programs have experienced a 33.1% reduction in total general education student course registrations (1413 to 945) since Fall 2011-Spring 2012, where 85.1% of total course registrations have taken place.</li> <li>• Low enrolled upper division courses necessary to sustain the major, such as: PHIL 300 (63 registrants in 5 sections), PHL 310 (80 students in 7 sections), and PHIL 312 (34 students in 10 sections).</li> <li>• Combined, the two programs have experienced a 33.1% total reduction in student course registrations since Fall 2011-Spring 2012 (Philosophy 30.8% and Religious Studies 37.1%).</li> </ul>
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### 3. Recommendations:

The committee discussed simply eliminating Philosophy Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of of the committee recommend maintaining the Philosophy Program (major).

Despite the current costs and Western's extraordinary fiscal challenges, a majority of the committee recommends that the administration retain the Philosophy Program (major) on the condition that the program complete the curriculum revision that will include Religious Studies as an option in the Philosophy major.

Additionally, a review in two years should be conducted to determine whether the merger of the two programs (majors) has resulted in a change from the combined 33.1% reduction in student registration in Philosophy and Religious Studies courses since Fall 2011-Spring 2012, and whether there has been an increase in the number of declared majors and students preparing for graduation.

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in Health Science / Public Health**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12th, 2016**

### **APER Committee Membership:**

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 Bart Jennings, College of Business and Technology  
 Cindy Piletic, College of Education  
 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in Health Science / Public Health. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program “strengths and weaknesses.” In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER’s Concerns:**

When the APER committee began review of the Bachelor of Science in Public Health Program (major), the members had difficulty deciphering the distinctions between degree options and the directed elective tracts that were presented in the catalog. It was felt that a discussion with the Chair of Health Services and Social Work was warranted, and two members met with Dr. Lorette Oden.

The Health Sciences department has bachelor degree programs in Public Health, Health Services Management, and Emergency Services. There is not a minor offered in Public Health. A Master of Science in Health Sciences is offered, and one of the options is Public Health. For the other two bachelor degree programs, the Illinois Board of Higher Education deemed the graduation numbers sufficient for continued support. However, Public Health Program (major) declared majors have remained steady at around 20 students for the past five years. During that same time period, the number of degrees conferred in Public Health has declined, with five graduates in 2011 and zero graduates in 2015. During the period Fall 2011-Spring 2016, the Public Health program has seen a 20.4% increase in student course registrations (289 to 348) at the undergraduate level. Of the undergraduate course registrations, 59.7% were in only three classes - 211, 250, and 410. It has also been noted that the number of Master’s candidates in Public Health has declined by 30% in recent years.

The department’s self-study program reported that because of the recent (FY 2013-2015) WIU administration’s mandate, the department was required to merge the Health Sciences and Social Work departments. This was documented as the reason why additional resources have not been used to grow the Public Health degree in Health Sciences.

Within the Health Science Department, the two other bachelor programs include Health Services Management (HSM) and Emergency Management (EM). HSM has three options, including a Public Sector option. When comparing the Public Health major course requirements to the courses for the Public Sector option of HSM, there is a large degree of overlap. Core foundation classes are very similar, and directed electives in the major are very comparable. The APER committee perceives that with few courses differentiating the Public Health degree from the Health Services Management (public sector option), the recruitment of students to this major may be difficult. Because of all the different majors and options within Health Science, it may be confusing for prospective students and also hard to promote.

According to the Chair of the Health Sciences Department, the Public Health degree was changed to a comprehensive degree within the past few years, and the curriculum requires 4.5 academic years to complete. According to the Chair, this is detrimental for recruiting purposes, and the major has not been made part of the "2+2" option advertised by the University. The HS department has submitted a "change in program" for the Public Health major option, and that change has moved through all levels of the university curriculum committees and has been approved at the CCPI level. The Chair also noted that when comparing the length of the program with other state universities, the additional semester of work is similar.

The APER committee was informed that Public Health majors have the option to earn specialty certification as a Community Health Education Specialist (CHES). This option has not been exercised often by recent graduates, and is not necessary for employment. Recent changes in accreditation requirements for Bachelor's programs now allow students in Bachelor's programs without Master's of Public Health Programs to sit for the CHES exam without having a Master's degree in Public Health.

The APER committee noted that there is no mention of Public Health certification at the bachelor's level in the catalog or on the department's website. It is thought that the lack of required certification in Public Health may be limiting students from obtaining specific jobs. Additionally, as prospective students examine the Public Health Program (major) they may notice the lack of discussion about CHES certification and may choose to go to other universities where the Public Health Certification is obtainable.

Information from the Chair of the Department of HS included that faculty expertise is not limited to courses in the Public Health degree, and in fact, the same faculty members are also assigned to teach courses in all degree programs in the Health Sciences Department. Based on this information, the Department Chair feels that even if the major in Public Health degree were to be eliminated, it would not result in a reduction of faculty.

**2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Faculty for this major option also teach core courses in other major degree programs in the department, so these</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Course requirements very similar to Health Services Management (Public Sector option)</li> </ul>

<p>course are not impinging on staff resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of the degree allows graduates to obtain Community Health Education Specialist (CHES) designation.</li> <li>• While not a requirement for admission to the graduate program, a Master's of Public Health is available in this department.</li> <li>• Job outlook for persons with this type of degree are rated as good. There appears to be a large variety of jobs/positions that a student with a major in Public Health would be qualified.</li> <li>• Student course registrations have increased from 289 (Fall 2011-Spring 2012) to 348 (Fall 2015-Spring 2016), an increase of 20.4%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low enrollment in the major judged by current IBHE recommendations</li> <li>• 59.7% (940 of 1574 student registrations Fall 2011-Spring 2016) have been in only three courses - 211, 250, and 410</li> <li>• No clear push by the department to increase the number of declared majors.</li> <li>• The comprehensive major may be decreasing the number of majors as 4.5 years of study are required to complete the degree if an associate of science degree is held.</li> <li>• Certification is not heavily supported.</li> </ul>
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### 3. Recommendations:

The Committee recommends eliminating the major in Public Health and the consolidation of the curriculum from bachelor's of Public Health into the options in the Health Services Management bachelor's degree. By consolidation, the low performing bachelor degree would be eliminated, and the remaining degree options in Health Science may actually grow. The Health Sciences department should be recognized for their efforts to enhance the Public Health degree, but the Committee wonders whether one degree can meet the needs of both Public Health and Health Management positions in the job market.

APER further recommends that the program (major) in Health Science be reviewed again in two years to insure they have implemented changes and improved their numbers of declared majors and annual graduation rates.

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in Religious Studies**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12, 2016**

### **APER Committee Membership:**

As specified in the 2010-2015 UPI contract (26.2), the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee consists of one faculty member from each college and one member from the library, each chosen through elections conducted by the Faculty Senate. The members of the 2015-2017 APER committee include:

David Banash, College of Arts and Sciences  
 Sean Cordes, Libraries  
 Bart Jennings, College of Business and Technology  
 Cindy Piletic, College of Education  
 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in Religious Studies. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program “strengths and weaknesses.” In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER’s Concerns:**

The program (major) in Religious Studies cannot be reviewed without keeping in mind its context with the Philosophy program (major): first, because the program is integral to the Philosophy program’s (major) plan to become a more robust degree; second, as part of this plan to become an option in the Philosophy major, Religious Studies will cease to exist as a (major) program with a unique CIP code. Its enrollments and graduates will be counted as part of the Philosophy program (major). Because APER has strongly endorsed the Philosophy program’s (major) plan, put forward jointly by both the Philosophy program (major) and the Religious Studies program (major), we cannot but concur with the recommendations of both programs (majors) to retain the complete Religious Studies curriculum as an option in the Philosophy Major.

Though Religious Studies will be eliminated as a program (major), its curriculum and current faculty will persist as an option in the Philosophy program (major), and thus the APER committee would like to make clear the value of this curriculum and the Religious Studies faculty to the core mission of the university:

Western Illinois University empowers students, faculty, and staff to lead dynamic and diverse communities. We provide student-centered undergraduate and graduate programs characterized by innovative teaching, research, and service, grounded in interdisciplinary, regional and global perspectives.

(<http://www.wiu.edu/catalog/intro/values.php>)

It is difficult to imagine dealing with diversity in global or, indeed, regional contexts, without engaging the many dimensions and problems of religions, and the curriculum in religious studies is one of the only opportunities students at Western have to encounter these issues in academic contexts led by experts in the field. This alone makes the curriculum of Religious Studies crucial to Western’s mission.



The program (major) in Religious Studies forwards the mission of the university, particularly through its substantial impacts in the general-education curriculum at multiple levels. Most of the courses the department offers are general-education, and many of the courses also support the global issues requirements. The program (major) in Religious Studies has also been a humanities leader in offering FYE sections of their courses.

It should also be noted that the faculty in Religious Studies Program (major) are extraordinarily accomplished compared to faculty across the university: Dr. Amy Carr holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago; Dr. Haynes holds a Ph.D. from the University of Calgary; Dr. Perabo holds a Ph.D. from Yale. All the faculty members have outstanding, active research agendas and remarkable scholarly accomplishments, as the detailed program self-study makes clear (15).

Like the Philosophy Program (major), the program in Religious Studies has been very well managed, and the APER committee is heartened to see how actively the faculty have responded to the changes in Western's enrollment and fiscal situation. Particular accomplishments include:

- Developing 6 online courses
- Offering the minor on the Quad Cities campus through both online and face-to-face courses
- Working with the LAS program to develop an integrated BA/MLAS, to begin in 2016
- Developing the new humanities Living and Learning community.

These substantial accomplishments and very active responses demonstrate the the faculty in Religious Studies are fully engaged with the problems the university faces.

As with all the programs under review, the Religious Studies Program (major), enrollments and graduation rates are key issues that must be considered. While the committee favor the proposed reorganization, nevertheless, the combination of Philosophy and Religious Studies still faces a major challenge. Of particular concern to the committee are the following statistics:

- Combined, declared majors and second majors are declining from 34 in 2011 to 21 in 2015, with degrees (and second degrees) awarded declining from 10 in 2011 to 3 in 2015.
- A combined decrease in general-education hours, from 1413 student course enrollments in Fall 2011-Spring 2012, to 945 in Fall 2015-Spring 2016, a decrease of 33.1%.
- General-education courses account for 85.1% of all student course registrations.
- Student registration in all Philosophy and Religious Studies courses has dropped 33.1% since Fall 2011-Spring 2012.

## 2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Key contributor to the university's mission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Low number of declared majors.</li> <li>● Low number of annual graduates.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Active and engaged administrators and faculty working to develop the reach of the program.</li> <li>● A leader in humanities departments in developing online courses.</li> <li>● Supporting the QC campus with the minor in Religious Studies.</li> <li>● A uniquely affordable program among Illinois universities, and one of only two programs at public universities in the state.</li> <li>● A very reasonable cost/s.c.h. at \$194 in 2015.</li> <li>● The substantial Mary Olive Woods endowment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Limited room for growth in even the most optimistic scenarios.</li> <li>● Small upper-division classes with multiple sections.</li> </ul>
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### 3. Recommendations:

APER recommends that the administration support the plan put forward jointly by both the Philosophy Program (major) and the Religious Studies Program (major) to strengthen the Philosophy major and maintain the Religious Studies curriculum and faculty by making Religious Studies an option within the Philosophy major.

Additionally, a review in two years should be conducted to determine whether the merger of the two programs (majors) has resulted in a change from the combined 33.1% reduction in student registration in Philosophy and Religious Studies courses since Fall 2011-Spring 2012, and whether an increase in the number of declared majors and students preparing for graduation has been achieved.

**APER Report and Recommendations on Western Illinois University's Program  
(Major) in Women's Studies**

**Prepared by the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee**

**Submitted to Provost Kathleen Neumann**

**May 12th, 2016**

### **APER Committee Membership:**

As specified in the 2010-2015 UPI contract (26.2), the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee consists of one faculty member from each college and one member from the library, each chosen through elections conducted by the Faculty Senate. The members of the 2015-2017 APER committee include:

David Banash, College of Arts and Sciences  
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 Bart Jennings, College of Business and Technology  
 Cindy Piletic, College of Education  
 Kate Pohlpetter, College of Fine Arts and Communication

The committee also had significant and much needed clerical help from Kathy Chambers.

### **Summary:**

In section one, we outline our concerns with the proposed elimination of the program (major) in Women's Studies. In section 2, we condense these concerns into a table of program "strengths and weaknesses." In section 3, we offer recommendations to the administration on possible actions.

### **1. Overview of APER's Concerns:**

The APER committee has carefully reviewed the Women's Studies Program (major). The committee carefully read the program's (major) self-study, conducted an independent analysis of enrollment trends, and discussed the issues affecting the program and the university in great detail.

The most immediate challenge facing the Women's Studies Program (major) is the number of declared majors and the number of annual graduates. While traditionally a smaller degree program, the Women's Studies major has had some very challenging years. Of particular concern to the committee are the following statistics:

- Declared majors at a very low 7 and only 2 degrees conferred in 2014 and 2015.
- Low enrolled upper division courses necessary to sustain the major, such as: WS 430 (35 students registered in 10 sections since Fall 2011) and WS 410 (33 students in 8 sections since Fall 2011)
- The number of students taking a course in the field has decreased 20.7% since Fall 2011
- General-education courses represent 72.7% of the total students registered for a Women's Studies course since Fall 2011, and students taking these general-education courses have reduced 35.6% during the same time.

In the current economic crisis conditions, low enrollments pose serious challenges for the university and raise legitimate questions about the sustainability of the program. The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) recommends that from 2017 forward, undergraduate majors should maintain a minimum enrollment of 40 declared majors and annually confer a 3-year average of at least 9 degrees. Currently, there is not a single Women's Studies major in the

state of Illinois that would meet the IBHE guidelines. Were IBHE to unilaterally insist on them, it would mean the end of Women's Studies Programs (majors) in the State of Illinois. The IBHE does make an exception for programs that do not meet this metric if they have "strong institutional justification." Given its important place in the curriculum of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Women's Studies program (major) should be considered an exceptional program with strong institutional justification.

The Women's Studies Program (major) makes very strong, critical, and unique contributions to Western's mission. Through its general-education curriculum, the Women's Studies Department is involved on campus, and its faculty are devoted to supporting Western's mission and core values. Specifically, Western's fourth core value calls on the university to support and equality and social justice, and these are central to the mission of the Women's Studies Program (major), and arguably more immediately and forcefully than many other programs (majors):

**Social Responsibility:** Western Illinois University is committed to equity, social justice, and diversity and will maintain the highest standards of integrity in our work with others. We create an environment that fosters and promotes civic engagement. We serve as a resource for and stimulus to educational, cultural, environmental, community, and economic development in our region and well beyond it.  
(<http://www.wiu.edu/catalog/intro/values.php>).

Questions of equity, social justice, and diversity are at the center of the Women's Studies Program (major), and Western makes clear its commitment to these values by supporting this curriculum and the faculty who create and teach it.

As with the African American Studies Program (major), a serious issue to consider with any proposal for program elimination is the potential for a disproportionate impact. In the self-study, the Women's Studies Program (major) underscores the fact that, though small, the program (major) is significantly more diverse than the student body as a whole. As the Women's Studies self-study explains:

Even as the number of minority students increases at WIU, the percent of Women's Studies students who fall into the category of "minority" was consistently higher, and in recent years, much higher. The Women's Studies Department does an excellent job of recruiting students of color and being inclusive of theories and research that reflect difference seen among people. (6)

The self-study supports this by showing that while 30.7% of Western's student body is considered "minority" by Institutional Research and Planning, the program's (major) declared majors are above 71% minority since 2014.

While the Women's Studies Program (major) has always had a low number of declared majors, the faculty and the curriculum have a tremendous effect on the university's general-education program. Women's Studies faculty have tremendous course enrollments:

- 2961 SCH in 2013
- At or near the top of the college efficiency, with 718 SCH/FSY measure from FY09-FY13, making the program the most efficient in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Thus, despite some upper-division major courses with dramatically lower enrollments, the faculty has a tremendous impact on the student body as a whole through its robust general education course offerings, arguably making the Women's Studies Program (major) affordable for the university.

It should be noted that the Women's Studies Department also offers a minor in Women's Studies, and their minor has much more robust numbers. For example, in 2014-15, Women's Studies maintained 58 minors. At the end of the Spring 2016 semester, there were 65 declared minors. Almost half of these are "second minors," demonstrating that the upper-division curriculum is having an impact on a significant number of students. In many cases, these minors come from programs like LEJA, RPTA, and Social Work. In addition, the Women's Studies Department offers its minor on the Quad Cities campus, furthering extending the reach of the program. A minor in Women's studies adds critical dimensions to these students' education, and this again speaks to the ways in which the Women's Studies curriculum supports the mission and core values of Western.

A particular bright spot in the WS Program (major) is the excellent management of the program through the Department of Women's Studies. The chair and senior faculty have done excellent work in managing their general-education enrollments, and in working with other programs to sustain and increase enrollment. Moreover, their commitment to developing their online presence and offering their gen-ed courses and minor at the Quad Cities Campus all speak to engaged leadership. Additionally, their recent move from Currens Hall to the more humanities oriented Simpkins Hall presents new opportunities to develop ties with other humanities programs (major) and recruit students.

## 2. Summary of Program (Major) Strengths and Weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Key program (major) supporting Western's mission and core values of equity, diversity, and social justice.</li> <li>● Diverse students in the major.</li> <li>● An excellent curriculum.</li> <li>● A particularly robust minor that supports a well-rounded education for students in many larger programs.</li> <li>● Strong general-education enrollments.</li> <li>● Leader in efficiency as measured by s.c.h./Faculty-Staff-Year</li> <li>● Excellent management.</li> <li>● Strong plans to develop enrollment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Low number of declared majors</li> <li>● Low number of annual graduates</li> <li>● Low enrollments in upper-division major courses</li> <li>● The number of students taking a course in the field have decreased 20.7% since Fall 2011</li> <li>● From Fall 2011 through Spring 2016, 72.7% of students registered in a Women's Studies course were taking a general-education course. The total number of students taking such a general-education course yearly dropped by 35.6% (792 to 510) during this time.</li> </ul>

### 3. Recommendations:

The committee discussed simply eliminating the Women's Studies Program (major). While the current fiscal crises makes elimination an option that must be considered, a majority of the committee recommend maintaining and reorganizing the Women's Studies Program (major).

The Committee recommends that the administration reorganize the Women's Studies Program (major). The committee discussed a number of options to do this, while nonetheless strongly encouraging the administration to insure that any reorganization protect the whole curriculum, and particularly maintain the major option, the minor, and the current Women's Studies Program (major) faculty. Options for reorganization include:

- Creating an "Area Studies" department by combining several departments, such as Women's Studies and African-American Studies. This would save significant costs, including the elimination of a chair position, staff clerks, maintaining fewer overhead costs, such as photocopiers, phones lines, etc. as well as other potential savings. A consolidated degree, supported by an a minor or major option in each of the specific fields could also provide the consolidated numbers needed to support the major, while still providing the field expertise through the options and minors.
- A second strategy would be to consolidate the Women's Studies Program (major) under the umbrella of a program such as the Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences to achieve significant savings.