

GRADUATE STUDIES

December 18, 2003

BACKGROUND: The Office of Graduate Studies was created to coordinate and provide services for graduate students from initial inquiry through application, matriculation, and graduation. It was reorganized in 1995 when the Dean of Graduate Studies and Dean of Continuing Education positions were consolidated. Graduate Studies staff work closely with the program coordinators in each of the colleges. Final admissions and graduation clearances are completed in the Office of Graduate Studies.

The major goals include increasing graduate program productivity consistent with the Chancellor's goal of making 10 per cent of total headcount consist of graduate students and to develop clear and consistent criteria for defining a "true graduate experience" to be applied in curriculum development.

The staff consists of .5 unclassified (.5 of Interim Dean and 100% GPR funded), 1 FTE unclassified (Associate Dean and currently vacant), .5 classified staff (100% GPR funded), and (1 Program Assistant II currently filled by an LTE, 60% GPR/40% PR funded), a half time graduate assistant, and student assistants. There has been a reduction of 3.0 FTE since the office was reorganized in 1996 when a half-time assistant dean was added. There has been no corresponding reduction of workload.

STRENGTHS:

- Student service is a great strength of this office as confirmed by discussions with program coordinators.
- The current centralized configuration of the office provides visibility and status to graduate study.
- The Office of Graduate Studies has maintained a high level of service despite staff reductions.
- Graduate enrollment has grown over the last several years and would have met the Chancellor's goal this fall if some graduate enrollment had not been switched from GPR to extension for target purposes.

CHALLENGES:

- The Office of Graduate Studies is limited in what it can do to promote program development. The model of shared governance ensures integrity of curricula. Creating offerings that might attract additional students requires intra-university political considerations.

- The Graduate Studies Committee has representation by all departments offering graduate courses rather than by individuals representing graduate programs.
- Dialogue about the nature of graduate study among various constituencies continues to be a challenge.
- Graduate application data entry is currently primarily a manual process.
- While it is assumed that providing a “true graduate experience” will enhance the desirability of graduate programs at UW-Whitewater, the process of relating that experience to the perceived needs and interests of persons likely to enroll has been based largely on anecdotal evidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The new Dean of Graduate Studies, Continuing Education, and Summer School/Winterim should oversee graduate education and chair the Graduate Council and should have a .5 appointment in the Office of Graduate Studies.
- There should be two full-time classified positions in the Office of Graduate Studies funded through the Office of Graduate Studies.
- Eliminate the position of Associate Dean.
- The Office of Graduate Studies staff should continue to work with graduate program coordinators on marketing, program development, and new entrepreneurial ventures. There should be a paradigm shift in terms of marketing—distribution and collection of information is only one of the many potential approaches.
- The Dean for Graduate Studies, Continuing Education, Summer School/Winterim should provide leadership in providing greater visibility for graduate education at UW-Whitewater.
- Initiate more inclusive survey strategies to improve programs/services/offerings using the data for a feedback loop for improving the operation. The survey results should be public.
- Acquire software to automate application processing.
- The Dean of Graduate Studies, Continuing Education, and Summer School/Winterim should provide leadership in refining the definition of a graduate experience and reconfiguring the Graduate Council to better represent departments with graduate programs.

CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES (CES)

BACKGROUND: Continuing Education Services (CES) is a non-credit component of the Office of Graduate Studies, Continuing Education and Summer Session. The CES Director reports to the Dean. The office staff consists of the Director (unclassified and 100% GPR funded), one Program Manager (unclassified and 80% GPR funded, 20% PR funded), three program assistants (classified and 100% PR funded), one LTE Graphic Designer (.50 FTE and PR funded), and several student employees.

CES performs a variety of services including program planning, marketing support, financial management, facilities coordination, presentation support, personnel management, food and housing arrangements, and professional support for non-credit programs. There are over 25 self-supporting budgets and non-credit events managed by CES making this unit one of the largest in the state, both in terms of participants and scope of offerings. In 2002-03 summer camps attracted 12,571 participants in over 80 events and an additional 6,168 persons were served during the academic year through UW-Extension accounts – Education and Liberal Studies – in 22 additional programs.

The World Affairs Conference is managed by CES. The World Affairs staff consists of .5 unclassified (100% PR funded) and .5 classified (100% PR funded).

STRENGTHS:

- Very efficient, highly organized, courteous, and people-oriented staff.
- Excellent communication, high work ethic, and professional in their approach to customer service.
- Perhaps the largest resource for potential student recruitment due to the number of students served.
- Exceptional working relationships with other campus offices.
- Office team is very compatible.
- CES is a highly efficient operation that simplifies the coordination of event planning for all constituents, whether they are campus groups or outside groups holding a conference or camp at UWW.

CHALLENGES:

- Perform more services than what they are compensated for which creates potential staff stress and burn out as well as a financial burden on the office.
- Technology and web page development and updates are inadequate.

- The graphic design area does not have enough personnel resources and may be an area that could be recovering more costs.
- Financial reports are untimely due to lack of personnel resources (bills get paid in a timely manner, but financial reports to Camp Directors are way behind).
- Space issues – office space is inadequate and unappealing considering the large number of clientele being served and “first impression” of campus.
- Fulfill the stated potential regarding student recruitment with an articulated plan and collect data to communicate the results.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hire at least one additional program assistant and reorganize duties to include receptionist, financial management, and graphics. Consider hiring additional student help or an LTE in the summer to assist during the peak period of camps or camp/conference registration and/or during the year when the volume of conference/camp registrations requires extra help to input the registration data.
- Improve the physical layout of Continuing Education Services. Staff is working in small spaces and closets. The first impressions of the physical office space are not what they should be. Either remodeled space in the existing location or new space for Continuing Education Services in the future University Center Student Services addition should be explored.
- CES should remain as the “one-stop shop” for all non-credit Camp and Conference Event planning and coordination. Other UW-System institutions that have camps and conferences housed at the departmental level and fragmented are envious of the efficiency of UW-Whitewater’s CES operation.
- Additional revenue sources should be explored so that CES can continue to be a self-supporting operation. There is a financial deficit because some camps do not meet their budget, which results in financial deficiencies. The host department/program does not cover the deficit from not meeting budget.
- CES should be relieved of its outside financial contributions such as the \$55,000 annually contributed to the Young Auditorium.
- Departments/programs offering conferences and camps that do not meet their budget should compensate CES to balance their event’s budget.
- CES should re-evaluate the fee they are charging to determine if they are covering all expenses and/or if financial efficiencies can be gained, thus creating the opportunity for additional resources/revenue (such as additional personnel).

- The World Affairs Conference should continue to be managed by CES and the director should report to the CES Director.
- Convert the .5 Graphics position to full time and provide web development support of CES.

CREDIT OUTREACH, SUMMER SESSION, & WINTERIM

BACKGROUND: The office of **Credit Outreach** works with academic departments to provide for the needs of part-time, non-traditional students who are mostly teachers seeking certification, license renewal, or salary advancement, as well as others seeking self-improvement. Courses are usually offered during the regular academic year in one of three modes: off campus, on campus on weekends, or via distance education. The office is almost completely self-supporting, with some funding from UW-Extension. In 2002-2003, 862 students were enrolled in outreach courses, an increase of 92 individuals from the preceding year, almost twice the goal.

The **Summer Session** office supervises all courses offered for credit during the summer session, both for undergraduate and graduate students completing degree programs and for others seeking professional development. This includes printing the Summer Schedule of Classes and other promotional material. Program revenue in the form of self-supporting courses for which faculty are paid at a per-student, per-credit rate, supplements the limited amount of general-purpose funds available from the colleges for required offerings. Enrollment in 2003 was 2,223 undergraduates and 1,173 graduate students.

The staff consists of a .5 unclassified (.5 Interim Dean, 100% PR funded), 1 unclassified staff (100% GPR funded) and student help. There have been no changes in staffing since 1996.

STRENGTHS:

- The Credit Outreach office has established long-term informal relationships with school districts in southeastern Wisconsin. They have helped identify staff development needs, developed credit courses (in cooperation with the offering departments), and recruited staff to teach the courses.
- They have supported increased offerings in nontraditional formats including fully on line offerings as well as full on line degree programs like the on line MBA and hybrid courses and programs such as the UWSSLEC Library Media consortium where courses are completed using a mix of face-to-face and on-line instruction.
- A comprehensive array of summer courses in general education and to fulfill various major and minor requirements have filled quickly and facilitated timely graduation for many students.

- The Interim Dean of Continuing Education is currently working actively with College of Education faculty to develop new courses to meet radically different teacher licensure requirements that take effect in 2004.
- New offerings in Special Education as well as one-credit workshops designed to meet specific licensure needs of teachers with out-of-state and provisional licenses have attracted enrollment in the summer session.

CHALLENGES:

- Offering a higher proportion of courses in the summer that meet or exceed minimum enrollment requirements.
- Forms of staff development that do not involve university credit may become preferred by schools, which might necessitate new approaches to collaboration with districts.
- Greater flexibility in conceptualizing the relationship between credit and fees/units and delivery modalities in offering instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Increase marketing and advertising efforts. The University is currently in a position to inform school districts about their responsibilities under PI34 that might stimulate interest in our course offerings. Media and methods other than those tried in the past (mail surveys of districts' staff development needs that yielded limited response) may be worth exploring.
- Promote staff development that will enable faculty to offer more courses online and in other convenient new formats.
- Promote consortia arrangements similar to UWSSLEC to protect student's system-wide from the effects of shrinking staffs in education and other specialties.
- The new Dean of Graduate Studies, Continuing Education, Summer School/Winterim should be knowledgeable about teacher licensure and staff development in schools.
- Develop close working relationships with associate deans and department chairs to ensure effective scheduling.

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS (RSP)

BACKGROUND: RSP coordinates the submission and administration of funding/grant opportunities on campus. It takes the lead in identifying grant opportunities for individual faculty members and faculty teams, assists in the development of proposals and oversees compliance. The office staff is composed of 1 classified (100% GPR funded), 1 unclassified (100% GPR funded and unfilled), and student workers. Since the creation of the LEARN Center in 1998, funded in part from the RSP budget, RSP has run a structural deficit – over half its spending in 2002-2003 was covered by a subsidy from the Office of Graduate Studies.

STRENGTHS:

- RSP can fairly claim a role in having greatly increased grant submissions from UWW since 1998. Office productivity is remarkable compared to peer institutions.
- RSP regularly disseminates news about intramural and extramural grant opportunities.
- RSP has begun identifying appropriate funding opportunities and targeting faculty and faculty teams to work on developing successful proposals
- The office wins high marks from faculty for its professional services in preparing grants. Both the self-study and faculty interviews concur RSP has been essential in “demystifying” the grant writing process and doing everything possible to ensure the success of the grant projects. As one faculty member commented, RSP “does what it takes to make things happen.”
- RSP has shown great willingness to aid faculty in locating funding opportunities. Faculty find RSP to have provided tremendous assistance in grant preparation, particularly in developing the evaluation and budget portions of their proposals where RSP has provided important expertise in “translating” funding sponsors’ guidelines.
- RSP is generally praised for helping to negotiate award terms with funding agencies and develop appropriate oversight criteria.

CHALLENGES:

- RSP lacks adequate professional staffing for its responsibilities.
 - During the last year RPS has not had an LTE and has been unable to do periodic individual searches for grant opportunities for interested faculty.
 - There is no backup for the RSP director, which makes even short absences problematic.

- Student workers are given an inappropriate degree of responsibility for time-sensitive and confidential materials.
- Faculty and staff who have never used RSP services indicate interest in grant opportunities but are uncertain how to begin the process. While they are aware of RSP services and announcements, it is clear that they would welcome more personalized attention.
- Creating faculty interest in developing proposals from all colleges as well as service areas (particularly student services, the Library, etc.)
- Developing a higher profile within the University to reflect University goals, faculty expectations, and the RSP mission.
- Receiving/establishing a budget appropriate to meet constituency expectations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Merge RSP and the LEARN Center.
- Create an unclassified position with responsibility for RSP management/supervision who will report to the Director of this unit.
- Two duties currently assigned to the program assistant (compliance coordination and management of grant accounts) should be re-assigned to the LEARN Center staff.
- Hire a full-time program assistant to provide clerical support for this unit.
- The budget for RSP/Learn Center staff and S&S should be fully covered from GPR.

TRAVEL STUDY AND DISTANCE EDUCATION (TSDE)

BACKGROUND: The major responsibilities are management of the DE classroom (support, schedule, expand, & report functions), and support and expand short-term travel/study opportunities to faculty and graduate students. The office works cooperatively with the International Programs as well as all academic colleges and departments on campus. The history of TSDE suggests that through the multiple opportunities provided, students and staff have expanded their demand upon the human and financial resources allocated to the two programs.

The TSDE office staff includes 1 unclassified (91% GPR, 9% PR funded) and 1 classified (100% PR funded).

STRENGTHS:

- Travel Study and Distance Education are functioning at near maximum capacity given the resources available in their current structure.
- The DE component provides instructional and professional development services to a wide-range of participants.
- With continued budget constraints, DE might be a viable option for campus to offer more courses within the existing budgetary constraints.
- There have been increasing demands upon the TS program to support travel study opportunities throughout the university.

CHALLENGES:

- If the number of Distance Education offerings continues to expand, additional DE classrooms will be needed.
- Current staffing levels have not provided an opportunity to plan for the future nor to provide a vision of where DE should be within the next five years.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The unit should explore the potential gains of relocating Distance Education to another unit and make the appropriate request after the review and analysis is completed.
- Relocate the Travel Study component to the International Program Office with one FTE so all travel study (traditional students and nontraditional students) is handled in one office. Many of the needs for planning and delivering travel study opportunities are similar for both populations. This will enable Travel Study coordinators to plan programs for traditional and non-traditional students in one office.

LEARN CENTER

BACKGROUND: The LEARN Center is located within the Division of Graduate Studies under the direction of an Associate Dean.

The acronym LEARN stands for **L**EARNING **E**NHANCEMENT, **A**SSessment and **R**ESearch **N**ETWORKS. The title suggests there is a wide-range of activities undertaken under the auspices of the LEARN Center and include:

LEARN Components 1. Teaching Learning 2. Assessment 3. Technology 4. Extramural support

The LEARN Center has identified six goals related to these activities and reports the activities associated with each goal. The measures the Center uses to determine whether a goal is being met include hours of contact, number of programs offered, and the number of clients served. The director of the program mentions other outcomes that have not yet been assessed.

The resources, both human and financial, are reported to be adequate for conducting and accomplishing the goals outlined in the self-report. The office staff is composed of .5 classified (100% GPR funded) and 1 LTE (100% PR funded).

STRENGTHS:

- The LEARN Center offers teaching support in a variety of ways
 - Sponsors major workshops on teaching each fall for the entire campus
 - Sponsors multiple workshops throughout the year
 - Book readings on multiple topics
 - Topic-specific workshops on a variety of topics
 - Targeted audiences are provided workshops on time-sensitive issues
 - Teaching-Mentor program
 - Supports research
 - Scholarship-Mentor program
 - Grant writing workshops
 - Research-sharing sessions
- Those using the offerings of the LEARN Center report high levels of satisfaction with them in both teaching and scholarship.

CHALLENGES:

- Reaching out to a wider audience-base for the workshops, attract tenured faculty as well as new faculty.
- Develop a teaching/scholar culture throughout the institution.
- Provide better links between teaching improvement and the sponsored workshops—establish how the workshops will directly improve teaching/scholarship.
- Integrate the services of the LEARN Center with the needs of faculty/staff in one location.
- Expanding offerings with limited resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Combine the following units under the leadership of a director who will report to the Provost or Chancellor:

Unit No.	Component Name	FTE	Existing/New
1	LEARN Center.	1	E
2	Research & Sponsored programs	1	E
3	Institutional Research	2	E
4	Technology Related to Teaching/Learning (from T&IR)	2	E

This structure would provide 7 FTE with 6 already in place. One new program assistant position would be added to support this unit. The LEARN Center is focused on teaching and learning (academic focus) as well as objectives that are more administrative in focus (assessment and research). These seemingly divergent units would support each other as well as faculty and staff on campus.

Institutional Research could provide support to the LEARN Center for the teacher/scholar model via the data collection function of their office. In addition, with the NCA visit pending, the “assessment” piece of the LEARN Center would be improved by a closer coordination with Institutional Research. This coordination can best be accomplished by merging the two.

Technology, Research and Sponsored programs, and Institutional Research, if integrated into one office, would provide heightened visibility within the institution and heightened support for the LEARN Center by providing a team approach for solving teaching/scholarship issues (the one-stop shop model).

By reporting to the Provost's office, institutional alignment between teaching and teaching's support mechanisms (LEARN Center) would be enhanced and inextricably linked!

- The LEARN Center staff should increase its offerings of instruction designed to prepare faculty and staff to use distance education delivery systems more effectively. This includes compressed video, blended courses (on-line and face-to-face), and fully on-line courses.