

## **FOCUS 2010 FALL 2004 SESSIONS RESPONSE FORM COMMENTS**

### **University Priority 1**

Enrollment management. We need a technical sales person to recruit specific programs. GBA and Art have high enrollment because students know what they are. Other programs must be “sold” to potential students.

The cost of attending Stout is directly related to enrollment. Stout’s decision to force laptop leasing, as well as the per-credit change, have put us way out of the price range of many from our historic enrollment base. The laptop program is killing our enrollment. The sooner we recognize this, as several other universities have, the better our chances of improving enrollment.

The Interior Design Concentration is experiencing a robust period; we currently enjoy an excellent reputation within industry, there is a great deal of potential student interest in our program and we have achieved the highest accreditation available. This success has been achieved through delivery of a well-managed curriculum based upon currency with industry and progressive pedagogy. Any decisions related to enrollment management must be made with an eye on continuing to deliver an **8-semester curriculum** in which courses sequentially build in complexity – which results in producing graduates with professional level skills. While we can increase our enrollment numbers, we must do so in a measured manner, so that we can adequately prepare our students for their professional lives. In order to do this we must have flexibility in terms of staffing and space, we must be able to help make decisions about the number of students admitted each year and we must retain our well established curriculum sequence – beginning with the freshman semester.

“True enrollment management is a holistic and synergistic approach that requires a paradigm shift.” Kuhn 1970. In the action plan, I see who is “responsible.” Where are the key stakeholders who truly define the university? (i.e. students)

In order for this priority to succeed, input from those entities UW-Stout is trying to recruit and retain is necessary, students, multicultural staff and faculty. Retention rates of faculty, staff and students is important.

### **University Priority 2**

Excellent idea. Action plans seem realistic and supportive of this priority.

### **University Priority 3**

Given our further movement into the Millennial generation (a more needy group of students), I suggest more structured mechanisms to connect sophomores to the institution. Connection could include a “strongly encouraged” membership in professional organizations for each program, including more out-of-class contact with faculty and administrative staff. Once the new student feels at home (at Stout) as a freshman, that sense of mattering needs to continue through choice of major to professional connection and networking. Faculty who advise professional organizations should receive more than the kudos of a grateful administration... these hours should be heavily weighted as service to the institution... and included in consideration for advancement opportunities.

The Capstone process in each program/major should begin with the laying of a common “cornerstone” - the first advising meeting of the sophomore year. Graduating seniors should be tapped as mentors for

sophomores to help the sophomores make the connection between the “now” and “then” (internships as juniors in following year), similar to peer advising but less formal, and perhaps through the professional student organizations... it is another part of connection and belonging.

Capstone experiences need to include some sort of assessment of, or emphasis on students’ leadership potential, style, work habit exploration, communication patterns, appreciation of diversity, commitment to service in the community – and this as a way to understand the greater civic responsibility they have (now and after graduation)... This can certainly happen without a service-learning requirement, but definitely needs institutional validation and support. If there is a way to create a template for Cornerstone to Capstone experience, without infringing on the academic discipline or requirement, this approach may move the institution even closer to retention targets.

Bottom line – we need to be better at balancing the technology piece (and distance learning opportunities) with the continuing developmental and contact needs of our student body (in the traditionally aged generational cohort), and limit the number of “undecided” students admitted to the University.

We need more Gen Ed flexibility.

What is great about this country is our independent pioneer spirit and risk taking attitude; creating new inventions, new ideas to solve problems. One of the best things I learned in school was critical thinking. While other countries seem to be able to build products they often lack innovation. I have had foreign exchange students from Eastern Europe live with us and one of the major things they struggled with was independent critical thinking; asking why or why not. I hope the teaching of critical thinking is not overlooked when striving to improve the educational experience. (relating to priority 3)

I strongly feel that many of the academic issues that have been discussed should contain a thread of relationship to environmental impact or environmental issues. Do we try to always include the relationship of our actions on our environment when developing programs? It can be as straight forward as teaching about our environment, to designing pop bottles that biodegrade or designing “green” buildings, to awareness of byproducts of equipment or machinery used to perform our jobs. (relating to priorities 3, 5,9)

#### **University Priority 4**

We do not need a general professional development degree. Focus on priority 5, science and technology.

Again, what else will our students need to successfully negotiate the workplace and move beyond the entry and mid-level positions in the workplace?

- An understanding of their own leadership or followership style;
- Conflict management skills (for those who never had to share a room and may soon have to share a work cubicle);
- A hands-on understanding of social needs via service to the community as well as changing nature of society and social capital;
- A clearer understanding of social diversity;

The technical skills are critical, but so are the interpersonal dynamics.

Please consider buildings and maintenance when discussing new directions with our campus. I feel we need to not only specify environmentally friendly Green buildings but also buildings designed to easily change from within to adapt to our rapidly changing needs and directions of the future. (relating to priority 4)

I disagree with the statement of the issue. We (UW-Stout) needs to focus on the programs that distinguish us from other UW schools and recruit/retain with our primary emphasis on making those academic programs the BEST, OR are we shifting to a liberal arts image and desiring many new academic offering with mediocre quality?

### **University Priority 5**

The proposed programs should not come at the expense of human services/education programs.

I have heard in Germany, particular companies will provide money to High Schools to train and prepare students for future positions with them. Is this resource being used in this country for Universities? (relating to priority 5)

### **University Priority 6**

Helpful approach to retention.

Agree with the formation of separate areas (residence) for freshmen and upperclassmen. Keeping main campus halls for underclassmen follows many private college “freshmen year plans.”

### **University Priority 7**

e-scholar, as far as I can see, and I have used it heavily, is simply one of several proprietary tools for course management and delivery. These tools are available system-wide; we don't have a corner on this market. Less emphasis on this priority is called for.

E-scholar requires working portals, net access 24/7, and a network with multiple redundancies so that it doesn't “go down.” Might be time to enlist the services of new techies. If a network is unstable enough to crash (repeatedly), how safe are/is e-scholar?

### **University Priority 8**

Has a study been done on the effectiveness of our Career Services program? What partnerships have been set up with area businesses (within a 40 mile radius, look at how many are Fortune 500! Great resources)?

### **University Priority 9**

I disagree with the explanation of this priority. We have been over responsive to some technologies (laptop) which may well prove obsolete in a few years. Other technologies (like classroom AV support) have been ignored, and as a result we are far behind even local high schools with things like working VCR's and “smart” boards.

Present technology is vitally flawed here, how can we implement new technologies? Who is showing a “lack of responsiveness” (statement of issue)?

We would be competing with Milwaukee and Madison? Yes. Could we partner with WTCS--yes. Focus more on the WTCS collaboration and less on being a leader in the field at the state and national level. We already excel in other majors at the national level.

I agree. Milwaukee and Madison will have a lot more resources to devote to this; competition in that league would be fierce. Let's allocate our resources and focus our attention on the piece of this emerging field that builds on what we are and allows us to come out on top.

### **University Priority 10**

Alarming priority. The track record of “for profit” educational enterprises, both K-12 and higher ed, has been very poor in terms of quality and disappointing in terms of revenue generating. Didn't the University of Northern Iowa “dump” their on-line, “for profit” arm (on us) because they decided it was not worthwhile?

Are you familiar with Personal Investing? An online course developed/executed by a UW-Stout faculty? Online offerings (whether courses for credit, trainings, distance ed) can provide more income to the university and more recognition.

### **Other Comments**

Just a thought on lack of feedback from Alums who have donated larger dollar amounts. It might be that it's fairly easy to write a check if you have the money but consider that Alums who don't have the money to donate large amounts may be more likely to give of their time with filled out questionnaires or other support. I feel many times you get more support, constructive criticism and excellent ideas from people who give more of their time than their money.

I will place this comment here because there is no priority that addresses my concern, which is that graduate education is devalued at this university. The absence of any graduate education priority in the focus 2010 list buttresses this assertion. We have vibrant and important graduate programs on this campus that are starved for teaching resources. Graduate programs seemingly are regarded as if they are similar to, or even less worthy of support than undergraduate programs, in part due to resource decisions based on analyses that do not distinguish between the two types of education despite the fact that the university charges significantly higher tuition for graduate education! We seem to have no problem recognizing the monetary value of graduate education when it comes to assessing graduate tuition rates. Our graduate students deserve better – in the form of faculty who have the time to mentor them and who can respond effectively to the higher intellectual and content demands of graduate education. This means more faculty allocated to our graduate programs at equitable teaching loads less than 12 credits per semester. Compare our graduate teaching loads with comparable programs elsewhere and you will discover that this argument has great validity. I hope that you will reconsider your resource allocations with the knowledge that there is growing dissatisfaction among graduate faculty regarding this issue.

Holism- A homogenous group of power holders do not a university make. Integrate a sense of investment (professionally personally) from the university community as a whole.