



Urban Serving University with Numerous Economic Challenges Endeavors to Ensure Alignment with its Mission

Academic Analytics Data Helps to Validate Conclusions

The Challenge:

UIC is an urban university that takes its mission (academic excellence, diversity, access, research translation, collaboration, community engagement) very seriously. Institutional mission is a deep and broadly shared commitment.

After eight consecutive years of rescission, divestment, redistribution, give-backs, cuts, shortfalls, and the constant *ad hoc* movement of funds, de-funding and re-funding symptomatic of budgetary insecurity, coupled with the increasing burdens of financial aid, deferred maintenance and energy, the institution was faced with a potential cut of as much as 10-15 percent in state funding. This drastic reduction would require immediate radical restructuring. UIC had to ask how it could continue to function in such an environment and still fulfill its mission.

Actions:

Creation of a Task Force

University leadership created the Academic Directions Task Force to review all 91 academic units on campus to determine how they fit into and furthered the university's mission.

Task Force Objective

The Task Force was charged to:

- Provide a one-time overarching review of the institution's 91 academic departments, 12 degree-granting colleges, 12 intercollegiate centers and the academic enterprise at large.
- Provide the VCAA / Provost with information that he/she could rely on when making necessary and appropriate decisions regarding the future of specific academic programs, units, colleges, centers and the campus at large.
- Provide a systematic means of annually informing the Faculty Senate, unit heads, deans, and the VCAA / Provost of trend changes in academic quality and unit productivity.

Each academic unit is analyzed based on:

- The unit head's response to a survey that focuses on evidence of the unit's excellence, unique qualities, and centrality to the institution's mission.
 - The survey asks about accomplishment and activity related to education, faculty scholarship,

diversity, urban orientation, collaboration, research translation, and contribution to health-related issues.

- comprehensive set of productivity measures indicating three-year trends provided by the UIC Office of Institutional Research.
 - Student enrollment, credit-hour generation, degrees granted and faculty FTE data.
 - Relative Value Unit (RVU) reports provided by the College of Medicine for clinical departments to help gauge clinical faculty productivity.
 - Grant expenditure reports, distributed to home departments of principal investigators
- National comparison data, focusing on faculty scholarly production, provided by Academic Analytics.
 - display of the quintile ranking of the faculty based on research productivity as measured against all other U.S. graduate faculty within the same discipline
 - display of the percentile ranking of the unit based on specific productivity measures.
 - Benchmark data for faculty and unit productivity and excellence (Academic Analytics FSP Database)
- Reports based on periodic reviews of academic units compiled by Illinois Board of Higher Education teams.

Unit Reviews

- The process was modeled on federal grant review panels. Each unit was assigned primary and secondary reviewer. Relying on the compiled data, the primary reviewer provided an in-depth review to the full task force, with emphasis on unit strengths and weaknesses. The primary reviewer accorded the unit a comprehensive score: 1 to 3, with 1 being the highest score. The secondary reviewer provided additional commentary and assigned score. The full task force discussed the reviews. Each member independently recorded his/her overall score on a score sheet. After each meeting, reviewer's forms were filed for future reference. Reviewers' forms and individual score sheets are not anonymous, but are confidential.
- Summary of Task Force findings identifying strengths, weaknesses and recommendations, accompanied by the supporting survey, OIR, IBHE and Academic Analytics data will be produced for each unit. Unit heads will be invited to compare the data with their knowledge of their unit and comment as necessary.



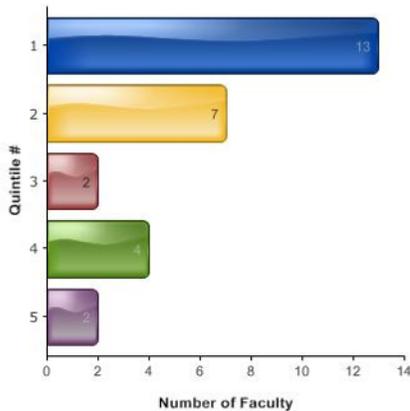
- A initial review of five units was conducted prior to obtaining data from Academic Analytics and these units were re-reviewed subsequent to obtaining Academic Analytics data. The Academic Analytics information had significant impact on two of the five reviews. One department in a STEM discipline that the Task Force believed to be performing satisfactorily was, in fact, performing below the national mean in winning federal grants. A department in the humanities that did not enjoy good reputation on campus was actually performing well above the national mean in faculty publications.

Quintile	Average Citations	Average Articles	Average Awards	Average Books	Average Number of Grants	Average Annual Grant Dollars
1	46.44	5.91	0.66	1.36	1.77	\$122,585
2	12.59	2.63	0.47	0.89	0.62	\$33,546
3	1.81	0.90	0.35	0.72	0.34	\$21,903
4	0.34	0.34	0.21	0.27	0.09	\$1,202
5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	\$0

Average metrics for all the US Scholars in the selected discipline.

Description:

All of the faculty members in the selected program have been placed into one of five quintiles based on their individual scholarly productivity. The first quintile represents the most productive faculty members, and the fifth quintile represents the least productive faculty members.



Academic Analytics Quintile Analysis Tool

Task Force Findings and Implementation

- When reviews of all the departments and department-level units housed in a college are completed, a Task Force subcommittee will be created to consider, as a whole, all the relevant data and reviews pertaining to departments and department-level units within that college. Each subcommittee will formulate a set of findings relative to its assigned college and present its findings to the full Task Force for discussion. Findings accepted by the whole Task Force will be presented to the Provost for her/his discussion with individual deans. The intent is to assist deans with their future decision-making by pointing to areas of strength and investment

and areas for potential improvement or disinvestment. Findings are expected to touch on matters such as:

- Recognition of units that have exceptional performance and/or growth potential.
- Programs and activities to maintain “as is.”
- Potential for merger of units within the college.
- Potential for merger or interaction with units outside the college.
- Potential for a unit to be absorbed by another unit within or outside of its present college.
- Elimination of a unit.

Task Force findings relative to departments and department-level units will be included in final report, along with findings based on reviews, to be conducted later of intercollegiate institutes, centers, and similar structures.

Completing the Cycle: Future Use of the Academic Directions Process

A significant and consequential contribution of the Task Force was the development of a set of common, easily understood, trend indicators that can be included in annual budget and academic review processes.

The current academic review process:

- Focuses on degree programs only, occurs once every eight years, and provides no guidance on department units, their activities at large, or their inter- or intra-collegiate interactions.
- Like accreditation, uses an in-depth self-study process and external evaluators to assess the program’s performance.
- Works well with learning outcomes assessment and Faculty Senate review processes.

The Academic Directions process:

- Reviews both academic programs and academic units.
- Relies on trend indicators that can be produced and assessed on an annual basis.
- Will work well with our current budget model and our annual budget process.

The annual budget process is the discussion between the Provost and the college deans regarding how the college’s funds will be distributed to assure a continual increase in academic excellence and productivity. It has been proposed that each year determination of every unit budget will be informed by a series of reports including:

- Comprehensive set of productivity measures indicating three-year trends.
- National comparison data from Academic Analytics.
 - ranking of the faculty by quintiles based on their overall research productivity as measured against all other U.S. graduate faculty within the same discipline.
 - A percentile ranking of the unit based on specific productivity measures.
- Program learning outcomes assessment.

It also has been proposed that a compilation of these annual reports would, in turn, form the bases for the every-eighth-year Illinois Board of Higher Education Program Assessments.